



## Australian Government

# Important information about Equine Influenza

**An outbreak of Equine Influenza (EI) has occurred in Australia.**

**A national response including a standstill on horse transport has been implemented to contain and eradicate this virus.**

### **What is Equine Influenza?**

Equine influenza (EI) is a highly contagious viral disease which can cause rapidly spreading outbreaks of respiratory disease in horses, donkeys, mules and other equine species. EI is exotic to Australia and would have a major impact on the Australian horse industry if it were to become established here. The disease is not generally fatal to horses however, fatalities may occur in old or infirmed horses or young foals.

### **How is EI spread?**

The virus is usually spread by:

- direct contact between infected and susceptible horses
- indirect contact with contaminated tack or equipment
- susceptible horses occupying buildings or vehicles recently occupied by diseased horses
- contact between contaminated horse handlers and healthy horses.

### **What do I do if my horse is sick?**

If you suspect that your horse has horse flu (a deep hacking cough is the main symptom, but horses may have a temperature, or a runny nose) please contact the Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

### **How can I protect my horse?**

Keep your horse away from other horses. If you have contact with other horses scrub your footwear in disinfectant, shower and change your clothes before handling your horse.

If you have contact with a sick horse do not go near another horse for 72 hours.

Cancel non-essential farrier appointments and other visitors.

### **When does the standstill finish?**

The standstill will remain in place until otherwise notified.

All Australian states and territories have movement restrictions in place in a national effort to control the spread of equine influenza and to prevent it from becoming established.

NSW and QLD have indefinite standstills, as they have confirmed EI cases.

### **What are the movement restrictions? What do I have to do?**

- Horse owners and handlers **MUST NOT** move horses from their properties.
- Avoid any contact between your horses and other horses.
- You cannot ride the horse off your private property.
- The tethering of horses in public places like nature strips is not allowed.

### **Can I apply for an exemption to move my horse(s)?**

Movement permits are only being issued for urgent horse movements such as horses requiring immediate veterinary attention. To apply for a permit you will need to contact your local Department of Primary Industries.

### **Who can I call for more information?**

National hotline: 1800 234 002 (8am - 8pm daily)

New South Wales - 1800 675 888

Victoria - 1800 678 779

Tasmania - 1800 234 002

South Australia - 1800 234 002

Western Australia - 1800 234 002

Queensland - 132 523

ACT - 6205 5232

Northern Territory - 1800 234 002

Or online see [www.outbreak.gov.au](http://www.outbreak.gov.au)