



Horse Safety Australia

Special Equine Influenza Issue

January 2008

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CLINICS held late in 2007:

We were able to hold two of the planned clinics late last year (Mill Valley Ranch in Victoria and Black Mountain near Cairns) both under strict biosecurity regimes. These were outside the proclaimed EI zones. Unfortunately other clinics have not gone ahead during the past months, due to the high risks linked to EI. Also many potential participants have not had the extra money to attend clinics, due to the slump in all areas of the horse industry. Still, on a more cheerful note, we seem to be on the way to recovery...the last reported EI new infection in NSW was in late December, so that is VERY encouraging. It is quite amazing that we seem to have gained control of the epidemic...Even the most optimistic were worried it would get away from the containment areas! Well done, all those who obeyed all the restrictions, some even to the point of threatening their businesses. Our sympathies go to those whose horses were infected and have struggled at this time. Let's hope there is not too much long term damage, and that we can gain something useful from this experience!

The threat of Equine Influenza is nearly over (we hope). The authorities are still talking about mid 2008 for Australia to be completely clear of it...and these holidays are a significant time for continuing the containment. Please continue to be careful!

We all should have processes in place to control the potential spread of EI through visitors who come on our sites to ride our horses...DON'T let your guard down now...That child who hops out of the car and pats your horse, could have patted another horse over the fence at the place the family stopped for a coffee! Keep your biosecurity measures going...have the hand washing bowl between the clients and the horses, so they cannot transfer infections!

The following speaks for itself...

"Horse Kills Perth Toddler (Dec 2007)

An 18-month-old Perth boy has died after a horse picked him up with its teeth and threw him several metres. The toddler and his mother were in a paddock on their property in Oakford, south of Perth, when the accident happened on Monday afternoon. Police said the horse picked the boy up by the neck with its teeth and threw him into the air several metres. The boy was in a critical condition and died in Princess Margaret Hospital this morning."

What a tragedy! and another message to us to take the power of horses seriously!

A reminder: www.outbreak.gov.au lets you know the current situation on restrictions, general information about EI, and the changes in place as restrictions ease. Also this site provides links to your state's department of primary industries where permits can be obtained. In most areas permits are still required for movements of horses (interstate and across zones) or gathering of groups of horses (biosecurity measures need to be in place). Note: most insurance policies will NOT cover events yet, unless they are specifically approved (and often with an extra premium due). At the time of writing this, it was still considered the responsibility of the organiser of an event to pay all costs related to the people and horses involved, should there be a lockdown because an EI outbreak occurred at that event.

Second Round of Business Assistance Grants

For the past 6 weeks there has been a Business Assistance Extension Grant (also \$5000) available for those who received this grant the first time round. If you received one of the first round of grants, and think you may be eligible for a second, contact the National Hotline: 1800 234 002 (daily 8am to 8pm) or access Centrelink forms on the following site: <http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/forms/a1613.htm>

Post equine influenza activities:

- **Try to get some editorial into your local papers to make it clear that you are back in business after the epidemic...**(Even if you didn't shut down completely, just experienced a slow down in your customer numbers, it is worth making sure the locals know you are up and running!). They could even be willing to print a story about your business and how you survived...Especially if you provide a few photos (sick horses/recovered horses/ clients enjoying a ride/ biosecurity procedures: still washing their hands or shoes etc.)
- **Distribute a new batch of brochures** in local tourist information centres/saddleries/other useful locations : corner shops/general stores/novelty shops/newsagents etc.
- **Support your local horse stores** (saddleries, fodder shops, etc)
- **Consider approaching your local school and offering a course in horsemanship in 2008**

If any members have ideas that have worked for them, and will share these with others please send them in and I will include them in the next newsletter....and on the website.

A special deal for Horse Safety Australia members...

We are just going through the final stages of organising a link with Saddleworld shops nationally...Many of these have really struggled to survive through the EI crisis...so please support your local saddlery all you can. The deal will provide us with a discount on purchases at any of their shops.

Bonnetts Saddleworld (in SA) will still give us special extra discounts on bulk purchases of helmets, Toestoppers and some other items. We will let you know the details of these in a letter we will be sending out in the next couple of weeks.

Incidentally we are pleased to say that Saddleworld's latest catalogue has a feature on safety tips for horse owners co-authored by Horse Safety Australia (featuring our logo). You can pick up a copy at your nearest Saddleworld store and look for this on page 35.....We are happy to have this free publicity, and to be apart of the general distribution of information on important safety issues.

So, look out for your personal letter in the mail soon. It will have an identifying membership number on it. This will be your authority to access the discounts at Saddleworld stores nationally... Eventually, we hope also to use this number for other discounts we are able to negotiate.



We have been fortunate to purchase a number of copies of Jane Myers book *Horse Safe* at a very good price. We were in a position to have significant input into this book, and recommend it highly as a good, general summary of safe procedures for working around horses. If you would like a copy of this book (rrp \$49.95) we can sell it to you at a special member's price of \$33 for a single copy or \$27.50 per copy for multiple copies. Prices include GST. (Postage costs will be added to your invoice.)

In future, we would like to email newsletters as much as possible, rather than post them. This should save us some money, which can then be used for other worthy projects....Please send your latest email address to Nina so she can add you to the internet communication list....and make sure the information she has is up to date. Thanks...

To contact Nina at the office:

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