

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Agriculture and Environment Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Hendra Virus Vaccine Inquiry  
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## **Submission to the Qld Parliament's Hendra Virus Vaccine Inquiry**

I am a veterinarian in Western Queensland. I graduated 29 years ago and have worked predominantly in equine and mixed practice since graduation.

The only reported case of Hendra Virus that is near where I live was reported at Chinchilla several years ago. This is 200kms east of where I live. As far as I am aware it is the only reported case west of the Great Dividing Range.

We have bats in our area. Our property is 17 kms from the nearest town (population about 500). This year the problems caused by the bats in the town were significant.

I have over 100 horses on my books that I regularly vaccinate against Hendra Virus. These are mostly campdrafting horses from properties in my area. Most horse owners around here would not perceive that Hendra Virus is a threat in the area.

Some property owners use horses for work and they like to look after their horses. But the horses are often looked upon as an expendable item. The horses used for campdrafting and other performance sports are looked upon slightly differently.

Property owners and workers routinely vaccinate large numbers of cattle themselves for various diseases. The cost of the cattle vaccines is tiny in comparison to the cost of Hendra Vaccines. It is often perceived that the cost of the Hendra Vaccine is prohibitive particularly when many property owners have had difficult financial times with the ongoing drought. The time involved in organising and keeping horses up to date with their vaccinations is considerable for me as the veterinarian and I would say that I make very little money out of it. I do not charge as much as my city counterparts because I initially thought that I should try to provide a service to the horse industry. But the cost of the vaccine is very high and it is often difficult to get vaccines delivered here in a timely manner. As a result I have had to destroy some vaccinations because the couriers had delayed in delivering them to me before they got hot.

I was disappointed with the original roll out of the vaccine by Zoetis. I received a text message to say that it was officially available. This information was relayed to the media very soon after I received the message. So I had no time to prepare to answer the questions from owners regarding cost etc. of the vaccine.

The treatment of some equine veterinarians by Work Place Health and Safety has been terrible. It has caused unnecessary stress and damage to some wonderful veterinarians. I would go so far as to say that it has also caused some vets to stop practicing.

I am also concerned that a sick horse may be euthanized by a vet or owner and it should possibly have been tested for Hendra Virus (in other words showing clinical signs that were unexplainable and possibly similar to Hendra Virus). The threat of being investigated by WHS may result in cases of unexplained illness and death being swept under the carpet. So in fact there may be cases of Hendra Virus that going undiagnosed and

unreported in this areas.I have no doubt that there probably are undiagnosed cases of  
Hendra Virus in endemic area of Queensland and NSW.

Yours sincerely

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