

15 April 2016

The Agriculture and Environment Committee Hendra Vaccine Inquiry
C/- Mr Rob Hansen
Parliament House
Brisbane
Queensland 4000
Phone: 07 3553 6660

By email: robert.hansen@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Hansen,

RE: Veterinarian Submission to Hendra virus Vaccine Inquiry

My name is Dr Sarah Van Dyk, and I am an equine veterinarian located at Marburg, Queensland. I have been in veterinary practice for 6 1/2 years. I wish to address the following Terms of Reference in the Qld Parliament's Hendra virus Vaccine Inquiry:

- The incidence and impact of adverse reactions by horses following vaccination and the reporting of adverse reactions and economic impacts of the Hendra vaccine.
- The development, trials and approval processes of the vaccine
- Who bears the risks of HeV infection and who incurs the costs and receives the benefits from each risk mitigation option.

Our practice has vaccinated over 7000 horses and I personally have vaccinated approximately 1500 horses. Of these horses, there have been less than 10 reported cases of swelling at the site of injection of varying degrees, with all of these cases clinical signs resolving within 3-4 days; some with concurrent non-steroidal anti-inflammatory treatment and others resolving with no treatment. I believe that the Hendra virus vaccination is safe, extremely effective and if used within the guidelines, very reliable.

The introduction of the Hendra virus vaccination to protect horses from this deadly disease certainly improves Workplace Health and Safety. Although this certainly doesn't negate the requirement to use personal protective equipment and practice good biosecurity practices, the risk to veterinarians and our support staff is greatly lessened by the having a large number of our patients vaccinated for Hendra virus.

I have spent weekends as the treating veterinarian at horse endurance rides and from my point of view, compulsory vaccination at events where there are many horses with many adults and children that could easily be exposed to a sick horse is essential. Although this particular catastrophe of a horse with Hendra virus at an equestrian event has not yet happened, this is a very real risk that can be negated with compulsory vaccination.

Yours sincerely,


Sarah Van Dyk BVSc (Hons)
WestVETs Animal Hospitals
