## **Safe Operating Procedure**

**Hazard** – Human exposure to Hendra virus from an infected or suspect horse.

# Preventative and emergency procedures for all users of the ODGC Equine Unit. 12/06/2016

**Location** – The University of Queensland Equine Unit – Farm Square, horse yards, paddocks, Equine Teaching Facility and Veterinary Medical Centre.

**Application** – All users of the Equine Unit, students, student horse owners, permanent staff, casual staff, volunteers, contractors (vets, farriers), visitors, instructors and anyone responsible for the care and welfare of horses on campus.

Obligations of person conducting business or undertaking – A person who conducts a business or undertaking has an obligation to ensure each of the person's workers and any other persons are not exposed to risks to their health and safety arising out of the conduct of the relevant person's business or undertaking. S28 WHSA 2011.

**Obligations of person in control of a workplace** – The person in control of a workplace must ensure the risk of injury or illness from a workplace is minimised for persons coming onto the workplace to work. S27 WHSA 2011.

**Obligations of users of the workplace** (as designated above under 'location') – A worker or anyone else at a workplace has an obligation to comply with the instructions given for workplace health and safety at the workplace by the person who conducts business at the workplace or is in control of a workplace. S29 WHSA 2011.

### Mandatory inductions required for all users of the Equine Unit

- Read Equine Unit manual
- Read and sign Equine Unit induction checklist
- Read all relevant Equine Unit risk assessments

Equine Unit Co-ordinator: Mitchell Coyle Contact 0417 999 399

Veterinarian: UQ Veterinary Medical Centre Contact: 07- 5460 1799

After hours: As above

#### 1. Horses transported onto Gatton Campus

• All incoming horses with unknown health status must undergo the induction procedures and be quarantined for 10-14 days in a yard or paddock that is isolated from all resident horses. Each animal must undergo a clinical examination, including temperature, heart rate, respiratory rate, mucous membrane colour and refill.

Horse movements on and off campus must be recorded in the Transport Logbook located in the offices at Farm Square.

#### 2. General maintenance of horses

- All Horses used for teaching and research must be vaccinated for HeV prior to commencement of program (refer to Hendra Virus Vaccination Implementation Strategy: Guideline)
- All student owned horses agisting at UQ Gatton Equine Unit must be vaccinated for HeV prior to arrival on campus.
- All personnel should pay attention to personal hygiene cover all cuts and abrasions, wash hands after handling horses, do not eat or smoke in the Equine Unit area (or when handling horses).
- Daily welfare observations must be made of all horses
- Signs and symptoms to be alert for are: abnormal behaviour, dullness, coughing, lack of appetite, nasal discharge, and ataxia. Evidence of these symptoms are considered risk factors see 3.
- Temperature screening rectal temperatures must be taken and recorded for stabled/yarded horses by all horse owners/caretakers every 2 days. A rise of 1.5 degrees in considered a risk factor see 3.
- Horses must not be left in yards overnight where trees are located that are designated a risk area.
- Horses must not be allowed to graze under fig trees near riding arenas at any time.
- Portable fenced mounted feeders should be placed as far away from fig trees as possible. If they cannot be moved more than 10 meters from a tree, then tyre feeders should be used instead. Tyre feeders must be placed away from trees and under shelter if available.
- Foods attractive to fruit bats must not be placed in feeding troughs, eg. Carrots, apples, molasses.

#### 3. Suspected Hendra virus cases

If a horse exhibits abnormal signs described above, the following steps should be taken immediately:

- Wash hands, face and body with soap and water under a shower.
- Notify the Equine Unit Manager, Supervisor and/or other senior staff member
- Do not touch the horse. Await instructions from the Equine Unit Manager, Supervisor or Veterinarian.

4. These instructions apply to the Equine Unit Manager and Supervisor or other senior personnel including security officers and relate to actions required for suspected Hendra virus cases.

If a horse exhibits abnormal signs described above, the following steps should be taken immediately:

- Wear PPE see below
- Establish quarantine area around the horse and leave the suspected horse where it was found.
- Prohibit all personnel from approaching the quarantine area (notify Security).
- The following PPE must be worn when handling suspect horses. This equipment is kept in the Hendra virus PPE kit located in offices in Farm Square.
  - o Impervious overalls
  - o Rubber boots/impervious over boots
  - o Particular mask P2 **not** effective for bearded operators.
  - o Face shield or safety eyewear
  - o Nitrile gloves double layer
  - o Clinical waste bags for used disposable PPE
- Contact a veterinarian (see above)