EQUINE BIOSECURITY

Current Import Arrangements

Phil Widders
Chief Quarantine Officer (Animals) NSW
Changes Post EI Outbreak

• A number of changes across the quarantine continuum - pre-export, border, post-arrival

• Some changes implemented immediately, others more recently, representing the Government’s response to the Equine Influenza Inquiry

• Senior officer ‘primarily responsible and accountable for the importation of horses into Australia’ - Rec 1
Government Response to EI Inquiry

- Commissioner made 38 recommendations to strengthen quarantine measures (all agreed by the Government) covering:
  - Inspector-General of Horse Imports (Interim)
  - Pre-export requirements
  - Facilities at Airports and Quarantine Stations
  - Operating Procedures, Work Instructions for AQIS and non-AQIS personnel
  - Import Risk Analysis and other reviews
  - Recovery of Quarantine Expenses

- Implementation Project plan available at www.aqis.gov.au (look at About AQIS, Equine Influenza Inquiry)
Pre-export

Revised interim quarantine measures and updates post EI Inquiry:

• **PEQ**
  - PEQ Inspections by AQIS - criteria, reports, audits
  - AQIS approval of PEQs
  - Vaccination changes- new strains, timing now 2-6 months plus 14-21 days prior to entering PEQ
  - Showering in
  - Blood samples collected and stored
  - Nasopharyngeal swabs for absence of EI (2 in PEQ, 3 in PAQ)

• **Prior to departure**
  - Sufficient evidence to AQIS of compliance with conditions

• **BA to review activities and events before import**
• **Interim Inspector-General to provide advice**
• **Import Risk Analysis**
Airports and Quarantine Stations Facilities

• Expert Group to provide advice to AQIS on facilities at airports and quarantine stations regarding biosecurity containment, animal welfare and OH&S

• Upgraded facilities at the airports and quarantine stations including showers, fencing

• Biosecurity Australia and Interim Inspector-General to provide advice
Airport & Post-Arrival Quarantine

- Increased AQIS staffing, coordination and control for airport arrivals
- 24hr security at quarantine stations, AQIS supervision of entry/exit
- AQIS on-site supervision of private vets, farriers etc
- Nasopharyngeal swabs for EI detection (24hr, 5d and 3d prior to release)
- Enhanced intervention for T₀ increases
Operating Procedures

• Updated operating procedures for AQIS and non-AQIS personnel
  – WIs, training, verification

• Roles and responsibilities clarified and documented

• Biosecurity Australia have inspected and reviewed operating procedures

• Interim Inspector-General inspecting & auditing operations and procedures from PEQ through to end of PAQ
Industry Consultation

• Noted specifically in several recommendations, implied in others
• WIs for non-AQIS personnel
• Horse Industry Consultative Committee formed
  – membership includes AQIS, horse industry reps, importers, AVA, airports, other areas of DAFF
• TORs, minutes and other information available at www.aqis.gov.au (look at About AQIS, Equine Influenza Inquiry)

• More changes in the future once reviews finalised:
  – facilities
  – legislation
  – import conditions
  – fee review