



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

# Australia's experience with avian influenza, outbreaks and preparedness plans



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# Overview

- Australia's HPAI experience and relevant epidemiological factors
- Government's approach to human pandemic influenza and EADs
- Specific AI prevention and preparedness activities
- Some OH&S aspects with AI



# Australia's experience with HPAI outbreaks

Keysborough, Vic	Jan 1976	H7N7	\$4.0 m
Bendigo, Vic	May 1985	H7N7	\$2.2 m
Bendigo, Vic	Aug 1992	H7N3	\$0.8 m
Lowood, Qld	Dec 1994	H7N3	\$0.4 m
Tamworth, NSW	Nov 1997	H7N4	\$4.2 m



# HPAI outbreaks in Australia

- **Limited outbreaks – rapidly detected**
- **All outbreaks linked to wild waterfowl:**
  - not found in nearby wild birds at the time
  - poor on-farm biosecurity
- **Waterfowl in Australia are nomadic, not migratory**
  - birds move in response to water availability, including to nearby islands
- **LP AI H3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, & 13 viruses recently detected in wild birds**
- **Australia, since the last outbreak in 1997, has no evidence of HPAI viruses**

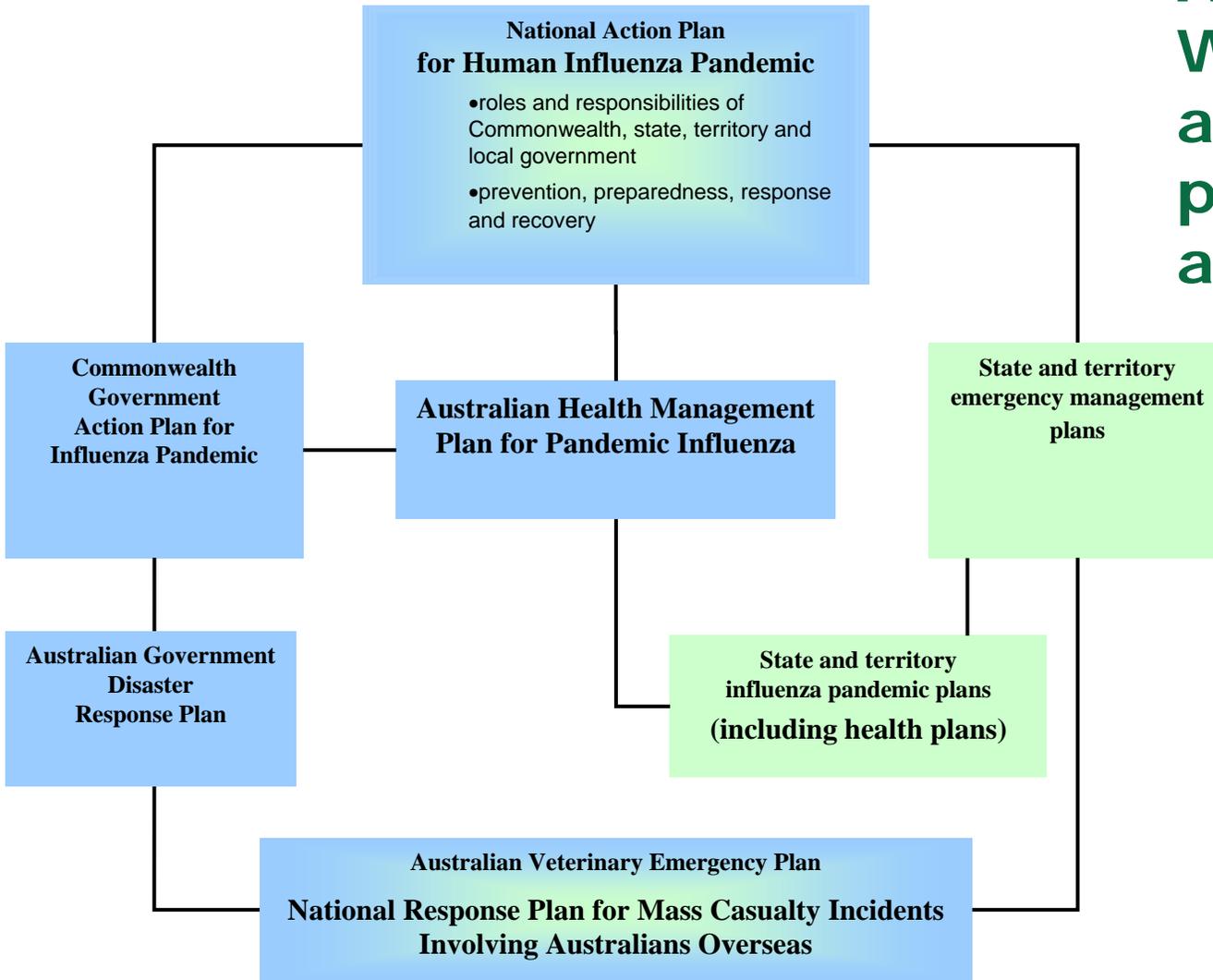


# HPAI threat to Australian poultry

- **Three potential sources of HPAI for Australian poultry:**
  - Endemic source – mutation of LPAI virus in Australian birds
  - Brought into Australia by migratory birds
  - Imported by human activity eg smuggled birds or imported goods
- **Risk of the introduction of the Asian H5N1 strain to Australia is much lower than for most other countries**
  - The risk factors in Australia are different to those in affected countries



# Australia's Whole-of-Govt approach to preparedness and response



## KEY



Commonwealth



State/territory



Whole-of-government

# Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD)

## WHO?

- CVO's
- CSIRO AAHL
- Industry representatives
- AQIS
- BA

## WHAT?

- Coordinates national technical response
- Consult and advise on EAD events
- Judgement/advice on diagnosis & control measures
- Reports
- Advise stand down



*Managed by CSIRO the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) is one of the most sophisticated laboratories in the world and is critical in Australia's efforts to remain free of major exotic diseases*

**Source:** CSIRO Livestock Industries



# Emergency Animal Disease Preparedness Program

*Coordinated by Animal Health Australia*

## AUSVETPLAN

**A series of technical response plans describing proposed Australian approach to an exotic disease incursion**

### **Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement**

- Details how governments and industry groups work together and jointly fund activities to reduce the risk of disease incursions & manage a response if an outbreak occurs

### **Rapid Response Team (RRT)**

- A team of skilled personnel for rapid deployment for EAD control

### **Emergency Animal Disease Training Program**

- A national training program for EAD response



# Prevention and preparedness activities (specific for AI)

## Pre-Border

- Cooperation with regional neighbours
- Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy (NAQS)
  - Assesses quarantine risks in northern Australia
  - Provides early warning of exotic pests and diseases
  - Onshore component: surveys, sentinel herds and awareness campaigns
  - Offshore component: capacity building & monitoring programs in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and East Timor
- AusAID



# Prevention and preparedness activities (specific for AI)

## Post-Border

- **Wild bird surveillance testing in all States/Territories – waterfowl & shore birds**
- **Vaccination - interim policy**
  - Domesticated birds
  - Killed vaccine
  - AHC endorsed
  - Industry consultation
- **AUSVETPLAN**
  - General review AUSVETPLAN
  - AI manual ongoing review – LPAI, wild, zoo and caged birds
- **Communications project – AI awareness and good biosecurity practices**
  - “Exercise Hippolytus” – testing our lab preparedness



# OH&S and AI

- **Potentially high consequences for human health with HPAI strains**
- **Certain groups should avoid/be prevented contact**
  - Children
  - Pregnant women, or those who think there is a possibility that they are pregnant
  - People with weakened immune systems eg. with cancers, those older than 60 years or people with known chronic heart or lung disease
  - People with respiratory tract infections whether the cause is known or not, and especially when it is known to be caused by human influenza (in order to further reduce the small risk of a pandemic strain of influenza developing if a worker is simultaneously infected with human influenza and HPAI)



# OH&S and AI

**Revised guidelines are being finalised for the following groups**

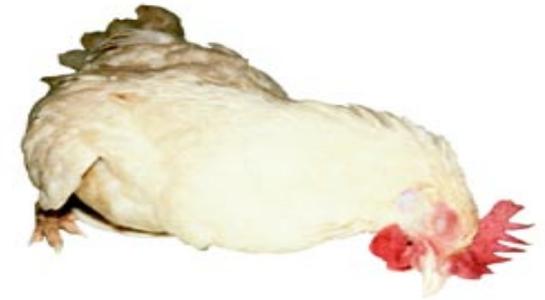
- **Commercial poultry farm workers**
- **Non-commercial poultry producers (lifestyle farmers, schools)**
- **Workers in poultry associated industries**
- **Workers with other caged birds (aviaries, zoos)**
- **Workers at risk of contact with wild birds infected with HPAI**
- **Workers at risk of contact with exotic birds and their associated products infected or contaminated with HPAI**



# OH&S and AI

## Overall messages for those participating in an outbreak

- **Up-to-date seasonal human flu injections**
- **In-field operations to use officially provided personal protective equipment**
  - Protective, disposable overalls ± impermeable apron
  - Gloves
  - P2 respirator (AS/NZA1716 std)
  - Goggles
- **Proper disinfection**
- **Wash hands thoroughly!**



# OH&S and AI

## Additional OH&S requirements include

- **training and supervision of workers on appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE) i.e. fit-testing of respirators to individual wearers**
- **antiviral medications for groups of poultry industry and other high-risk workers with birds for**
  - Treatment of symptomatic human cases of influenza-like illness within 7 days of contact
  - Post-exposure prophylaxis of those that had direct contact within the last 7 days
  - Pre-exposure prophylaxis of those who will have direct contact
- **surveillance (active or passive) - determined by the level of risk of exposure to HPAI**





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**For further information:**

**[www.daff.gov.au](http://www.daff.gov.au)**

**[www.outbreak.gov.au](http://www.outbreak.gov.au)**

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