



Food Act 2008 (WA) Fact Sheet 23

Emergency Animal Disease Plan for Domestic & Export Registered, State Regulated (Tier 1) Abattoirs' and Knackeries in Western Australia

Version 1 – 22 July 2019

Purpose

The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to help minimise the impact that an emergency animal disease can have on a business within the period of reporting to confirmation through early detection and surveillance. Simple steps and key information gathered before an outbreak is confirmed can significantly decrease the impact. The information gathered will help the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) know what resources are available and what is needed on site to put into place a disease response.

Background

An Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) is a disease that is not known to exist or has occurred sporadically in Australia. Such diseases can significantly affect human health, animal health and production, causing significant economic cost to the industry and restrictions on trade of animals and animal products. These diseases are classed as emergency because of their potential, in most cases, for very serious and rapid spread.

Australia is free from many of the world's most significant animal diseases, allowing efficient domestic and global trade. Australia's enviable animal health status is protected by the 'Australian animal health system'. The system is incorporated into commonwealth and state legislation but relies on the ongoing vigilance of livestock industry enterprises. The meat processing industry plays a particularly important surveillance role in Australia's animal health system. Stockmen and meat safety inspectors at domestic slaughterhouses and knackeries may be the first to identify new diseases.

Early identification and notification of animal diseases allows state agriculture departments and the relevant regulatory organisations to take action to prevent the spread of the disease. Quick and simple measures built into the everyday routine will help protect a business. It is a business' legal obligation, to notify DPIRD or the **Emergency Animal Disease Hotline 1800 675 888** if the business know or suspect that an animal has a notifiable disease.

Every day, thousands of animals pass through Australia's abattoirs and knackeries. This means that these facilities may be amongst the first to detect Emergency Animal Diseases (EADs). In 2001, the UK Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak was first detected in an abattoir. Abattoir and knackery workers are on the frontline of the efforts to protect the Australian livestock industry from the threat of EADs.

The National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council (MINTRAC) has been funded by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) to enhance the capacity of abattoir and knackery workers in their ability to identify abnormal symptoms at ante- and post-mortem inspections that potentially could be an EAD.

Guidance & Advice for Appropriate Enforcement Agencies, Food Businesses and Knackeries

The purpose of an EAD program is to describe the actions that will be taken by the processing plant staff after detecting abnormal symptoms or behaviours which may be an EAD, minimising the risk of a nationwide outbreak.

Specifically, the program is designed to:

- Advise actions to take when detecting abnormal symptoms
- Detail the responsibilities of staff in the event of an EAD outbreak.
- Detail the required information that DPIRD will need. This information includes the source PIC, NVD number, transporter and the number and species of animals in the consignment. This will allow effective control of an outbreak and return a premises to productivity as quickly as possible
- Help prepare businesses for an outbreak on a premises, or the imposition of animal standstill movements
- Ensure consideration of measures to prevent pollution of the environment, harm to animal or human health, specifically encouraging operators to think through potentially polluting actions and establish appropriate disinfecting and animal disposal strategies.

The EAD Program should detail the actions and responsibilities of staff at the site in the event of identifying abnormal symptoms that may be associated with an EAD.

The program should be completed by the site manager/business owner. The meat safety inspector(s) and stock handler(s) should have received training in abnormal animal health conditions that require them to inform the site manager/business owner. They will then report it to DPIRD.

Employee work instruction details:

- Who to tell if an employee sees symptoms at ante or post mortem
- Who to contact DPIRD
- What staff should do while they wait

The Program should include a map of the site, detailing but not limited to,

- perimeter fence showing gates, parking facilities; indicate types of surfaces
- drainage plan
- numbered yards
- numbered chillers and freezers
- adjoining premises with susceptible stock
- suitable areas for burial pits
- ponds and waste water disposal
- secure entry and exit points (cleaning and disinfectant points)
- showering/changing area
- storage facilities i.e. feed, potable water, rendered products etc
- proposed locations of cleaning disinfectant wash down sites

Useful Resources

MINTRAC: Emergency Animal Disease Response Plan for Small Domestic Slaughter House and Knackeries – Training Manual

MINTRAC: Emergency Animal Disease Response Plan for Small Domestic Slaughter House and Knackeries – EAD Program Template

Contact the Food Unit:

To contact the Food Unit please utilise the “Food Unit Query” form which can be downloaded from our website: http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/4/1594/2/4-1594/display/contact_us.pm

Email: foodsafety@health.wa.gov.au

Phone: (08) 9222 2000

Website: ww2.health.wa.gov.au

Various parts of the information contained in this Fact Sheet were provided by MINTRAC.

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