



Queensland Government's response to the  
Ombudsman's Hendra Virus Report  
17 November 2011

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# 1. Overview

The Queensland Government acknowledges the work done by the Queensland Ombudsman in compiling The Hendra Virus Report, released Thursday 3 November 2011.

The report contains 74 recommendations across five government agencies and relates to incidents that occurred between 2006 and 2009. Since 2009, the Queensland Government has responded to another 11 Hendra virus incidents and has already made significant changes that address many of the issues raised in the report.

The Queensland Government agrees completely or in principle with all 74 recommendations made in the report. The Queensland Government has already implemented nearly half of the recommendations. By the end of 2011, more than 70 percent will have been completed with the remaining recommendations to be completed by mid-2012 under the oversight of a steering committee.

These figures highlight the progress the Queensland Government has made in responding to Hendra virus since the timeframe analysed in the Ombudsman's Report. Much has happened since 2009 and our response capability has developed as we learn more about the disease. The Ombudsman's review did not capture the significant evolution in knowledge and management strategies that have occurred during the past two years.

Even though many aspects of the report are now dated, there are always lessons to be learnt and the Government will be using this report as part of its continuous improvement program for its biosecurity system.

Human health will always be of paramount importance to the Queensland Government. As we continue to improve our ability to manage suspected Hendra virus cases, our priorities will include:

- Ensuring that our policies and procedures reflect the best advice available,
- Improving our communications to increase community awareness, and
- Enhancing skills and knowledge in the horse industry, for private veterinarians and for our staff.

## ***Biosecurity Queensland***

Queensland has a strong and proven biosecurity system, as evidenced by our successful eradication of major pests and diseases such as equine influenza, citrus canker, Asian green mussels, bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis. Through each of these events, Biosecurity Queensland continues to adapt and improve response capabilities, communications and procedures.

As well as the major responses of fire ants, electric ants, Asian honeybees, Siam weed, four tropical weeds and myrtle rust, Biosecurity Queensland dealt with over 20 new significant incidents in the past financial year, including cocoa-pod borer, mango malformation disease in Bundaberg and Childers, and spur throated locusts across central and western Queensland.

Biosecurity Queensland continues to deliver a range of other services while responding to new incidents, including animal disease surveillance and diagnosis, interstate certification services for plant products and weed and pest animal management. These have been well- managed responses, providing critical protection to our local industries.

## ***Hendra virus in 2011***

Hendra virus is a relatively new disease and it is also relatively rare. Our knowledge of Hendra virus improves with more research and with each response.

Until this year there had only been 14 primary cases of Hendra virus over a 17 year period. Since June 2011, there have been ten incidents in Queensland including the first infection of a dog outside of a laboratory. Biosecurity Queensland has effectively managed all of these cases in Queensland without any spread of infection from the primary location either property to property or horse to human.

The Ombudsman's report pre-dates the success of the 2011 response. There has been an increased focus on the virus from industry, horse owners and the Australian and New South Wales Governments in recent years – particularly during the past 12 months. This increased focus has brought about additional investment from industry and horse owners in the form of improved practices and education aimed at preventing the occurrence of Hendra virus in horses. An additional \$12 million committed over three years by the Queensland, New South Wales and Australian Governments for new research into the virus.

## ***Implementation of recommendations since 2009***

Since 2009, the Government has implemented a number of significant reforms relevant to the recommendations which have been implemented by the Queensland Government since 2009, including:

- Introducing the new Biosecurity Bill into Parliament on 25 October 2011, which will provide a clearer legislative basis for responses, including application of quarantines to properties and access to compensation,
- Establishing the Queensland Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases in 2010 to better understand Hendra virus and the disease it causes,
- The allocation of \$12 million over three years by the Queensland, New South Wales and Australian governments for Hendra virus research,
- Establishing an Intergovernmental Hendra Virus Taskforce to ensure national coordination and collaboration in relation to Hendra virus,
- Enhancing capacity and capability of Biosecurity Queensland to manage the large number of biosecurity risks facing the state, including better emergency management preparation, workforce planning and business improvement, and
- Focusing on increasing awareness about Hendra virus and ways to prevent its transmission with horse owners, veterinarians and the general community with:
  - specialised information packs distributed to all veterinarians and general information packs made available to all Queensland horse owners following advertisements in major metropolitan and regional newspaper across the state,
  - seminars, local community engagement activities and door knocking around infected properties,
  - extensive use of online and social media communication tools to reach a broad audience, including an online expert forum on flying foxes, and

- legislative amendments are currently before Parliament to make it compulsory for veterinarians to provide a range of contact details, including after hours details, to enable quicker communication during a biosecurity emergency.

### ***Implementation of Perkins review recommendations***

In his 2009 report, Dr Perkins concluded that “Biosecurity Queensland officers responded rapidly and effectively to the initial notification of a suspect case of Hendra virus” and that “the response activities being undertaken by Biosecurity Queensland staff are in accordance with state and national plans and procedures are being undertaken in a professional and timely manner”.

Biosecurity Queensland engaged Dr Robin Vandergraaff, ex-Chief Veterinary Officer of South Australia, in July 2011 to review its implementation of the Perkins recommendations.

Dr Vandergraaff concluded that Biosecurity Queensland had fully implemented or was close to finalising implementation of all major recommendations and that “Biosecurity Queensland has taken a comprehensive and professional approach to addressing the Hendra virus challenge”. Dr Vandergraaff said that there were sound scientific or health based reasons for a minority of recommendations not being adopted or implemented.

### ***Biosecurity Queensland response capability***

Biosecurity Queensland’s capacity to respond to major incidents is continually being refined and developed. As outlined in the recent report by the Auditor-General, Biosecurity Queensland has applied lessons learnt from previous responses to improve the unprecedented Hendra virus responses in 2011, including:

- Establishing a trained First Response Unit of in excess of 100 members – this has enabled Biosecurity Queensland to draw on staff with the right skills throughout the prolonged response.
- Using other DEEDI staff and resources, particularly in community engagement and communications, allowed response staff to focus on their roles and enable the rapid dissemination of information into the community.

Biosecurity Queensland has also instigated a long-term workforce planning program to ensure future workforce requirements are met with the right skills in the right places.

### ***Use of Legislation***

Biosecurity Queensland used the *Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981* for all 2011 incidents. The new Biosecurity Bill was introduced into Parliament on 25 October 2011.

Once passed, it will repeal the *Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981* and the *Stock Act 1915*, and provide legislative certainty to future Hendra virus responses, including having clearer provisions for compensation and tools for establishing movement controls on infected properties.

## **Communications**

Increased effort and resources have been committed in recent years to improving communications with both industry and the community regarding Hendra virus. This focus on improved engagement and information provision has resulted in a significant increase in the level of understanding and awareness of the virus, and the risks associated with it.

### **...with veterinarians**

Every registered veterinarian in Queensland has been provided with a hard copy of the reference document '*Guidelines for veterinarians handling potential Hendra virus infection in horses*' – and all information is readily available and kept up to date on Biosecurity Queensland's website.

Workshops for veterinarians have been held across the state about ways to prevent contracting Hendra virus in collaboration with Australian Veterinary Association (AVA).

The peak professional bodies, including the AVA and the Equine Veterinary Association (EVA), are alerted by SMS of new cases. Communiqués are regularly sent throughout the course of a response to all vets who have supplied their details.

Amendments to the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936* - introduced in the *Protecting Primary Production Amendment Bill 2011* on 6 September 2011 - will require veterinarians to provide a range of contact details which will allow contact at all times, including outside normal working hours.

### **...with horse owners and the general community**

A range of modern and traditional communication tools have been used to deal with the high public demand for information about Hendra virus, particularly in the 2011 responses, including:

- Distribution of more than 71,000 information packs to horse owners and the general community following a statewide advertising campaign – all information is also available on the Biosecurity Queensland website.
- Use of social media for fast updates on Hendra virus including to more than 2600 followers on Facebook.
- Delivery of an online forum allowing the public to ask questions of an expert panel about Hendra virus – the forum was viewed by 227 people live online and more than 500 follow-up views on YouTube.
- More than 3500 people attended more than 80 information sessions held this year.
- More than 470 properties neighbouring quarantined properties were door-knocked; mobile offices and community engagement occurred in every affected local community and information was distributed to communities through 170 local businesses.

## **Compensation**

DEEDI acknowledges that incorrect advice was provided to the Minister in respect of the 2008 Redlands incident by the then Department QPIF.

Updated advice has been prepared by the Director General, DEEDI for consideration by the Minister.

The Minister has also sought independent legal advice and as a result will write to owners or parties representing the owners of the horses involved in the Redlands incident seeking submissions. The submission/s will be considered with the Director General's and relevant legal advice in order for the Minister to make a fresh decision.

### ***Destruction of sero-positive horses***

Any order to destroy animals is taken seriously by Biosecurity Queensland. In the case of sero-positive horses, there are clear national policies that suggest that all animals that test positive to Hendra virus antibodies are to be destroyed. This position was confirmed this year following the detection of antibodies in the dog.

There is serious concern that the animal may recrudescence (re-present) and pose an unacceptable risk to human health. A major research project has been commissioned from the \$12 million research program to investigate the risks of sero-positive animals – the outcomes of which will inform future decision making and national discussions through the Primary Industries Ministerial Council. In the meantime, Queensland's policy remains that animals that test positive for Hendra virus will be destroyed.

### ***Health and safety***

The health and safety of those who come into contact with suspected cases of Hendra virus is critical. Biosecurity Queensland has commissioned an external expert to implement a detailed risk assessment process and review all of the relevant workplace health and safety policies and procedures. Through this process, we will improve the level of protection available to our staff and others who are involved in responses. Revised policies and procedures will be finalised before the end of 2011.

The response agencies of Queensland Health, Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General continue to work collaboratively in reducing the health and safety risks. This has included:

- publishing procedures documenting workplace health and safety practices during responses,
- workplace health and safety inspections and audits during the 2011 Hendra virus response, and
- a series of training workshops held across the state.

### ***Virus Testing Procedures***

Biosecurity Queensland has made significant advances in testing for Hendra virus since 2006 and is continually reviewing and improving its procedures. Biosecurity Queensland can now conduct its own testing, with results possible on the same day.

To ensure confidence in Biosecurity Queensland's testing, a scientific panel was convened this year to further examine Hendra virus testing at the Queensland laboratories. The Panel is chaired by Dr Rob Rahaley, South Australian CVO.

Although the work is yet to be finalised, changes have been made so that all prospective samples for Hendra virus exclusion are now tested by a combination of polymerase chain reaction test (PCR) and serological assays whenever sample type and volume permits (as opposed to just PCR).

As part of the review by the Panel, serum samples from 85 horses that had tested negative for Hendra virus by PCR in Queensland were forwarded to AAHL for serological testing. All samples tested negative, providing a level of assurance to Queensland's testing regime.

### ***Ongoing research and understanding the disease***

Effective preparedness, prevention and response relies on a good understanding of the disease. In comparison to other animal diseases, our knowledge of Hendra virus is relatively new and, until this year, there had only been a small number of sporadic events to draw knowledge from.

Significant developments have occurred in recent years as a result of research being undertaken by AAHL and Biosecurity Queensland. This has translated in advice to horse owners about ways to minimise the risk of the virus being transmitted from flying foxes to horses and advice to veterinarians about its diagnosis and health and safety protocols.

The knowledge about Hendra virus is expected to be advanced rapidly as a result of a \$12 million research program recently announced by the Queensland, NSW and Australian Governments.

Five projects have been commissioned to accelerate research to increase our understanding of Hendra virus and how the disease is transmitted, and to initiate research into priority areas:

- the transmission dynamics of Hendra virus,
- Hendra virus in dogs,
- the impact of flying fox dispersal and Hendra virus risk,
- the risks from sero-positive animals, and
- additional work on the horse vaccine.

A \$2 million open funding program has also been announced to attract a wider range of research expertise and collaboration with a major Hendra Virus Science Congress to be held in Brisbane on 8 and 9 December 2011.

### ***Conclusion***

The Queensland Ombudsman's Report into the Hendra virus incidents between 2006 and 2009 provides us with a useful historical record that will further assist us to learn these lessons, adapt our systems and improve our decisions and response capacity when we are confronted with the uncertain, abnormal, complex and sometimes unexpected risks of biosecurity incidents.

The response to the unprecedented 10 Hendra virus incidents in 2011 demonstrates the significant progress made by the Government in recent years in managing Hendra virus.

The progress outlined in the response to the Ombudsman's report is further tangible evidence of the Government's commitment to improving biosecurity incident responsiveness. Implementation of the remaining recommendations will be overseen by a Steering Committee over the remainder of 2011 and 2012.

## 2. Queensland Government's response to the Ombudsman's findings

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
1	QPIF continue to provide advice and information to private veterinarians about Hendra virus, including in what situations testing is appropriate.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Ensuring private veterinarians have relevant and up-to-date information about Hendra virus is a priority for the Government and every effort will continue to be made to ensure this information is readily available.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland has practices in place to ensure this occurs.</p> <p>An information pack on Hendra virus, including <i>Guidelines for veterinarians handling potential Hendra virus infection in horses</i> (the Veterinary Guidelines) was sent to all registered veterinarians in June 2010.</p> <p>Version 4.1 (reviewed March 2011) is available on the Biosecurity Queensland website.</p> <p>The Veterinary Guidelines are reviewed twice a year (March and November).</p> <p>The November 2011 review of the Veterinary Guidelines is currently underway and will include looking at the 2011 incidents (including the positive antibodies in a dog), new research findings and any additional clarification of information as a result of the Ombudsman recommendations.</p> <p>Veterinarians are contacted by email when revised Veterinary Guidelines are available.</p> <p>As per recommendation 13, Veterinary Guidelines will be amended within three months of when significant new information comes to hand.</p>
2	QPIF inform private veterinarians that final decisions about whether to take samples and submit them for Hendra virus testing are to be made by the private veterinarian with reference to the Guidelines for Veterinarians.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Private veterinarians are responsible for any decision in relation to treating sick animals and it is Biosecurity Queensland's policy that veterinarians must make any final decisions as to the samples that are taken. Biosecurity Queensland can only provide advice.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY END 2011</p> <p>The adequacy of information available to private veterinarians will be included in the November 2011 review of the Veterinary Guidelines (refer to Recommendation 1).</p> <p>Internal policies and guidelines will be reviewed to ensure sufficient guidance is provided to Biosecurity Queensland staff and the call centre when talking to private veterinarians.</p>
3	QPIF refer to an independent expert peer-review panel the question of conducting research on a representative cross-section of the Queensland horse population to identify whether it contains horses that are sero-positive for Hendra virus.	<p>AGREE IN PART</p> <p>The Queensland Government sees limited benefit in testing a cross-section of the horse population to determine if there are any sero-positive horses given the current testing requirements.</p> <p>Since 2008, more than 650 healthy horses have been tested for Hendra virus as part of checks for pre-surgery, breeding, sale and export. To date, no horses have tested positive for Hendra virus.</p> <p>Since January 2011, the Biosecurity Queensland laboratory has received 757 cases for disease investigation and regulatory testing and processed 1626 Hendra virus tests with only the known cases identified. A survey of 2000 horses from 160 properties was undertaken in 1995, with no Hendra virus detected.</p> <p>Nevertheless, Biosecurity Queensland will seek advice on the merits of such research from the independent scientific expert panel established to inform the Intergovernmental Hendra Virus Taskforce.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY END 2011</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland will refer the question to the Hendra Virus Scientific Panel by 31 December 2011.</p>

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
4	QPIF consider how it will approach the issue of horses that are sero-positive for Hendra virus being identified outside of a Hendra virus incident and develop appropriate policies and procedures in this regard.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Queensland Government supports the implementation of the national policy to destroy all animals sero-positive for Hendra virus. If an animal is identified sero-positive outside of an incident, the outcome would be no different if the animal was found to be sero-positive during an incident or identified through other means.</p> <p>Since January 2011, the Biosecurity Queensland laboratory has received 757 cases for disease investigation and regulatory testing. The laboratory has processed 1626 Hendra virus tests with only the known cases identified. A survey of 2000 horses from 160 properties was undertaken in 1995, with no Hendra virus detected (see Recommendation 33 for further discussion).</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland's approach to managing sero-positive animals will remain consistent with the national policy.</p> <p>Should scientific advice from the Australian Animal Health Laboratory provide compelling evidence to support a change in policy, Biosecurity Queensland will present these findings to the Primary Industries Ministerial Council for consideration.</p>
5	QPIF should not charge health testing fees for Hendra virus tests if the test result is positive.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland does not, and has no intention to charge health testing fees if test results for Hendra virus are positive.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>While this will remain Biosecurity Queensland's policy, relevant documents will be reviewed by 31 December 2011 to ensure the policy is adequately documented and communicated.</p>
6	QPIF amend its Guidelines for Veterinarians to provide more information about Hendra virus testing procedures, including the criteria used to determine if testing is urgent.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Private veterinarians are required to notify Biosecurity Queensland if they suspect a Hendra virus case. A range of considerations are taken into account in making the decision about the urgency of a case and, as Hendra virus cases do not tend to present in a uniform manner, the expertise and judgement of the duty pathologist is important. Nevertheless, the Veterinary Guidelines will be reviewed to ensure there is sufficient guidance about testing procedures.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>To be included in the November 2011 review of the Veterinary Guidelines (see Recommendation 1).</p>
7	<p>QPIF should consider</p> <p>(a) the adequacy of its sample submission forms for Hendra virus samples</p> <p>(b) the adequacy of its recording and reporting systems for Hendra virus samples</p> <p>(c) whether further information should be provided to private veterinarians or horse owners about submitting Hendra virus samples</p> <p>(d) the adequacy of making a determination about whether a horse has Hendra virus through analysis of a single sample such as a nasal swab</p> <p>(e) the effect of non-preferred samples on testing accuracy</p> <p>(f) whether it is appropriate for QPIF scientists to deliberate on how to report the results of tests conducted at other laboratories</p> <p>(g) whether there is adequate certainty in the advice given by QPIF, QHFSS and WHSQ about whether Hendra virus samples being transported to the laboratory constitute 'dangerous goods'.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Veterinary Guidelines contains a range of information about submitting Hendra virus samples, including the types of samples that should be taken.</p> <p>Specimen Advice Sheets are currently under review to ensure clearer communication to the submitting party about the information required by the laboratory and to enhance the information captured at the time of samples being submitted.</p> <p>An enhanced laboratory reporting system was introduced in 2010. Any further improvements will be made as part of the other overall information management strategy for Biosecurity Queensland.</p> <p>All results obtained from other laboratories are provided to submitting veterinarians/ horse owners. However, Biosecurity Queensland scientists provide a valuable service through interpreting results obtained from other laboratories and can significantly add to the understanding of a particular incident or suspect case.</p> <p>The issue of whether Hendra virus samples are dangerous goods is a complex issue and Biosecurity Queensland will consult with the Australian Veterinary Association, Workplace Health and Safety and transport regulators. Advice provided to veterinarians and horse owners will then be reviewed by the various government agencies.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>(b) Biosecurity Queensland Veterinary Laboratories have veterinary laboratory quality management systems that are NATA accredited. This ensures that sample integrity, records and reporting meet internationally recognised standards.</p> <p>(c) Information about submitting Hendra virus samples is contained in the Veterinary Guidelines</p> <p>(d) Advice about samples is contained in the Veterinary Guidelines</p> <p>(f) Biosecurity Queensland has determined that it is appropriate for its scientists to deliberate on results conducted at other laboratories.</p> <p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>(a) The Specimen Advice Sheet is currently under review</p> <p>(e) The effect of non-preferred samples on the accuracy of testing is to be included in the November 2011 review of the Veterinary Guidelines (see Recommendation 1).</p> <p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>(h) Discussions to occur with relevant bodies on the issue of whether Hendra virus samples constitute 'dangerous goods' by end March 2012.</p>

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
8	QPIF review its Quarantine Policy and consider whether the use of the Stock Act provides adequate powers to control Hendra virus.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland has reviewed legislative provisions and determined that the <i>Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981</i> is the appropriate Act to provide powers to control Hendra virus. The Biosecurity Bill (introduced to Parliament in October 2011) will provide legislative certainty in the future for Hendra virus responses.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>The policy document 'Hendra virus – Actions to be taken on declared premises V3' and the Standard Operating Procedure Issuing Quarantine Notices under the <i>Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981</i> (V1) provide clear guidelines for inspectors when exercising legislative powers in relation to the control of Hendra virus.</p>
9	<p>As part of the current review of the Quarantine Policy, QPIF should ensure the policy:</p> <p>(a) accurately describes the range of powers that QPIF has to implement quarantines under both the Stock Act and the EDIA Act;</p> <p>(b) clearly states if there is a preference for the use of one Act over the other;</p> <p>(c) explains both the reasons for this preference for the use of one Act, and the reasons why the other Act will not or should not be used.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Quarantine Policy has been reviewed and the decision taken to use the <i>Exotic Diseases in Animals (EDIA) Act 1981</i> for quarantining properties for Hendra virus. The EDIA Act was used in all 2011 Hendra virus incidents. The Biosecurity Bill (introduced to Parliament in October 2011) will provide legislative certainty in the future when applying quarantine restrictions on properties.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>The policy document Hendra virus – 'Actions to be taken on declared premises V3' and the 'Standard Operating Procedure Issuing Quarantine Notices' under the <i>Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981</i> (V1) provide direction that the Act must be used when quarantining properties for Hendra virus.</p> <p>The policy will be amended to provide adequate explanation as to why the <i>Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981</i> is to be used instead of the <i>Stock Act 1915</i>.</p>
10	QPIF ensure all relevant officers are aware of its policy decision to use quarantines rather than undertakings in any future response to Hendra virus incidents.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Undertakings are no longer used during Hendra virus responses. Targeted communication with relevant staff will occur to ensure staff are fully aware of this position.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>The Chief Inspector of Stock will reaffirm the Queensland Government's position on the policy with relevant staff by 31 December 2011 through appropriate channels.</p>
11	<p>QPIF cease the practice of purporting to orally impose a quarantine without serving a written notice on the owner of the property under s.14 of the Stock Act, and instead develop a process whereby it:</p> <p>(a) issues a quarantine notice at the time of the initial visit on the basis of the information known at the time;</p> <p>(b) if necessary, revokes the notice and issues a more detailed notice as soon as further information becomes available.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The process for quarantining a property is contained in the policy 'Hendra virus - Actions to be taken on declared premises V3'. This process is consistent with the Ombudsman's recommendation and does not include the use of verbal quarantines.</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland will continue the practice of advising property owners of the likely contents of a quarantine notice in advance of the quarantine notice officially being served.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Policy for how to quarantine a property for Hendra virus is contained in 'Hendra virus - Actions to be taken on declared premises V3' and is supported by the Standard Operating Procedure Issuing Quarantine Notices under the <i>Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981</i> (V1).</p>
12	<p>The Director-General of DEEDI allocate the necessary resources to ensure that, within six months of the date of this report:</p> <p>(a) all policies and procedures relevant to Hendra virus incident responses are prepared and finalised, or reviewed where necessary</p> <p>(b) these policies and procedures are made available to QPIF officers and officers are provided with adequate training to implement these policies and procedures.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Policies and procedures are continuously under review to account for latest information and experiences. Due to the unprecedented scale of Hendra virus incidents in 2011, a major review process is currently underway with NSW Department of Primary Industries, Animal Health Australia and the Australian Animal Health Laboratory.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Resources have been allocated.</p>

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
13	QPIF ensure that any necessary changes to the Guidelines for Veterinarians are made within not more than three months of when QPIF becomes aware of relevant new information.	<p>AGREE IN PRINCIPLE</p> <p>The Veterinary Guidelines are reviewed twice a year to take into account new information.</p> <p>Careful consideration of the information gathered throughout the year is needed to ensure it is provided to veterinarians in the right context to avoid the risk of providing misinformation.</p> <p>For example, an epidemiological analysis is underway in relation to the 2011 incidents which will form the basis of future advice to veterinarians about the significant information gathered during the multiple incidents. This analysis is not expected until at least April 2012.</p> <p>Nevertheless, where it is determined that significant information should be updated prior to a scheduled review, this will occur within the timeframe recommended.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Processes are in place to regularly review the Veterinary Guidelines in relation to significant new information.</p>
14	Withdrawn		
15	QPIF continue to develop policies, procedures and publicly available fact sheets containing advice on the protective equipment required for responding to zoonotic diseases such as Hendra virus, and direction on how to fit and remove this equipment.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Government has been proactive in taking steps to educate the veterinary profession about the risks posed from exposure to zoonotic diseases and has maintained an ongoing awareness campaign for all people who may handle horses about general precautions that could be taken.</p> <p>The Veterinary Guidelines set out the recommendations for the need and type of personal protective equipment (PPE) required when attending to suspected or confirmed Hendra virus incidents.</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland will develop fact sheets and general information for horse owners on the use of PPE. This work will be informed by the contents of the Veterinary Guidelines, the review of workplace health and safety policies and procedures currently underway and the fact sheets prepared by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing on the fitting and removal of PPE.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>The review of Biosecurity Queensland's workplace, health and safety policies will be completed by 31 December 2011.</p> <p>Any updates to the generic information available to horse owners and private veterinarians will be considered during the normal review of document processes.</p>
16	QPIF review the adequacy of the current Guidelines for Veterinarians, Quarantine Policy and related policies insofar as they concern the classification of horses potentially exposed to Hendra virus and the consequential PPE response to ensure the required level of PPE is clear in the case of a horse testing positive to Hendra virus without any clinical signs.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>General information about PPE requirements are contained in the Veterinary Guidelines.</p> <p>The policy 'Hendra virus - Actions to be taken on declared premises V3' provides advice on the classification of animals on declared premises. The policy also includes guidance on the use of PPE when managing animals.</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland is currently reviewing its policies to ensure appropriate PPE advice is available to staff highlighting the level of potential risk posed by a particular animal or situation.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>The review of Biosecurity Queensland's workplace health and safety policies will be completed by 31 December 2011.</p> <p>Any updates to the generic information available to horse owners and private veterinarians will be considered during the normal review of document processes.</p>
17	<p>QPIF take ongoing and regular steps to:</p> <p>(a) ensure that all officers wear the appropriate PPE when responding to a Hendra virus incident</p> <p>(b) reinforce with officers the importance of wearing appropriate PPE, and provide training for officers if necessary</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Queensland Government places a high priority on the health and safety of its employees, particularly for those staff dealing with potentially dangerous situations.</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland is currently reviewing its policies to ensure information and advice on the use of PPE is provided to staff. Current training programs will be subsequently reviewed to ensure necessary training is provided. This will include the</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>The review of Biosecurity Queensland's workplace health and safety policies will be completed by 31 December 2011.</p> <p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland will review its training strategy in 2012 to ensure</p>

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	(c) have appropriate systems in place to monitor compliance with PPE requirements.	arrangements for monitoring and compliance.	appropriate workplace health and safety training is provided to staff.
18	<p>QPIF continue to:</p> <p>(a) prepare clear and detailed guidelines for members of the public on the PPE requirements when dealing with horses which are, or are suspected of being, infected with Hendra virus</p> <p>(b) publish these guidelines on its website</p> <p>(c) provide training to QPIF officers in the content of these guidelines</p> <p>(d) explain the guidelines, both orally and in writing, to property and horse owners during Hendra virus incidents.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>See discussion for Recommendation 15.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland has made a number of publications available to the public via information sheets contained on its website, contact with industry associations such as the Australian Horse Council and the Australian Veterinary Association as well as direct communication with over 100 veterinarians across Queensland.</p>
19	QPIF review and amend the Quarantine Policy to provide adequate guidance to QPIF officers about the collection of temperature data.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland staff are no longer required to routinely collect temperature data as part of observation / monitoring activities.</p>	COMPLETED
20	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) seek advice from Crown Law, and WHSQ if necessary, to clarify QPIF's workplace health and safety obligations in respect of:</p> <p>(i) property and horse owners and others who assist QPIF during Hendra virus incidents</p> <p>(ii) property and horse owners to whom QPIF has issued PPE and who QPIF requires to follow certain procedures during Hendra virus incidents</p> <p>(b) consider whether its policies and procedures adequately describe and meet such obligations</p> <p>(c) amend its policies, procedures and practices, where necessary, to reflect the advice received.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Crown Law advice has been obtained.</p> <p>An external review of Biosecurity Queensland's workplace health and safety policies and procedures has commenced.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>The review of Biosecurity Queensland's workplace health and safety policies will be completed by end 2011.</p>
21	<p>QPIF and QH:</p> <p>(a) develop an agreed approach to the testing of QPIF officers involved in incident responses</p> <p>(b) make appropriate changes to their respective policies and procedures</p> <p>(c) provide information and training on this approach to officers of the agencies that are involved in incident responses.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Queensland Health and Biosecurity Queensland have determined that routine testing of officers involved in incident responses is not required. This position is included in the policy 'Hendra virus - Actions to be taken on declared premises V3'.</p> <p>Testing may be required on a case by case basis, for example where a significant breach of infection control occurs or there is a significant level of concern about potential exposure.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Decision made to not require routine testing.</p> <p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>This advice will be provided to staff as part of the induction process.</p>
22	<p>QPIF provide clear guidance to officers about:</p> <p>(a) the steps to be taken to ensure that infected or suspected horses on the IP and DCPs do not have contact with people or other horses</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Guidance for officers on management of animals and the use of signage are contained in 'Hendra virus - Actions to be taken on declared premises V3' and the Standard Operating Procedure Issuing Quarantine Notices under the <i>Exotic Diseases in Animals</i></p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>The policy 'Hendra virus - Actions to be taken on declared premises V3' and the Standard Operating Procedure Issuing Quarantine Notices under the <i>Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981 (V1)</i> provide guidance to officers on management of</p>

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	(b) the circumstances in which quarantine signs should be placed on properties	<p><i>Act 1981 (V1).</i></p> <p>Appropriate quarantine signage was erected at each property quarantined in 2011.</p> <p>A 'property management plan' template is currently being developed which will further assist officers in managing the risks on each property given risk must be assessed on a case by case basis.</p>	<p>animals and the use of signage</p> <p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>A 'property management plan' template will be ready for implementation in mid 2012.</p>
23	<p>When conducting tracing, QPIF:</p> <p>(a) commence, and adequately resource, tracing activity as soon as practicable</p> <p>(b) use a standard questionnaire to obtain written and oral information from property owners and horse owners</p> <p>(c) develop systems to accurately record data</p> <p>(d) maintain contact with horse owners in case new information comes to hand.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Tracing is always given a high priority in any biosecurity response, particularly those tracings to and from infected properties. This process commences with the first contact following a positive diagnosis. Dedicated officers are appointed to undertake this task.</p> <p>The ability to quickly and accurately conduct tracing activities is largely dependent on the information provided by clients and the accuracy of their record keeping.</p> <p>A basic questionnaire (or template for information) was developed after the 2009 incidents, and is currently under review by an interagency working group.</p> <p>BioSIRT, a new national (computer based) system for managing surveillance, incident, response and tracing data, was used for the 2011 incidents. Ongoing use of BioSIRT for this function will be included in the development of an information management strategy for Biosecurity Queensland (see recommendation 51).</p> <p>Liaison officers for horse and property owners are a standard part of a Hendra virus response.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>BioSIRT is used to record tracing data.</p> <p>A template for tracing information was developed in 2009.</p> <p>Tracing and liaison functions are an essential part of any Hendra virus response.</p>
24	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) adopt a method for the accurate and efficient identification of horses, for example by affixing unique QPIF identifiers to all horses being tested during Hendra virus incidents</p> <p>(b) provide training to officers responsible for collecting blood samples to ensure that sufficient detail are recorded about the identity of the horses at the time of testing.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Being able to accurately identify horses is critical to ensure Hendra virus is managed as fast and effectively as possible. Since the incident at Cawarral in 2009, Biosecurity Queensland now uses collars to identify individual horses when there are a large number of horses on property. Collars were used in 2011 response.</p> <p>Queensland has been the leading state in pursuing mandatory micro-chipping of horses nationwide through the Primary Industries Ministerial Council. To date, the Council has been unable to reach a resolution on this matter, however, Queensland will continue to pursue this national reform with other states and the Australian Government.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>Relevant documents will be reviewed by the end of 2011 to ensure the policy is adequately documented and communicated, including the provision for training.</p>
25	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) consider whether it should amend its policies and procedures to require its officers to assess the adequacy of a proposed burial site before any horse that is highly suspected or known to have Hendra virus is buried on a property</p> <p>(b) in any event, amend its policies and procedures to detail the roles and responsibilities of QPIF, DERM and horse owners in relation to the disposal of horse carcasses during Hendra virus incidents.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Carcass disposal is an important consideration in any Hendra response, and must balance the risk of disease, human safety and environmental concerns with the wishes of the animal's owner. Disposal can be particularly challenging in peri-urban or urban settings.</p> <p>The Queensland Government acknowledges that best practice must be adopted and will give it priority under the review of priorities (see Recommendation 12).</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>Issues relating to carcass disposal to be included as part of the review of policies (see Recommendation 12).</p> <p>Policies and procedures will be updated, amended or developed by mid 2012.</p>

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26	<p>QPIF conduct a review of current levels of officer training and personnel selection procedures during Hendra virus incidents and develop additional processes where necessary to ensure that:</p> <p>(a) sufficient officers have the necessary training, experience and skills, including regular refresher courses, to enable QPIF to respond effectively to incidents</p> <p>(b) officers are selected for response tasks based on training, experience and skill</p> <p>(c) information regarding the training, experience and skills of QPIF officers is adequately recorded and used by QPIF.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland has directed significant resources to training of staff working in emergency responses.</p> <p>Five in-house training packages have been developed and nearly 400 frontline staff have been trained to work in emergency responses since 2008, with more than 230 staff trained in 2010-11.</p> <p>There are now more than 100 staff members in the First Response Unit, which is a specialist group of people trained to be the frontline response team.</p> <p>The Auditor-General in his report to Parliament No. 8 of 2011 highlighted the 2011 Hendra virus response as a case study of the advances made by Biosecurity Queensland in preparing for and managing its workforce during an incident response.</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland will be conducting a training needs analysis and revising its training strategy for staff involved in incident responses in first half of 2012.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>Incident Response Training Strategy (including training needs analysis and selection procedures) to be finalised by mid 2012.</p>
27	<p>QPIF review its business continuity plan to ensure that biosecurity incident responses such as Hendra virus responses:</p> <p>(a) do not adversely affect the day-to-day conduct of QPIF's business, other than in exceptional circumstances</p> <p>(b) are not adversely affected by a requirement for officers to also maintain day-to-day business operations.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Responding to biosecurity incidents, including Hendra virus, form an important role of day-to-day business for Biosecurity Queensland.</p> <p>The ability to mount significant responses while managing other operations has been further enhanced by the development of a risk-based decision making framework and a number of workforce development activities that have been implemented.</p> <p>Ongoing work in this area, including a Workforce Refresh Project, has commenced recently will improve the ability to move resources to meet changing priorities through a sound business planning framework and with a high-performing, agile, engaged and resilient workforce.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Looking ahead, a Workforce Refresh Project has been commissioned with a report due to Biosecurity Queensland by the end of 2011. This will provide the next major plank in the workforce planning and development activity that is currently underway.</p> <p>The risk-based decision making framework has been developed and implementation is well advanced.</p>
28	<p>When engaging non-industry personnel to assist QPIF during a quarantine, QPIF enter into a written agreement with any person engaged which, at a minimum, specifies the nature and scope of the person's duties and responsibilities, and the terms and conditions on which they are engaged.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Queensland Government accepts the need to enter into formal agreements with external stakeholders working on a biosecurity response. However, Biosecurity Queensland notes that some circumstances surrounding such agreements are beyond its control (particularly in a high pressure response) and commits to employing best endeavours to ensure relevant agreements are in place.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p>
29	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) seek advice from Crown Law, and WHSQ if necessary, about the health and safety implications of its level of control over the conduct of private veterinarians, property owners and property workers during Hendra virus incidents, under both the Stock Act and EDIA Act</p> <p>(b) carefully consider the adequacy of its current policies, procedures and practices in this regard.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>See discussion for Recommendation 20.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p>
30	<p>In considering whether to investigate the possibility of any statutory offence, QPIF officers make and retain a record of their decision not to investigate, including their reasons for the decision and material on which</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Queensland Government accepts the need to fully record matters in relation to investigation of possible offences and will ensure relevant policies and training are in place to assist officers in fulfilling their duties.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>As per Recommendations 12 and 26, the review of policies and revision of a training strategy will be completed by mid 2012.</p>

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	they relied.		
31	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) implement the recently developed Horse Biosecurity Communication Plan so that critical information regarding Hendra virus is distributed to private veterinarians and other relevant people in a timely and comprehensive way</p> <p>(b) regularly (at least every six months) review the content of the Hendra virus materials for accuracy and completeness</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Horse Biosecurity Communication Plan has been implemented.</p> <p>The Queensland Government has demonstrated a clear action to increase awareness about Hendra virus and ways to prevent its transmission. The plan employs a range of mechanisms to communicate with horse owners, veterinarians and the general community.</p> <p>The Queensland Government has pioneered the use of social media during the 2011 Hendra virus response, with extensive use of Facebook, Twitter and an online discussion forum on flying foxes. The Biosecurity Queensland website is the leading source of information about Hendra virus.</p> <p>Specialised information kits have been sent out to all registered veterinarians and to over 25,000 horse owners and members of the public.</p> <p>In 2011 alone, over 3500 people attended more than 80 information sessions across Queensland and over 470 properties were doorknocked during the response.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Communication activities about Hendra virus are ongoing and part of normal business.</p> <p>Processes are in place to review materials at least twice a year.</p>
32	<p>QPIF implement a risk-based assessment framework during Hendra virus incidents to enable it to:</p> <p>(a) prioritise biosecurity threats</p> <p>(b) better inform decision-making</p> <p>(c) allocate a commensurate level of resources</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Queensland Government takes a risk based approach to allocating its resources during major responses.</p> <p>A risk based decision making framework for biosecurity programs has been developed and is currently being implemented.</p> <p>The Auditor-General in his report to Parliament No. 8 for 2011 commented that he was 'satisfied that Biosecurity Queensland has progressed the development of risk management systems sufficiently to demonstrate commitment to complete the implementation'.</p> <p>See comments on Recommendation 27.</p> <p>The management of the 2011 Beachmere incident is an example of a risk based approach informing appropriate resource allocation.</p> <p>The incident was effectively managed as part of normal business with all necessary response functions delivered by a small number of officers working from their normal workplace.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>The Animal Biosecurity and Welfare risk management framework (Hendra virus) has been developed and implemented. Processes are in place to ensure risk management frameworks are continuously improved.</p>
33	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) review its policy on destroying sero-positive horses</p> <p>(b) if necessary, ensure that this review forms part of any reconsideration of the national policy</p> <p>(c) consider participating in any research designed to establish whether sero-positive horses can</p>	<p>AGREE IN PRINCIPLE</p> <p>The national policy is to destroy all animals that are sero-positive for Hendra virus. The policy was confirmed in July 2011 with the discovery of positive antibodies in a dog. Biosecurity Queensland endorses and adheres to the national policy.</p> <p>The Intergovernmental Hendra Virus Taskforce has commissioned a research project (led by NSW Department of Primary Industries partnered by Queensland Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases and the Australian Animal Health Laboratory) worth</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>The policy for destruction of sero-positive animals is in place.</p> <p>The research will take three years and its outcomes may inform future policy directions, which will be considered through existing national processes at the appropriate time.</p> <p>Refer also to recommendation 36.</p>

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	recrudesce, and if such recrudescence results in a risk of infection to other animals or people.	\$870,000 over three years into issues associated with the detection of antibodies in animals exposed to Hendra virus. The outcomes of this research will inform any future policy position.	
34	In drafting the proposed Biosecurity Bill, QPIF take into account the comments in my report when considering the adequacy of the proposed powers and processes to respond to Hendra virus incidents	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Biosecurity Bill was introduced into Parliament in October 2011. The recommendations included in the draft report were taken into consideration in finalising the Bill.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>The Biosecurity Bill is currently being considered by the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee of Parliament.</p>
35	<p>QPIF review and amend its Destruction Policy to comply with procedural fairness requirements when considering the destruction of sero-positive horses, including:</p> <p>(a) providing all relevant documents and information to the horse owner at the time the notice is provided</p> <p>(b) advising horse owners that the national and QPIF policy is to destroy all sero-positive horses</p> <p>(c) ensuring that the time period for making submissions does not commence until the notice is received by and brought to the attention of the horse owners</p> <p>(d) unless there is a verifiable biosecurity risk that justifies a departure from the principles of procedural fairness stated above, providing adequate time (which will be a period of at least seven days) for the horse owners to make submissions to QPIF and seek any necessary legal or veterinary advice.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Queensland Government is committed to observing procedural fairness in relation to destruction orders for sero-positive animals. The relevant policies have been reviewed and amended.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Matters relating to procedural fairness are included in the 'Destruction of suspect Hendra virus response animals under <i>Exotic Diseases in Animals Act 1981 (V2)</i>.</p>
36	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) seek independent clinical advice as to whether a sero-positive horse can be considered to be 'free from disease'</p> <p>(b) obtain further external legal advice, based on the independent clinical advice, as to:</p> <p>(i) the correct interpretation of the availability of compensation under the Stock Act in previous incidents where QPIF has destroyed a sero-positive horse</p> <p>(ii) how and when QPIF should determine the market value of a sero-positive horse</p> <p>(iii) the level of proof and amount of scientific evidence required by QPIF to show that a sero-positive horse was not 'free from disease' at the time of its destruction</p> <p>(iv) the procedure by which QPIF should receive and assess claims for compensation in the</p>	<p>AGREE IN PART</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland's veterinary and epidemiology experts have provided advice that an infected animal is considered to be diseased, irrespective of whether it is showing clinical signs and that surviving sero-positive horses may have an asymptomatic latent infection that may recrudesce to disease at a later point in time.</p> <p>Nevertheless, in light of the recommendations, Biosecurity Queensland will seek independent clinical advice from the Australian Animal Health Laboratory on the matter for consideration.</p> <p>Any comments of (b) and (c) are reserved until after the clinical advice has been received.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>Advice on whether a sero-positive animal can be considered free from disease will be sought from the Australian Animal Health Laboratory by early 2012 (see Recommendation 37).</p> <p>Should scientific advice received from the Australian Animal Health Laboratory provide compelling evidence in support of a policy change, the Queensland Government will present these findings to the Primary Industries Ministerial Council for consideration.</p> <p>Refer also to recommendation 33.</p>

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
	<p>absence of statutory guidelines</p> <p>(c) in light of the legal and clinical advice received, review and make appropriate amendments to its policies and procedures regarding the payment of compensation in Hendra virus incidents.</p>		
37	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) write to the owners of Winnie to inform them that:</p> <p>(i) compensation may be payable for the destruction of a sero-positive horse if the horse was free from disease at the time it was destroyed</p> <p>(ii) they are able to submit a claim to QPIF for compensation which will be properly assessed</p> <p>(b) respond to any claim received accordingly.</p>	<p>AGREE IN PART</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland will write to the owners of Winnie advising of the report, the advice it has sought and further actions taken.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland's approach to managing sero-positive animals will remain consistent with the national policy.</p>
38	<p>QPIF develop clear legal authority and clinical criteria in the proposed Biosecurity Bill to ensure that sufficient guidance is provided to the public and to QPIF officers on the circumstances in which compensation is payable to individuals whose stock is seized and destroyed by QPIF for purposes such as disease control.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Compensation provisions are clearly outlined in the Biosecurity Bill.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Biosecurity Bill currently being considered by the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee of Parliament.</p>
39	<p>QPIF ensure that, if the proposed Biosecurity Act eventually uses the term 'outbreak' or a similar term as the basis for determining whether compensation is payable:</p> <p>(a) the Act includes a definition of the term, or</p> <p>(b) QPIF develop a policy and publish guidelines or a list of relevant factors which will be considered by QPIF to assist in determining whether an outbreak has occurred or when an outbreak started or finished.</p>	<p>AGREE IN PRINCIPLE</p> <p>The Biosecurity Bill does not include the term 'outbreak'. Instead, conditions for compensation are clearly defined under the new Bill.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Biosecurity Bill currently being considered by the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee of Parliament.</p>
40	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) advise the Minister that QPIF's previous advice and recommendation relating to the interpretation of 'outbreak' in s.28 of the EDIA Act during the 2008 Redlands incident were based on a mistake of law and were wrong</p> <p>(b) seek legal advice as to the further legal issues raised in my report, including whether a retrospective notification can be made and the effect of a retrospective notification of the operation of s.30 of the EDIA Act</p> <p>(c) provide fresh advice and a fresh recommendation to the Minister about the application of s.28 and s.29 of the EDIA Act in relation to the 2008 Redlands incident and other relevant incidents of</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>DEEDI acknowledges that incorrect advice was provided to the Minister in respect of the 2008 Redlands incident by the then Department QPIF.</p> <p>Updated advice has been prepared by the Director General, DEEDI for consideration by the Minister.</p> <p>The Minister has also sought independent legal advice and as a result will write to owners or parties representing the owners of the horses involved in the Redlands incident seeking submissions. The submission/s will be considered with the Director General's and relevant legal advice in order for the Minister to make a fresh decision.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>This will depend in part on receiving the submission from or on behalf of the owners in a timely manner.</p>

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
	Hendra virus and exotic diseases.		
41	<p>The Under Treasurer:</p> <p>(a) consider the feasibility of the Queensland government developing a discretionary payment framework that provides for a range of payments to be made in different circumstances</p> <p>(b) prepare a submission to government in this regard.</p>	<p>AGREE IN PART</p> <p>The range of services provided by departments in the Queensland Government is very broad. As such, the range of circumstances under which a discretionary, or special payment could be made are many and varied.</p> <p>In 2009, the <i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i> came into effect. The Government determined that the new public sector financial management legislation should be principles-based, in recognition of the various functions of government. Principles-based legislation specifies that departments are provided with a degree of flexibility to determine the most appropriate processes that are needed by the agency, but retaining an appropriate level of accountability.</p> <p>The <i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i> clearly states in section 72 that the accountable officer of a department may authorise special payments. The Act further allows the accountable officer to delegate this authority to an employee of the State.</p> <p>The Act is supported by a number of policy and guidance documents, one of which is the <i>Financial Accountability Handbook</i>.</p> <p>Pursuant to the <i>Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009</i>, departmental officers must have regard to the <i>Financial Accountability Handbook</i> when developing and implementing the department's internal controls. Furthermore, a department must document all its internal controls in its <i>Financial Management Practice Manual</i>.</p> <p>With respect to special payments, the <i>Financial Accountability Handbook</i> currently reiterates the legislative requirement for agencies to maintain a record of all special payments over \$5,000.</p> <p>It is proposed that the <i>Handbook</i> be expanded to provide a broad, though not exhaustive, outline of when a special payment may be appropriate. It is to also clarify the responsibility of each agency to develop a policy for when a special payment may be appropriate given the department's 'business' and to document this policy in the department's <i>Financial Management Practice Manual</i>.</p> <p>This is considered to appropriately address the concerns raised by the Ombudsman, while maintaining flexibility for accountable officers to tailor systems to their individual needs.</p>	COMPLETED
42	<p>Until such time as a discretionary payments framework is in force in Queensland, the Under Treasurer should issue guidance to all Queensland government agencies on:</p> <p>(a) the situations in which discretionary payments may be appropriate, such as the principles relevant to determining whether a discretionary payment is appropriate</p> <p>(b) how requests for discretionary payments should be received and processed</p>	<p>AGREE IN PART</p> <p>As indicated in recommendation 41, given the diversity of services provided by the Queensland Government and the levels of special payments that could potentially arise, it is considered appropriate to assign these responsibilities to accountable officers.</p>	COMPLETED

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	<p>(c) the appropriate amount of discretionary payments and how such amounts can be calculated</p> <p>(d) how to determine whether conditions should be attached to discretionary payments and examples of appropriate conditions</p> <p>(e) common standards of service or administration against which claims of maladministration can be measured by an agency.</p>		
43	Withdrawn		
44	<p>Within two months from the date of my report, QPIF:</p> <p>(a) evaluate any recommendations made by Dr Perkins in the 2008 Perkins Report which have not yet been fully implemented</p> <p>(b) reach a decision, duly recorded, as to whether to implement these recommendations. Where this decision differs from the decision noted in the Cabinet report of June 2009, the reasons for this different approach should be clearly recorded</p> <p>(c) take steps to ensure that all recommendations that are accepted have been fully implemented.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland engaged Dr Robin Vandergraaff, previous Chief Veterinary Officer of South Australia in July 2011 to review its implementation of the Perkins recommendations. Dr Vandergraaff concluded that "Biosecurity Queensland has taken a comprehensive and professional approach to addressing the Hendra virus challenge".</p> <p>The audit found that Biosecurity Queensland has addressed all the recommendations, and most recommendations have been fully or substantially implemented. A small number was found to have not been implemented, but Dr Vandergraaff advised that none of these remained relevant.</p> <p>The audit found that implementation of some recommendations has progressed more slowly, mostly because of the time involved in making significant administrative and legislative changes or because of resource constraints.</p> <p>These recommendations include the training of Industry Liaison Officers (which is under discussion at the national level), access to contact details for veterinarians (see Recommendation 66), testing in North Queensland (which is subject to completion of new laboratory at James Cook University), and training and staffing levels (both subject to resource constraints).</p> <p>Continued implementation of these recommendations will be accounted for under the process established for Recommendation 46.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Vandergraaff review of the implementation of the 2006, 2008 and 2009 Perkins recommendations were completed in July 2011.</p> <p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>Continued implementation of those (elements of) recommendations identified as still progressing included in overall implementation plan for Hendra virus review recommendations (see Recommendation 46).</p>
45	The Director-General of DEEDI consider conducting an open selection process when appointing an external reviewer of QPIF's response to future Hendra virus incidents.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Procurement decision will be made in accordance with the State Purchasing Policy.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Decisions about selection processes for reviewers will be made on case-by-case basis as part of normal operations.</p>
46	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) establish a process for evaluating and implementing, where appropriate, the recommendations made in the 2009 AAR Report and any outstanding recommendations from the 2008 AAR Report</p> <p>(b) set in place a timeline for the implementation of the accepted recommendations</p> <p>(c) ensure all recommendations are implemented within six months of the date of this report</p>	<p>AGREE IN PART</p> <p>PriceWatehouseCoopers has been engaged to develop a system for analysing recommendations from after action reviews, making decisions about which ones to adopt and for tracking their implementation.</p> <p>This system will be used to review the recommendations from all Hendra virus related after action reviews and external reviews since 2006.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>System for managing recommendations from relevant reviews to be in place by early 2012. All accepted recommendations will be implemented within the prescribed timeframe.</p>

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47	The Director-General of DEEDI ensure that the recommendations arising from the reviews of the needle-stick incidents in 2007 and 2008 are immediately implemented.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Queensland Government places a high priority on the safety of its staff and was disappointed when the needle stick injury occurred during the 2011 response.</p> <p>Immediate action was taken at the time to conduct refresher training courses, purchase new PPE and ensure every veterinarian working in the response understood their safety obligations.</p> <p>Processes have been implemented to address the recommendations. Biosecurity Queensland is also developing and embedding higher level systems to ensure that these processes form part of normal operations. This will ensure that systems and processes will not degrade over time and that regular auditing and reviews maintain the integrity of the systems.</p>	COMPLETED
48	<p>Where QPIF undertakes or receives recommendations from an internal or external review of its response to biosecurity incidents, QPIF develop a process to ensure that:</p> <p>(a) any recommendations are fully considered at a senior level in a timely fashion</p> <p>(b) a decision about whether to implement the recommendations is made within a reasonable time</p> <p>(c) any recommendations accepted for implementation are then implemented in a timely fashion</p> <p>(d) it makes and keeps appropriate records of the consideration given to the recommendations and the reasons for not implementing them.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>See Recommendation 46. This process will include timely consideration by senior officers</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>System for managing recommendations from relevant reviews to be in place by early 2012.</p>
49	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) adopt a consistent approach from the start of a Hendra virus incident response regarding the use of role-based email accounts</p> <p>(b) ensure that all information and emails relating to a Hendra virus incident response are captured and stored by QPIF in a single location.</p>	<p>AGREE IN PART</p> <p>Role based email accounts are used from the beginning of every biosecurity response.</p> <p>In the 2010 and 2011 responses, all emails were stored in a single location on the Biosecurity Queensland server.</p> <p>An electronic document and record management system is now available to Biosecurity Queensland. This system (eDocs) will be used to capture and store documents and emails for Hendra virus responses once it is fully integrated into Biosecurity Queensland's business process. Access to documents by all relevant staff is a critical consideration in the implementation of any record keeping system during a response</p> <p>It is not feasible to store laboratory information in the same place as emails. Laboratory information needs to be stored in its own dedicated system (LIMS). The objective is to ensure that information is easily searchable and retrievable. This capability exists within both eDocs and LIMS.</p> <p>This matter will be pursued further under the response to Recommendation 51.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Role-based emails are currently in place. The full integration of eDocs will further enhance record keeping.</p>

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
50	<p>QPIF take the following actions to ensure that officers comply with the requirements of the Public Records Act:</p> <p>(a) provide regular training to officers, including senior officers, on its record-keeping systems and on QPIF's record-keeping obligations</p> <p>(b) regularly monitor its officers' compliance with record-keeping obligations.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland will prioritise allocation of resources to its implementation of eDocs (see Recommendation 49), including a dedicated officer to lead system development and staff training. This training will include compliance with the Public Records Act.</p>	TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012
51	<p>QPIF develop and implement a comprehensive information management system to assist in the management of Hendra virus and other biosecurity responses.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Queensland Government recognises that robust information management systems are critical for timely, efficient and successful incident responses. Considerable investment has been made nationally and at the state level on BioSIRT, a system for managing biosecurity incidents. BioSIRT has been implemented and was used in the 2011 Hendra virus responses.</p> <p>BioSIRT is currently being reviewed nationally, with decisions about its future to be made over the next year. Biosecurity Queensland now has considerable operational experience with BioSIRT and will be contributing to its review.</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland intends to undertake a review of its current systems capability alongside the national review and develop an Information Management Strategy to inform future decisions.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Looking ahead, an Information Management Strategy, taking account of our experience with BioSIRT, will be developed in the first half of 2012</p>
52	<p>QPIF regularly review the adequacy of its communication practices with industry groups.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Government has established a structured approach to communicating with industry groups about Hendra virus and has established a formal consultative mechanism through the Horse Biosecurity Market Access Liaison Group (HBMALG). Issues relating to the adequacy of communication practices are regular discussion points with HBMALG.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Consultation about communication practices built into processes of HBMALG.</p>
53	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) review its current communication strategies to ensure that its strategies present a comprehensive, effective and reliable information network for private veterinarians and other people who have a risk of being exposed to Hendra virus</p> <p>(b) ensure that private veterinarians are urgently notified of Hendra virus incidents through the VSB mailing list once a Hendra virus incident is confirmed.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>As demonstrated under Recommendation 31, the Queensland Government employs extensive communication activities and regularly reviews their effectiveness.</p> <p>In addition to those activities listed, email alerts were used in the 2011 response to inform veterinarians (for whom contact details were available) about significant developments. SMS alerts were also used to provide early advice to peak industry bodies, including the Australian Veterinary Association and Equine Veterinary Association.</p> <p>Legislation has been introduced into Parliament to require contact details from private veterinarians be supplied and made available to Biosecurity Queensland to enable a broader reach.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Communication strategies are regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Private veterinarians are notified by SMS and/or email of new Hendra virus incidents.</p> <p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>Subject to the passing of the Protecting Primary Production Bill in Parliament, systems will be implemented to ensure Biosecurity Queensland has access to contact details for every registered veterinarian.</p>

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
54	<p>QPIF:</p> <p>(a) collect information promptly on the observed clinical signs from private veterinarians, horse owners and QPIF officers for each confirmed Hendra-positive horse, including information about the progression of the disease over time</p> <p>(b) collate the information for each horse without interpretation</p> <p>(c) distribute the information to private veterinarians within a reasonable time during each Hendra virus incident</p> <p>(d) publish the information for each horse on the QPIF website within a reasonable time during each incident.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Information on observed clinical signs of infected horses is collected from Specimen Advice Sheets (SAS) submitted with samples for laboratory testing and also collected during initial tracing and conversations with submitting veterinarians and horse owners.</p> <p>For the 2011 responses, this information was disseminated to private veterinarians in a timely manner in a Veterinarian Communiqué, which is emailed to all veterinarians who have supplied their addresses to the Veterinary Surgeons Board. This practice will continue.</p> <p>See Recommendation 55 for discussion about information on the website.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Information is collected and disseminated to veterinarians as part of normal operations.</p>
55	<p>QPIF collate and distribute to private veterinarians (including by publishing the information on its website) any information in its possession about the observed clinical signs of the horses that have died of Hendra virus between 1994 and the date of my report.</p> <p>This information should be reported for each relevant horse individually.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The Queensland Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases has reviewed all equine Hendra virus cases to date and collated all available history and clinical aspects.</p> <p>There are a number of issues that need to be resolved before the information can be published (for example, the de-identification of horses and owners).</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>It is expected that all case studies will be published in early 2012.</p>
56	<p>QPIF continue to work with WHSQ, the AVA and the VSB to identify ways of effectively communicating to private veterinarians about the necessary PPE to protect against Hendra virus.</p>	<p>AGREE IN PART</p> <p>See discussion at Recommendations 15, 17 and 18 noting that review of generic information will be included in regular reviews of material being provided for veterinarians.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Processes are in place for any updates to the generic information available to horse owners and private veterinarians will be considered during normal document review processes.</p>
57	<p>QPIF, either alone or in conjunction with other organisations, ensure that training in Hendra virus procedures and the correct use of PPE for zoonotic disease response is made available to all Queensland veterinarians.</p>	<p>AGREE IN PART</p> <p>See Recommendation 15, noting that provision of training about correct use of PPE must be linked strongly to its manufacturer and the obligation on each person and organisation under the <i>Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995</i>.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland will ensure that its veterinarians have up-to-date training in PPE and that it is included in the Training Strategy (see Recommendation 26).</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland will write to every registered veterinarian encouraging them to seek appropriate training and will work with the Australian Veterinary Association to investigate the establishment of a network of training providers.</p>
58	<p>QPIF continue to work with private veterinarians and horse owners to better explain QPIF's limited role in responding to suspected Hendra virus incidents prior to private veterinarians obtaining initial samples for Hendra virus testing.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Processes are in place through regular reviews of the Veterinary Guidelines (see Recommendation 2).</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>The need for more information about the role of Biosecurity Queensland in responding to suspect cases will be considered in the November 2011 review of the Veterinary Guidelines (see Recommendation 1).</p> <p>Internal policies and guidelines will be reviewed to ensure sufficient guidance is provided to Biosecurity Queensland staff and the call centre when talking to private veterinarians.</p>

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
59	QPIF review its policies and procedures and provide necessary training to officers to ensure that adequate information about testing is provided to property owners and horse owners to enable them to fully understand the testing regime before testing is conducted.	AGREE See Recommendation 6.	TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011 To be included in the November 2011 review of the Veterinary Guidelines (see Recommendation 1).
60	QPIF: (a) provide written test results, to either the owner's private veterinarian (where the veterinarian submitted the samples for testing) or the horse owner personally, for all horses that are tested for Hendra virus during a Hendra virus incident (b) amend the relevant QPIF policies and provide training to QPIF officers in support of this requirement (c) provide information explaining or interpreting test results, and detailing their reliability to horse owners with similar general information made publicly available on the QPIF website.	AGREE to (a) and (b) This recommendation is current practice. Where the samples are collected by a Biosecurity Queensland veterinarian as part of a Hendra virus response, the owner of the animals is provided with copies of all laboratory reports. A Biosecurity Queensland veterinarian is tasked with providing a verbal interpretation of the results and the equivalent advice in writing. AGREE IN PRINCIPLE to (c) While the general principle of information being made available is supported, the interpretation of laboratory results is a specific field of scientific expertise. Complication and confusion may arise where interpretation of test results is being undertaken by laypersons. Careful consideration is needed of what (if any) information on how to interpret should be made available on the website.	COMPLETED Provision of written test results is standard practice of Biosecurity Queensland.  TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012 A review of what (if any) information is suitable for publishing about how to interpret test results will be completed in early 2012.
61	QPIF continue to appoint a liaison officer, where required, by future Hendra virus incidents.	AGREE Liaison officers are appointed for all major biosecurity responses, and liaison officers with specific knowledge of the horse industry have been appointed for each Hendra virus response since 2009.	COMPLETED The appointment of liaison officers is part of normal operations.
62	QPIF immediately and fully inform horse owners and/or their private veterinarians of the results of Hendra virus tests on their horses.	AGREE Immediate provision of test results (within practical limits) has been part of standard practice since 2009. The Chief Veterinary Officer releases any results as soon as they are validated as part of the 'Distribution of laboratory results – Hendra virus V 2.2' policy.	COMPLETED The immediate provision of test results is part of normal operations.
63	QPIF continue to provide information to the community during Hendra virus incidents, with the extent of that engagement determined by QPIF on a case by case basis.	AGREE See Recommendation 31. Specific response communication and engagement plans are developed as needed.	COMPLETED Communication activities about Hendra virus are ongoing and part of normal business. Processes are in place to review materials at least twice a year.
64	QPIF consider the AVA's suggestions when next reviewing its website content on Hendra virus.	AGREE The Government welcomes feedback from stakeholders about ways to improve its communication about important biosecurity matters. The Australian Veterinary Association's suggestions will form part of the website review and Biosecurity Queensland will regularly seek feedback from this association.	TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011 The next review of the website will be undertaken immediately. Website content will be included as an agenda item for the regular Australian Veterinary Association liaison meetings

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
65	<p>The VSB amend its annual registration forms to make it a condition of registration that all veterinarians provide email addresses and mobile telephone numbers for the purpose of distributing information about emergency biosecurity incidents.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Annual registration forms now include email addresses and mobile phone numbers. The Queensland Government has taken action to make the provision of contact details mandatory as part of the Protecting Primary Production Legislation which has been introduced into Parliament. In the interim, the Queensland Government will write to the Veterinary Surgeons Board to persuade the board to collect contact details for re-registrations that occur prior to the commencement of new legislation and in light of the Ombudsman's recommendations.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>This is subject to the passage of new legislation in Parliament.</p>
66	<p>QPIF and the VSB enter into a formal arrangement whereby:</p> <p>(a) the email addresses and other relevant contact details for all veterinarians are made available for immediate use by QPIF officers during an emergency biosecurity incident. This arrangement should take into account any reasonable privacy concerns of veterinarians</p> <p>(b) QPIF provides reasonable additional resources to assist the VSB to facilitate this recommendation within six months of the date of my report.</p>	<p>AGREE IN PRINCIPLE</p> <p>The Veterinary Surgeons Board has supplied Biosecurity Queensland with the contact details of veterinarians in their database and the two agencies have developed a proposal to enable more efficient transfer of data.</p> <p>Legislation has been introduced into Parliament to require contact details (including after hours details) from private veterinarians be supplied and made available to Biosecurity Queensland.</p> <p>The final implementation of this recommendation will be subject to the passage of the legislation.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>Current arrangements will continue.</p> <p>Future arrangements will be subject to the passage of new legislation and the availability of resources.</p>
67	<p>As part of ongoing communications between QPIF and QH in between incidents of Hendra virus, the agencies continue to:</p> <p>(a) discuss their respective responses during incidents</p> <p>(b) ensure that each agency's response is consistent with the known levels of risk</p> <p>(c) minimise the potential for inconsistent messages to be provided to property owners and the general public.</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Biosecurity Queensland, Queensland Health and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland have well-established mechanisms for communicating about Hendra virus. The agencies have a memorandum of understanding which formalises relative roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>A Hendra Virus Interagency Community Engagement Framework has been established to ensure a consistent approach to communications and a kit containing information from each agency developed.</p> <p>The three agencies hold regular (often daily) teleconferences during a Hendra virus response to ensure activities are coordinated and information shared.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Engagement Framework is in place. Ongoing communication is part of normal operations.</p>
68	<p>QPIF, QH and WHSQ revise their current memorandum of understanding and create any accompanying interagency standard operating procedures within three months of the date of my report covering:</p> <p>(a) in relation to notification of exclusion or suspect Hendra virus cases:</p> <p>(i) the information to be provided by one agency to the other when testing occurs</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The interagency steering committee will be reconvened to review the MoU and develop any relevant standard operating procedures.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>MoU will be reviewed in early 2012</p> <p>Relevant standard operation procedures will be finalised by mid 2012.</p>

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(ii) when and how this information will be provided</li> <li>(iii) the officers or departmental units responsible for providing or receiving this information</li> <li>(b) in relation to responses to Hendra virus incidents:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the information to be provided by one agency to the other</li> <li>(ii) when and how this information will be provided</li> <li>(iii) the officers or departmental units responsible for providing or receiving this information</li> </ul> </li> <li>(c) ongoing communication about relevant matters between Hendra virus incidents.</li> </ul>		
69	<p>QH develop detailed information sheets for people who are involved in Hendra virus incidents, including information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) testing procedures, such as how many tests will generally be provided in different situations, the basis on which decisions about testing are made and who will take the blood samples</li> <li>(b) how test results are interpreted</li> <li>(c) the symptoms of Hendra virus and what self-monitoring for symptoms involves</li> <li>(d) the incubation period for Hendra virus</li> <li>(e) the transmissibility of Hendra virus from person to person, and any precautions that should be taken both when a person is well and if a person becomes unwell. This information should include advice about people adopting the same precautions (that is, standard and droplet precautions) that are adopted by QH officers if a person becomes unwell during the incubation period and needs to attend a hospital or clinic for further testing</li> <li>(f) the treatment for Hendra virus, including length, side effects, risks and expected clinical monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>There is already a detailed fact sheet on the Queensland Health website which contains most of this information and is aimed both at the general public and people involved in Hendra virus incidents. Revised national guidelines, close to finalisation, are likely to contain significantly changed recommendations on testing. When these are endorsed, Queensland Health will develop an additional fact sheet specifically targeted at people involved in Hendra virus incidents and containing all recommended information.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>Detailed Queensland Health factsheet aimed both at the general public and people involved in Hendra virus incidents is currently available on the Queensland Health website. Revised national guidelines are close to endorsement and likely to contain significantly changed recommendations on testing. When endorsed, Queensland Health will revise the existing fact sheet and develop an additional fact sheet for people involved in Hendra virus incidents, ensuring that both documents are consistent with the revised national guidelines and with the Ombudsman's recommendations.</p>
70	<p>QH provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) information to QH officers, GPs, medical laboratories and hospitals during Hendra virus incidents about the precautions which are necessary when testing for and treating Hendra virus, to ensure as much as possible a consistent approach</li> <li>(b) information to the public (whether through the media or by other means) about the transmissibility of Hendra virus and the precautions which are necessary during a suspected or confirmed Hendra virus incident.</li> </ul>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Queensland Health will continue to provide up-to-date information about necessary precautions to relevant clinicians and laboratories in future Hendra virus incidents.</p> <p>Queensland Health will continue to provide up to date information about transmission and necessary precautions to the public in future Hendra virus incidents.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p>

No.	Related Recommendation(s)	Government Response	Status
71	QH finalise a standard risk assessment process and corresponding exposure assessment form for exposure to infection from Hendra virus within 28 days of receiving my report.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Queensland Health has already finalised the risk assessment process and exposure assessment form, which is available on the Queensland Health website.</p>	COMPLETED
72	As soon as an incident of Hendra virus is identified, QPIF nominate a QPIF veterinarian who can provide information to the QH officer assessing levels of risk about what particular veterinary procedures mean in terms of risk exposure.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Processes for providing appropriate information about risk are in place via the interagency working group and the MoU</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Communication about risk exposure will continue as part of normal business.</p>
73	QH formally communicate to QPIF the process by which exposure risk is assessed and what information about people's exposures to horses QPIF officers should share with QH during incident responses.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Queensland Health has already communicated to QPIF that the exposure assessment form is available on the Queensland Health website. The Interagency Steering Committee will examine whether there is any need for further clarification of the exposure assessment process and information sharing.</p>	TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011
74	Withdrawn		
75	Withdrawn		
76	QH, QPIF and WHSQ take joint responsibility and a coordinated approach in providing information to private veterinarians on reducing the risk of, and consequences of, human infection with Hendra virus, particularly during Hendra virus incidents.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>The three agencies have developed a Hendra virus Interagency Community Engagement Framework, which established an agreed and consistent process when communicating about Hendra virus. The interagency working group will reconvene to review the Framework's ongoing effectiveness.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED IN 2012</p> <p>The interagency working group will review the ongoing effectiveness of the Community Engagement Framework in early 2012.</p>
77	WHSQ ensure that information on managing biosecurity risks in the workplace is made available to all Queensland veterinarians, including by working with QPIF where necessary to formulate or distribute this information.	<p>AGREE</p> <p>Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) has engaged with the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) and Equine Veterinary Association (EVA), assisted the AVA with state-wide infection control workshops and provided Hendra virus information for veterinarians on its website.</p>	COMPLETED
78	<p>In investigating workplace incidents, WHSQ should give adequate consideration to:</p> <p>(a) the skills, experience and training of the investigator assigned to the investigation</p> <p>(b) the need for any expert advice on technical matters that arise during an investigation</p> <p>(c) its statutory obligations to investigate matters</p>	<p>AGREE</p> <p>WHSQ has implemented a Hendra virus enforcement note and is conducting an internal review of its investigation processes that is examining training, recruitment and on-going support for inspectors conducting investigations.</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 DECEMBER 2011</p> <p>The WHSQ's investigation review report is expected to be finalised at the end of 2011.</p>