



Situation Report 8 – Pigeon Paramyxovirus - Industry

Issued 20 December 2011

1. Situation to date

- a. The South Australian pigeon flock remains free of pigeon paramyxovirus disease (PMV1) and there have been no cases in wild or feral birds in SA.
- b. Victoria has had a total of currently has 55 PMV1 infected pigeon properties. Of these 33 have been resolved and released from quarantine, with 22 remaining as infected premises.
- c. The last infected property was confirmed on the 14th December 2011.
- d. Paramyxovirus (PMV 1) has been confirmed in feral pigeons in 12 locations around Melbourne with several more recent suspected cases.
- e. There have been no detections of this disease in Australian commercial or backyard poultry flocks.
- f. Pigeon racing and shows have been cancelled in South Australia until further notice.
- g. A meeting with pigeon organizations to discuss the current PMV1 disease prevention strategy in SA is being organized for early January.
- h. The pigeon breeding season is underway and there is expected to be considerable movement of birds from states other than Victoria this month.

2. Actions taken in South Australia

- a. **It is prohibited for pigeons to be brought into South Australia from interstate without prior approval from the Chief Inspector of Stock. Significant penalties apply.**
- b. **The Livestock Act of 1997 has been amended to list virulent avian paramyxovirus as a notifiable exotic disease.** This means that pigeon and poultry owners and producers, as well as veterinarians are under obligation to report any signs of the disease in their flocks.
- c. **Biosecurity SA, through the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD), made up of state and territory Chief Veterinary Officers, has supported the importation of a killed vaccine from overseas.** The process for any vaccine import now rests with pharmaceutical companies making application to DAFF to import the vaccine.
- d. Biosecurity SA is working with industry to minimise the likelihood of introducing pigeon paramyxovirus into SA pigeon flocks.
- e. Industry supports the continuing voluntary ban of exhibitions, shows and races (including tossing) of pigeons. Loft flying is supported as this is a low risk activity.
- f. Anyone wishing to race or show birds should contact their industry body for advice.
- g. Interstate movements from non-infected state and territories are allowed **under permit**. Permit application forms can be found at: http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/animalhealth/animal_health/pigeon_paramyxovirus
- h. Introductions from infected states i.e. Victoria **will not be allowed** except under exceptional circumstances requiring CVO approval.
- i. Information has been provided to veterinarians, industry and the public about the incident, to increase awareness and provide information about what to look out for, who to contact and measures that can be undertaken to limit the risk to their birds.
- j. BSA has investigated current options for vaccinating pigeons. Information is available at;

http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/animalhealth/animal_health/pigeon_paramyxovirus/vaccination_of_birds_against_avian_paramyxovirus_pmv-1

- k. **Movement restrictions and biosecurity measures remain the primary means for controlling this disease until any pigeon vaccine is imported.**
- l. To assist pigeon owners mitigate the risks, Biosecurity SA is promoting good biosecurity practices and movement limitation. A biosecurity factsheet for bird owners has been distributed and is available on the PIRSA website –see [Biosecurity for Bird Owners](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/animalhealth/animal_health/pigeon_paramyxovirus) (http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/animalhealth/animal_health/pigeon_paramyxovirus)
- m. Suspected cases of paramyxovirus infection should be reported to Biosecurity SA by phoning **1800 675 888**.