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## Protect your flock from new pigeon virus

NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) is urging pigeon fanciers and breeders to restrict any movement of pigeons, following the detection of Pigeon Paramyxovirus in a number of pigeon flocks in Victoria.

“Pigeon Paramyxovirus has been detected in a number of hobby pigeon flocks and one racing pigeon flock and resulted in the deaths of hobby pigeons in Victoria,” NSW Chief Veterinary Officer Dr Ian Roth said.

“It’s important that pigeon owners avoid bird movements and strengthen their biosecurity measures.

“Racing events, showing and bird sales should cease until the situation becomes clearer.”

Dr Roth said that the first signs are usually increased thirst and diarrhoea, loss of appetite, and reluctance to move and fly.

“Pigeon Paramyxovirus also causes neurological symptoms such as trembling of the wings and head, tumbling on landing, partial paralysis of the wings and legs and head flicking before death,” Dr Roth said.

“With 50 to 100 per cent of infected adult birds dying from the virus, it’s critical that pigeon owners put in place good biosecurity practices to reduce the likelihood of cases in NSW.”

Pigeon owners should contact their private veterinarian or the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888 if they notice any unusual signs or are concerned about their pigeons.

Protect your flock by:

- Not taking birds to shows, fairs or race meets;
- Not trading or introducing new birds;
- Isolating and closely monitoring introduced birds or birds that have been to races or shows for 14 days (feed and water these isolated birds last and wash and change afterwards);
- Disinfecting equipment used to house, transport of feed or water birds from outside your flock or birds that have travelled to shows;
- Removing stray birds from your loft;
- Avoiding visitors to your loft;
- Disinfecting boots and washing hand and clothes if you visit other lofts.

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