

Surveillance Program for Newcastle Disease under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*

**For implementation of the National Newcastle Disease
Management Plan**

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1 Biosecurity program

1.1 Program name

The surveillance program (biosecurity program) for Newcastle disease (ND) will be known as the Surveillance Program for Newcastle Disease (the Program).

2 Requirement for a surveillance program

2.1 Purpose and rationale

The *Biosecurity Act 2014* (the Act) provides for the establishment of surveillance programs. Surveillance programs are directed at any of the following—

- (a) monitoring compliance with the Act in relation to a particular matter to which the Act applies;
- (b) confirming the presence, or finding out the extent of the presence, in the State or the parts of the State to which the program applies, of the biosecurity matter to which the program relates;
- (c) confirming the absence, in the State or the parts of the State to which the program applies, of the biosecurity matter to which the program relates;
- (d) monitoring the effects of measures taken in response to a biosecurity risk;
- (e) monitoring compliance with requirements about prohibited matter or restricted matter;
- (f) monitoring levels of biosecurity matter or levels of biosecurity matter in a carrier.

The purpose of this Program is to detail the epidemiologically defensible, risk based surveillance plan for chicken meat producers and companies opting to discontinue ND vaccination in Queensland broiler flocks.

The objectives of the Program are to:

- continue to support the low risk status of ND virus in Queensland;
- demonstrate through active surveillance that the non-vaccinated chicken populations (practical sentinels) in Queensland remain free of non-vaccine strain ND virus;
- demonstrate that if sero-conversion occurs in these sentinels, it does not involve precursor or virulent ND virus; and
- enable investigations of mortality or morbidity fitting the case definition as stated in National Newcastle Disease Management Plan in commercial poultry flocks in Queensland (passive surveillance).

Virulent ND caused by avian paramyxovirus of type 1 serotype (APMV-1) is prohibited matter under the *Biosecurity Act 2014* (the Act). A person must not deal¹ with ND virus infected birds or a carrier of ND virus. An occupier of a place or a registered biosecurity entity² (RBE) has an obligation to report³ the presence of prohibited matter.

ND is a highly contagious, generalised viral disease of domestic poultry, cage, aviary, and wild birds. In its virulent form, it is usually seen in domestic poultry (especially chickens) as a rapidly fatal, high-mortality condition characterised by gastrointestinal, respiratory and/or nervous signs.

¹ See section 37 (Dealing with prohibited matter) of the Act.

² The Act defines a registered biosecurity entity has obtained registration under chapter 7, part 2.

³ See section 36 (Reporting presence of prohibited matter) of the Act.

Outbreaks of ND have occurred in Australia in the 1930s and from 1998–2002 (New South Wales in 1998, 1999 and 2000 and in Victoria in 2002). ND prevention in Australia is managed under the National Newcastle Disease Management Plan with the vaccination program that mitigates the risk of an outbreak of ND. In jurisdictions considered to be of low risk for an outbreak of ND (QLD, SA, WA and TAS), vaccination of short-lived chickens (i.e. birds of relatively low risk) may be reduced as per the revised Standard Operation Procedures under the National Newcastle Disease Management Plan. However, in flocks that opt for reduced vaccination, surveillance protocols in this Program must be implemented.

To support the low risk ND status (apparent from previous surveys and risk assessments carried out by the ND Steering Committee and its Surveillance Working Group and Risk Assessment Working Group) assigned to Queensland, a 12-month survey of unvaccinated broilers is to be conducted to assess the epidemiology of ND virus, including the serological profile of non-vaccinated flocks.

2.2 Measures that are required to achieve the Purpose

The key activities undertaken by the Program to support the National Newcastle Disease Management Plan include but are not limited to:

- surveillance to check for the presence or absence of non-vaccine strain ND virus;
- monitoring to check the effectiveness of measures taken against ND virus;
- reporting any unusual morbidity and mortality in un-vaccinated flock in the suspect of ND;
- checking compliance with the reporting obligation for virulent ND;
- timely investigation on serology positive flock(s) to establish potential cause of ND virus infection.

2.3 Powers of authorised officers

Entry of place

The Act provides that authorised officers appointed under the Act may, at reasonable times, enter a place situated in an area to which a biosecurity program applies, to take any action authorised by the biosecurity program⁴. These activities must be done in a timely and efficient manner to ensure that the measures are as effective as possible. The Program will authorise entry into places to allow these measures to be undertaken.

In accordance with the Act a reasonable attempt will be made to locate an occupier⁵ or a RBE and obtain the occupier's or RBE's consent to the entry prior to an authorised officer entering a place to undertake activities under the Program. Nevertheless, an authorised officer may enter the place if⁶—

- (a) the authorised officer is unable to locate an occupier or a RBE after making a reasonable attempt to do so; or
- (b) the occupier or RBE refuses to consent to the entry.

If after entering a place, an authorised officer finds an occupier or RBE present or the occupier or RBE refuses to consent to the entry—an authorised officer will make reasonable attempts to produce an identity card for inspection and inform the occupier or RBE of the reason for entering and the authorisation under the Act to enter without the permission of the occupier or RBE. An authorised officer under the Program must make a reasonable attempt to inform the occupier or RBE of any steps taken, or

⁴ See section 261 (Power to enter a place under biosecurity program) of the Act.

⁵ The Act defines an **occupier**, of a place, generally to include the person who apparently occupies the place (or, if more than 1 person apparently occupies the place, any of the persons); any person at the place who is apparently acting with the authority of a person who apparently occupies the place; or if no-one apparently occupies the place, any person who is an owner of the place.

⁶ See section 270 (Entry of place under sections 261 and 262) of the Act.

to be taken, and if steps have been taken or are to be taken, that it is an offence to do anything that interferes with a step taken or to be taken.

An authorised officer must leave a notice in a conspicuous position and in a reasonably secure way. This notice must state the date and time of entry and information addressing the reason for entry, authorisation to enter a place and the steps undertaken by the authorised officer after entry.

Obligations

Program-specific obligations on an occupier of a place in the area to which the Program relates are specified in the Program authorisation.

General powers of authorised officers

Nothing in this Program or its associated Authorisation limits the powers of authorised officers under Chapter 10 of the Act.

2.4 Consultation

A consultation process has been implemented that included broiler industry stakeholders through Queensland Poultry Health Liaison Group (PHLG) meetings and email communications.

Consultation activities include:

- PHLG meeting agenda on ND surveillance program for unvaccinated broiler flocks in Queensland including informing the broiler industry of the non-vaccination option in Queensland and drafting the Queensland ND surveillance plan;
- Circulation of draft ND surveillance plan to key broiler industry personnel for comments;
- Distribution of relevant information through PHLG member email list.

Additional consultation has occurred with all Queensland local governments prior to the authorisation of the Program.

3 Authorisation of a surveillance program in the State of Queensland

I, Dr Elizabeth Woods, the chief executive of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (the Department) acting pursuant to section 235 of the *Biosecurity Act 2014* (the Act), authorise the Surveillance Program for Newcastle Disease (the program) in the State of Queensland, on the basis that:

- I am satisfied there is low risk of virulent Newcastle disease (ND) outbreak in Queensland, which is prohibited matter under the Act⁷, and that the broiler industry can opt to withdraw the ND vaccination; and
- I am satisfied that surveillance measures are required for the unvaccinated commercial broiler flock (500 or more chickens) in Queensland in accordance with the National Newcastle Disease Management Plan.

Dr Elizabeth Woods
Director-General
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

Authorised on 02 / 06 / 2016

3.1 Biosecurity matter

The biosecurity matter to which the Program relates is virulent ND virus - avian paramyxovirus of type 1 serotype (APMV-1).

3.2 Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the Program in the State of Queensland is to:

- confirm the presence or absence of virulent ND virus in the State;
- monitor the effects of measures taken in response to a biosecurity risk of virulent ND virus; and
- monitor compliance with reporting requirements about ND.

3.3 Area affected by the Program

The Program will apply to a place where a person keeps a commercial broiler flock (500 or more chickens) that has withdrawn from ND vaccination in Queensland.

3.4 Powers of authorised officers

An authorised officer of the Program appointed under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*, may enter a place—other than a residence⁸ - without a warrant and without the occupier's or RBE's consent within the State of

⁷ See section 235(3)(a) (Authorising and carrying out biosecurity program) of the Act.

⁸ 'residence' means a premises or a part of a premises that is a residence with the meaning of s 259(2) and (3) of the Act

Queensland under the Program⁹. An authorised officer appointed under the *Biosecurity Act 2014* will also have the power to enter a place under the Program¹⁰.

An authorised officer can exercise the powers of an authorised officer under the Act in relation to the Program, if the authorised officer is appointed by the Chief Executive¹¹.

An authorised officer appointed under the Act can exercise the powers of an authorised officer under the Act in relation to the Program, subject to conditions of that appointment.

An authorised officer has general powers after entering a place¹² to do any of the following:

General powers in the Act	Measures an authorised officers under the Program
Search any part of the place	<i>Search a place to conduct disease investigation on broiler flock(s) with serology positive test result under the Program.</i>
Inspect, examine or film any part of the place or anything at the place	<i>Inspect, examine and film to assist with tracing of carriers of ND virus to and from a place.</i>
Take for examination a thing, or a sample of or from a thing, at the place	<i>Inspect and take samples from broiler flocks that have withdrawn from ND vaccination.</i>
Place an identifying mark in or on anything at the place	<i>Take samples for the purposes of diagnostic analysis, to ascertain the presence or absence of ND virus.</i>
Place a sign or notice at the place	<i>Identify carriers such as vehicles, footwear, clothing, other appliances or any other thing from the land, that have been in contact with ND infected birds or waste upon which ND virus has been identified with the Program.</i>
Produce an image or writing at the place from an electronic document or, to the extent it is not practicable, take a thing containing an electronic document to another place to produce an image or writing	<i>Produce a written and/or electronic note(s) to support Program activities.</i>
Take to, into or onto the place and use any person, detection animal, equipment and materials the authorised officer reasonably requires for exercising the authorised officer's powers under this division	<i>Request and inspect any documents required to be kept under the Act.</i>
Remain at the place for the time necessary to achieve the purpose of the entry	<i>Take GPS coordinates to ensure accuracy of location details of carriers of ND virus.</i>
The authorised officer may take a necessary step to allow the exercise of a general power	
If the authorised officer takes a document from the place to copy it, the authorised officer must copy and return the document to the place as soon as practicable	
If the authorised officer takes from the place an article or device reasonably capable of producing a document from an electronic document to produce the document, the authorised officer must produce the document and return the article or device to the place as soon as practicable.	

⁹ See section 259 (General powers to enter places) of the Act

¹⁰ See section 261 (Power to enter a place under biosecurity program) of the Act

¹¹ See section 255 (3) (Powers of particular authorised officers limited) of the Act

¹² See section 296 (General powers) of the Act. In this section In this section—

- **examine** includes analyse, test, account, measure, weigh, grade, gauge and identify.
- **film** includes photograph, videotape and record an image in another way.
- **inspect**, a thing, includes open the thing and examine its contents.

An authorised officer may make a requirement (a **help requirement**) of an occupier of the place, a RBE or a person at the place to give the authorised officer reasonable help to exercise a general power¹³. An authorised officer may carry out, or direct another person to carry out, the sampling of unvaccinated broiler birds at a place.

3.5 Obligations imposed on a person under the Program

A person may be required under a program authorisation to do any of the following:

- notify Biosecurity Queensland, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries of the date of withdrawal ND vaccination from their broiler flocks;
- identify the flocks that are eligible for the inclusion in the ND Surveillance Program (at 6 months and 12 months after the cessation of vaccination and ready to be sent for slaughter);
- collect tracheal and cloacal swabs from 10 birds (10 tracheal and 10 cloacal swabs) from each identified flock for PCR/virus isolation 12-14 days before final slaughter;
- collect a minimum of 15 blood samples for serology (haemagglutination inhibition test) at final slaughter, either collected on the farm prior for slaughter or collected at the processing plant during slaughter;
- provide further samples and information for investigation at request;
- assist the authorised officer in the execution of their powers.

3.6 Commencement and duration of the Program

The Program will begin on 1 July 2016. The Program will conclude when the National ND Management Plan Steering Committee determines that surveillance of unvaccinated broilers in Queensland is no longer required.

3.7 Consultation with relevant parties

As required by the Act¹⁴, I have consulted, prior to the authorisation of this Program, with all local governments in Queensland in the area to which the Program applies. Additional consultation has been undertaken with the broiler industry in Queensland.

3.8 Notification of relevant parties of requirements

As required by the Act¹⁵, I will give public notice of the Program 14 days before the Program starts by:

- giving the notice, by way of letter, to each government department or government owned corporation responsible for land in the area to which the Program relates; and
- publishing the notice on the Department's website.

A copy of the Program (including its Authorisation) is available for inspection at the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries head office at 80 Ann Street Brisbane and regional offices. A copy of the Program is also available to view and print at no cost on the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries website at www.daf.qld.gov.au. A copy of the Program Authorisation will be provided on request by contacting the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Customer Service Centre on 13 25 23.

¹³ See section 297 (Power to require reasonable help) of the Act.

¹⁴ See section 239 (Consultation about proposed biosecurity program) of the Act.

¹⁵ See section 240 (Notice of proposed biosecurity program) of the Act.