

21st of 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 Asher Dessaix, and I am a mixed practice veterinarian located at Anstead, Queensland. I have been in veterinary practice for 15 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.

I have administered 65 HeV vaccinations without any adverse reactions being reported.

I trust completely the scientific process that has provided us thus far our safety and efficacy data we have for the Hendra virus vaccine and the ongoing safeguards to monitor and investigate any adverse events in an objective and scientific basis without prejudice or bias.

In the face of what is an emerging disease such as Hendra Virus, the benefits of this vaccine in situations where a patient may otherwise have Hendra Virus considered as a differential diagnoses is invaluable as it gives myself and the client the piece of mind I need to focus on treating the patient and not implementing biosecurity measures and limiting treatment to non invasive, rudimentary first aid.

In a society where public health is considered of paramount importance, how an event coordinator can consider running an event without mandatory HeV vaccination is completely bewildering and highlights the public's lack of understanding of the behavior of this virus. An infected horse that is shedding virus can infect people prior to showing clinical signs for several days. How can unsuspecting public be exposed to this risk?

As a veterinarian I will continue to attend to sick horses whether they are showing clinical signs similar to those of Hendra Virus or not. I will also continue to implement biosecurity measures if their clinical signs could be considered remotely caused by Hendra virus. This is my professional obligation. Unfortunately many of these horses will suffer whilst Hendra exclusion tests are run. Until clients accept the Hendra Vaccine more widely I will continue to watch these horses suffer

needlessly. This is a welfare concern that is no longer necessary as we have a safe and effective vaccine to prevent it.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

Dr Asher Dessaix BVSc (Hons) MVS(SAP)
WestVETS Animal Hospital

[Redacted address line]

Anstead QLD 4070

[Redacted address line]

[Redacted address line]