

# Victoria's Response to Equine Influenza 2007/2008

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# Rationale & Outline

**Victoria was not infected . . . but was a 'frontline' State. Continuity of racing in Victoria was the key to industry short-term survival.**

**Response components:**

- Standstill
- Tracing & investigation
- Surveillance
- Border control
- Public awareness/industry liaison
- Biosecurity
- Vaccination
- Compensation
- Software development
- Situation analysis

# Movement Standstill and Tracing

- SDCHQ set up at Attwood 25 August 2007
- Minister signed Standstill Order 25/08
- Renewed and extended to 31/08
- All animals from NSW in 14 days prior to 25/08 traced, tested
- Some properties quarantined
- All horses negative
- Standstill was essential to preventing entry of EI



# Surveillance

- Prove freedom
- Enable early detection

## Passive surveillance

Public/practitioner awareness

Case definitions/protocols

## Sentinel practice surveillance

Practitioner engagement (15)

“Report what you see”

No. properties visited	No. horses tested	PCR negative	PCR positive
405	1,315	1,315	0

# Properties visited	# healthy horses	# horses with respiratory signs	# horses suspicious for EI	# PCR positive
13,368	155,262	1,564	51	0

Properties visited in passive surveillance programme →

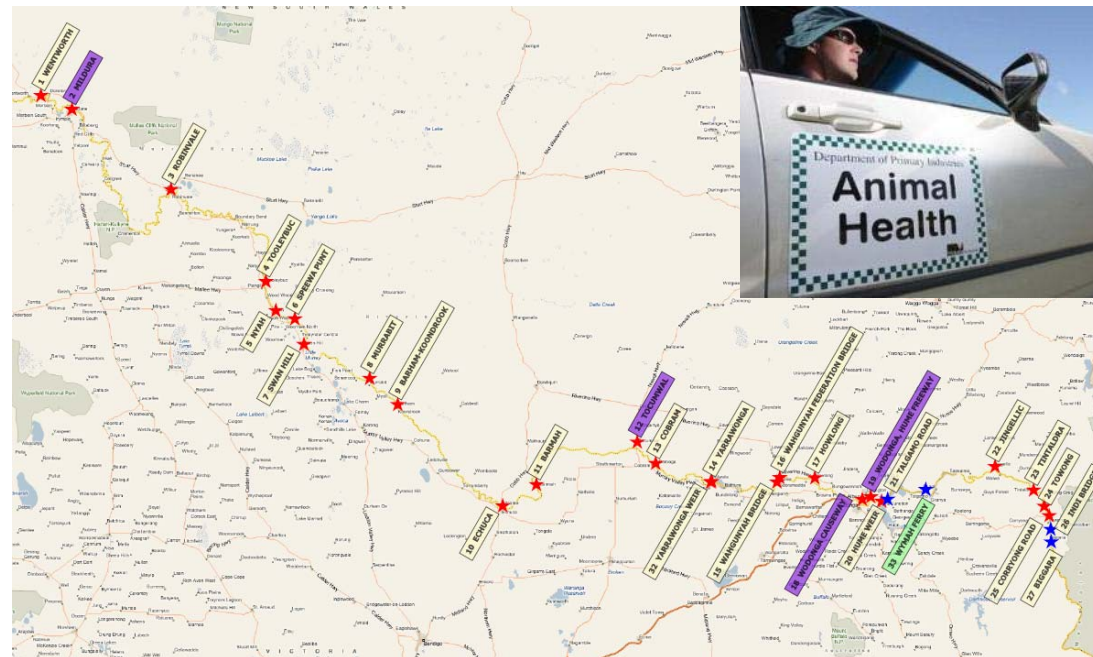


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# Border Controls

- First, the Standstill
- Then restrictions/prohibitions on horse movements, vehicles, tack
- Gradually relaxed and eventually removed March 2008
- Enforced by private company under DPI supervision
- Videosurveillance

Border Monitoring		
Total 'suspicious incidents'	Warnings issued	Possible prosecutions
629	29	3



# Public Awareness/Liaison

- DPI's biggest ever publicity campaign
- Radio, TV, newspapers, pamphlets, billboards, community meetings, internet - \$1 million
- Appointment of ILO (valuable)
- Regular liaison with industry (racing/non-racing)
- Voluntary moratorium on events, joint drafting of biosecurity guidelines

DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

**CROSS THE LINE AND  
YOU'LL PAY THE FINE**

**No Horses. No Equipment. Without Permit.**

Call 1800 678 779 for information



**HELP FIGHT HORSE FLU IN VICTORIA**

# Biosecurity Guidelines

- Racing sector
  - Sophisticated
  - Targeted to various staff categories
  - Included barriers at races
- Non-racing sector
  - Less complex
  - Commonsense, practical

# Strategic Vaccination

- Animals of high economic potential (i.e. racehorses in training/racing)
- Business insurance – vaccinated horses at racetracks likely to be less debilitated by outbreak, able to race
- Contingency plans for Spring Racing Carnival
- 9500 thoroughbreds & 1800 standardbreds vaccinated



# Compensation/Grant Scheme

- Event moratorium caused hardship for horse clubs
- Many of these events were fundraisers, and they had often already committed funds to holding them
- Compensation/reward needed
- Treasury allocated \$1.5 m
- Two tranches paid out
  - \$306,000 (October)
  - \$264,000+ (November-December)



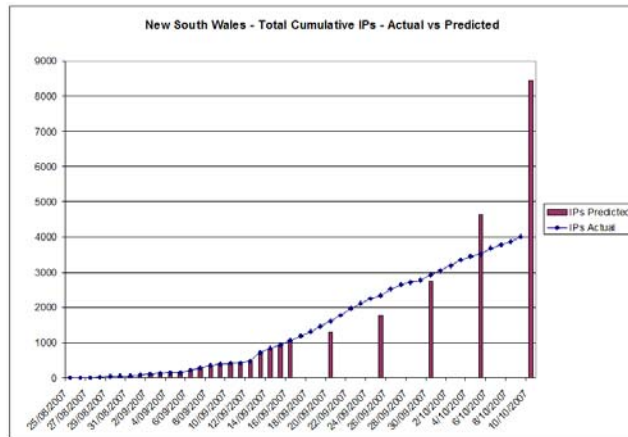
# Software Development

- Redevelopment of ANEMIS: multi-user web-based
- With document and image repository, interactive mapping, permit applications etc
- “The Portal”

The screenshot displays the Biosecurity Victoria website for Equine Influenza. The page features a navigation menu with categories such as Animal Standards, Applications, Animal Welfare, Bus. Mgt, Disease Control, General Surv, EAD, John's, Legal, Product Integrity, Training, Biosecurity, and Licences/Permits. The main content area is titled 'Equine Influenza' and includes sections for 'Internal news', 'Public call / Permit recording', and 'Media'. The 'Internal news' section lists three entries with dates and times, such as '14/03/08 - 16:28 - EI update - S. Nee'. The 'Public call / Permit recording' section provides a list of call types, including 'ADD a record', 'OPEN - MOVEMENT REQUESTS', and 'CLOSED - Movement Requests'. A sidebar on the left offers navigation options like 'View All Site Content', 'Documents', 'Pictures', 'Lists', and 'Discussions'. A search bar at the top right allows for site-wide searches, and a 'Biosecurity I.T. Service Desk' contact information is provided on the right side of the page.

# Situation Analysis

- Needed to guide Vic DPI response, brief decision-makers and manage industry expectations
- Evaluate control measures, risk, predict epidemic course



# Conclusion

- Many lessons learned . . .
- But . . .
- Even “unaffected” States are “affected” and must commit resources to activities on home territory
- Battle fought across a far wider front than just in areas where the disease is present



There's plenty of room for all God's creatures.  
Right next to the mashed potatoes.



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