

Equine Influenza – Final Surveillance July to December 2008

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EI timeline

Post Freedom

- 30 June 2008 – Australia declared free from EI
- 25 December 2008 – one year since last property in Australia infected – International Freedom

How can suspected EI be reported?

- **EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE HOTLINE**

1800 675 888

- **Inspector**
- **Hotline manned 24 hours a day and information on all calls recorded in database**

Industry and Vets on Alert

Since June 2008:

- Reminders on reporting obligations to
 - Vets (4 Biosecurity Bulletins from CVO)
 - Public (Hotline number widely publicised)
 - Event organisers (guideline published by DPI)
- 283 calls to hotline – 28 callers concerns relating to horses with possible EI

EI Investigations

- Sick horse calls transferred to a DPI Biosecurity Vet
- History recorded and case assessed - does it warrants laboratory investigation?
- Private practitioner tasked to visit, assess horses, collect samples (up 6 horses), submit samples to laboratory, send in records of history on ANEMIS forms.

Veterinarian testing a horse for EI

- Nasal swab from each nostril placed into viral transport media and 10 mls blood into a plain red top tube



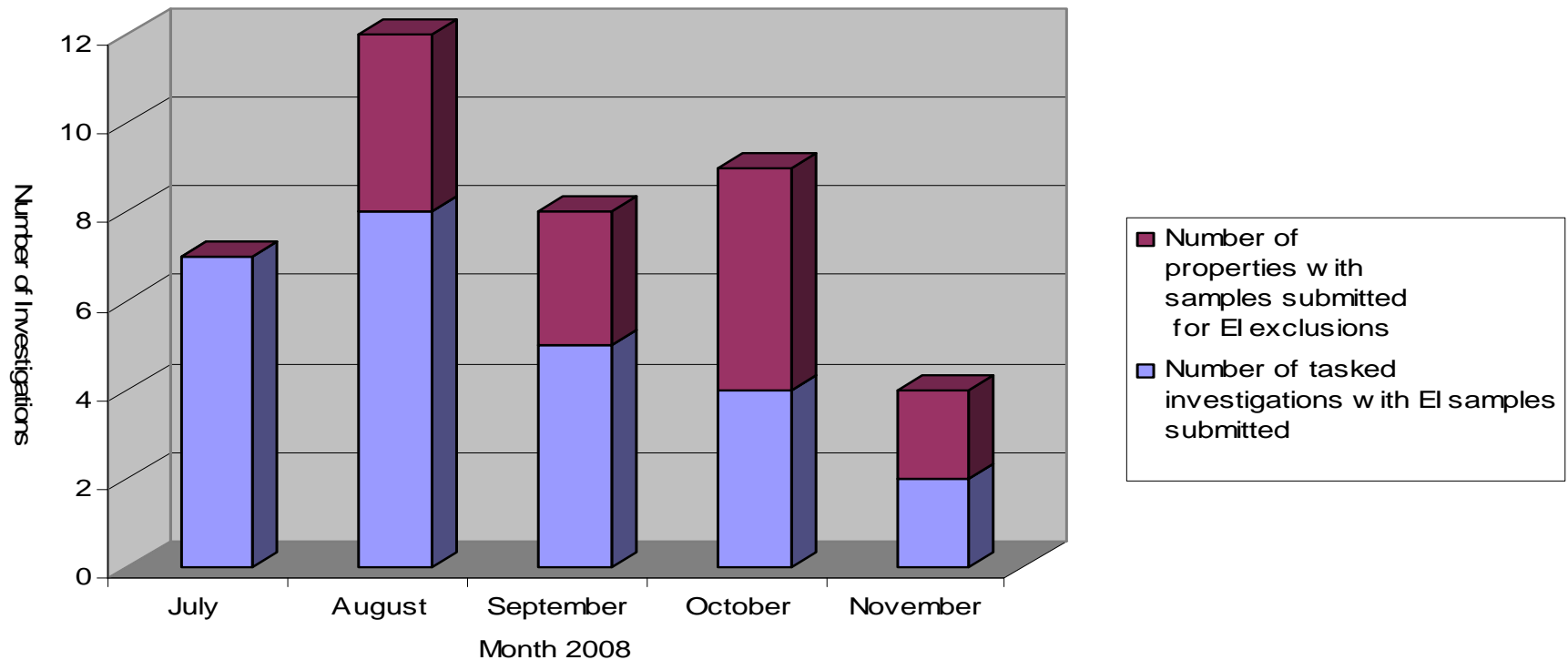
Other Surveillance

- Veterinarians (private practitioners or District Vets) asked to investigate horses with respiratory signs
- Where they assess as negligible risk of EI (history and/or clinical signs) not reported to the hotline but samples submitted for routine EI exclusion tests

EI Investigation Summary

NSW conducted EI testing on 40 properties from 1 July to 30 November 2008. 26 of these investigations were tasked, while 14 were routine EI exclusions.

NSW EI Surveillance June to December 2008



Surveillance Scares

Horses destined for export:

- vaccinated with killed vaccine and swabs collected for viral testing

Weak positive PCR (swab contamination) and mild clinical signs (vaccine reaction)

All weak PCR results were negative when testing was repeated on fresh swabs

Surveillance Scares cont.

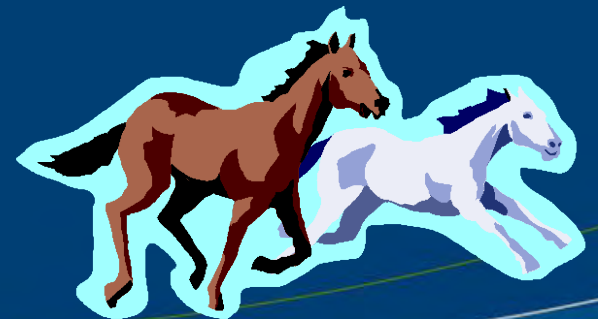
- New direct PCR test extremely sensitive – capable detecting minute quantities viral RNA
- Reactive material may be vaporised when draw up vaccine
- Swab collected after vaccine administered is contaminated and produces weakly positive reaction to PCR test

Why is NSW certain EI has been eradicated

- Horses have mixed freely (vaccinated, recovered and naïve)
- Immunity is waning (many recovered horses now sero-negative)
- Minimum 70 possible incubation cycles for EI in 1 year – lots of opportunities to spread if Australia was still infected
- Vets and public are alert
- All surveillance negative

Acknowledgments

- 1. NSW Equine Influenza Outbreak, 2007-8
Post-Outbreak Demonstration of EI Freedom,
Evan Sergeant Epidemiologist SDCHQ,
Orange, 27 May 2008.
- 2. Outliers Tasked spreadsheet 08.10-08,
INT08/66577.
- 3. Minutes CCEAD EI teleconference 54





Congratulations NSW

