



Equestrian Event Biosecurity Planning

Guidelines to the preparation of horse event
Biosecurity Plan to minimise
the risk of introducing Equine Influenza into South Australia

EQUINE EVENT APPROVALS

To minimise the potential spread of Equine Influenza (EI) should it enter South Australia, all horse events involving 10 or more horses from 2 or more properties require a permit issued by the Department of Primary Industries and Resource, SA (PIRSA).

For an event to qualify for a permit, the event organisers must have a Biosecurity Plan and, for larger events, a Contingency Plan approved by PIRSA Animal Health prior to the event. There must be a single person or incorporated body as the applicant for the permit and this person or body is responsible for conducting the meeting in accordance with the Biosecurity Plan. PIRSA Animal Health will randomly audit events to check that this is the case.

This document is a guideline to help you in applying for a permit. Because each event and each venue is different, there is no “one size fits all” for biosecurity plans so you will need to do a bit of thinking about the specific risks associated with your event and how you will address these risks.

The PIRSA Animal Health group is able to assist you if you get stuck on any requirement. If you are proposing to hold an event with more than 30 horses, we recommend you consult with us before you get too far into the planning to make sure you are on the right track.

Key Points to remember when planning include:

- The EI virus is spread directly from horse to horse or it may travel between horses on objects and people
- It takes 3-5 days for a horse infected with EI to show any signs
- Horses may excrete virus (and therefore be infective) before they show signs of the disease
- People or equipment from the infected areas of NSW or QLD may be infective for 2-3 days

Visit www.pir.sa.gov.au to download non-racing horse event requirements

WHAT IS A BIOSECURITY PLAN?

A Biosecurity Plan describes the actions you will take to minimise risk of horses at the event being exposed to EI and to minimise the spread of the disease if it does get into an event. Every event involving horses should have a Biosecurity Plan. Biosecurity shouldn't only apply at events but should also be implemented at home by all horse owners.

Each event is different and each venue is different so you need to tailor your plan to your event.

Biosecurity at events can be divided into 3 levels:

- Level 1 – What actions are taken before the event
- Level 2 – What 's done at the event
- Level 3 – What's done after the event

Level 1 - Minimise the chances of the EI virus entering an event

This is the most important level of biosecurity for an event. If none of the horses, participants, or spectators carries the virus then the event can occur in absolute safety.

Unfortunately it's not so easy to be sure that people or horses are not carrying the virus. You often have little knowledge or control over what people do or who has contact with their horse before they come to your event. However, there are some things you can do to minimise the risk.

For a start, PIRSA now requires all participants at an event to complete an *Event Participant Declaration*. This is a statement, signed by the participant, to declare that they have not been in the infected areas of NSW or QLD in the past 3 days that that

their horse has been healthy for the past 14 days. A similar statement, called a *Horse Health Statement*, is required for people to bring horses into SA from Victoria, WA or the NT. The signed EPD or a copy of the HHS must be collected by the event organisers from each participant and kept for at least 7 weeks after the event.

Other steps you can take include:

- Have participants pre-register and sign an agreement to comply with your biosecurity and contingency requirements (see the section on Contingency Planning later on)
- Ensure all competitors arrive in freshly laundered clothes
- Tell owners to clean and disinfect floats before traveling to the event
- Do not encourage interstate participants
- Make sure no participant uses equipment shipped from NSW or QLD in the preceding 3 days.
- Only accept entrants into the venue who arrive with a Horse Health Statement (HHS) and/or an Event Participant Declaration (EPD). These documents are available on the PIRSA website
- Have an experience horse person check horses on arrival to make sure they are healthy
- Don't allow any spectators

You may not be able to do every one of these suggestions – pick the ones that can be applied to your event.

Level 2 - Minimise the risk of spread of the disease at an event

If Level 1 biosecurity fails and a person or horse brings the virus into your event, it is probable that no one will know. You can't tell if a horse is incubating the disease and you can't tell if a person is carrying the virus on their clothes or equipment. Therefore, you must have some steps in place to try and to minimise the spread of virus at the event.

Some suggestions are:

- Keep horses separated from each other
- Have separate water buckets and feed buckets for each horse

- Do not allow competitors to share riding equipment and tack
- Do not allow dogs at the event
- If there are spectators at the event ensure they are kept at least 3 metres away from the horses and participants

You should include these conditions in your Event Rules. Of course, not all events can have all these rules – you need to pick the ones you can apply. You also need to think about how you will let people know these rules and how you will enforce them.

Other suggestions for Level 2 biosecurity are:

- Provide ample hand washing facilities (soap and water) and ensure competitors and handlers wash their hands
- Provide good footbaths (at least 1.2 m wide and 10 cm deep) and insist competitors and handlers use them (footbaths are a good physical reminder to people about the need for biosecurity)

Level 3 - Minimise the spread of the disease after an event:

As we've already said, if EI is introduced into your event you probably won't know it and the horses will go home. It is important that some steps are in place to minimise possibility of disease spread after the event. Participants at events should agree to:

- Participants should take their horse directly to their post event destination
- Handlers should shower (including washing hair) and change their clothes before coming into contact with other horses
- Horses should be closely monitored for the next 5 days and any suspicion of illness reported to PIRSA or their vet immediately

DEVELOPING YOUR BIOSECURITY PLAN

Developing a Biosecurity Plan is not difficult but will take a little time and some planning. We hope you'll agree that this is a small price to pay to keep South Australia free of EI.

Step 1: Check with you club or organisation

- Check with your horse organisation (eg Pony Club, EFA, etc) to see if they have any governance rulings or other additional considerations. They may

also be able to help you with your plan

- Check with the club's insurance company to make sure there are no restrictions on holding events
- Check with the land manager and neighbors to ensure they are aware the event is proposed to take place and are aware of the Contingency Plan
- Check what disciplinary powers can be enacted against club members and event participants who fail to comply with event organisers requests

Step 2: Review the venue site

You need to submit a map of the site with your permit application. You should think about how the vehicle, people and horse traffic will flow. Other things to consider are:

- Are the fences adequate?
- Where will the participants enter the grounds?
- Where do you unload the horses?
- Where are the stable and water points for the horses?
- Where will spectators enter the grounds (if there are any)?
- How will you keep spectators away from the horses and competitors?
- Where are the toilet and catering facilities?
- Where will you place hand-washing facilities and foot baths?
- For larger events, where will you isolate any sick horse until the vet arrives?

The fences, amenities, water points, hand-washing facilities and traffic flow etc. should be drawn on the map and submitted with your application for a permit. Also show where any neighboring horses are.

Step 3: Biosecurity at the event

You should write out some clear rules for your meeting and have all participants sign an agreement to abide by your rules. An example is given in Appendix 3. For larger

events you should consider appointing a “Biosecurity Marshall” to monitor compliance with your rules.

You will also need to tell us how you will:

- Inform your participants, Officials, judges, coaches etc about your Biosecurity Requirements.
- Keep uninvited spectators or participants away from the event
- Maintain accurate records of participants and horse arrivals and departures
- Deal with participants who arrive without a completed EPD or HHS. You should not allow entry to an interstate horse without a validated Horse Health Statement – crossing the state border without a HHS is a serious breach of the law. We suggest that you have a separate area for SA people without an EPD and have them complete one before they can proceed into the event. This means you will need blank copies of these documents available at the event.
- Strictly enforced 3 metre barrier between spectators and the participants and their horses.
 - No contact includes no shared toilets or catering facilities.
 - Also no contact between officials and the public if these officials have contact with participants and/or horses.
- For larger events identify an isolation area away from the other horses where sick horses can be moved for veterinary inspection and treatment
- Allow access for ambulance or other emergency vehicles without compromising the biosecurity.

The Biosecurity Plan document

The document and maps you submit with your permit application must show us how you will run the event as safely as possible taking into consideration all the above guidelines.

The bigger the event, the more detailed the Biosecurity Plan needs to be but for small events, it shouldn't take too long to prepare once you've thought about the issues. A typical Biosecurity Plan will have:

- Maps that include the information in Appendix 1.
- A copy of your Rules for the event biosecurity (example in Appendix 2)
- A description of how you will manage the event biosecurity (see the example in Appendix 3)

- A list of emergency contact numbers (Appendix 4)

Finally, you should be able to tick off the checklist in Appendix 5.

THE CONTINGENCY PLAN

What is a Contingency Plan?

A Contingency Plan describes the steps you will take if things go wrong.

If EI does get into South Australia there is likely to be an immediate statewide standstill of all horses. Any horses already at an event will not be allowed to leave the site. This could take from 2 to 6 days. If EI is diagnosed at the event, the horses will be quarantined on the site for up to 6 weeks.

A contingency plan should also address how this eventuality is dealt with i.e. accommodating, feeding and watering the horses, securing the site, providing people with accommodation, toilet and shower facilities, etc.

If the proposed venue is not capable of accommodating the expected number of horses, people and security for an extended time, consider moving the event to another venue.

All event organisers should consider their contingency planning. With smaller events the task is easier but no less important.

A more detailed guide to developing a Contingency Plan is on the PIRSA website. A completed contingency plan will be essential for larger events (more than 25 horses).

The following issues need to be addressed when developing a contingency plan.

- Who is the person responsible for notifying all participants of a Standstill?
- How will participants be notified?
- The response to attempts to remove horses from the site – it is highly likely that some participants will attempt to remove their horses from the event if a Standstill is called. Immediately record the owner and horse identity and notify the police.
- Site security during the standstill.
- Who will be responsible for the horses held on-site?
- How to hold the horses for an extended period (stables, temporary yards etc)?
- Feed supply.
- Water supply.
- Exercising horses while they are confined to the site.
- Veterinary treatment if required
- Accommodation, toilet facilities and washing amenities for horse carers
- How to disinfect vehicles and people to allow them to leave the site (without their horses)?

APPLYING FOR A PERMIT

The permit application is available on the PIRSA website www.pir.sa.gov.au. Complete the application form and post or fax the form to PIRSA along with the Biosecurity and Contingency Plans.

Please allow 2 weeks for processing the application as sometimes we require time for follow-up and consultation to ensure the event can take place safely.

APPENDIX 1 – MAPS OF THE VENUE

Two maps will need to be prepared:

1. Venue location
2. Venue layout

1. The **venue location map** could be a copy of street map or a hand-drawn map. It will need to show:

- An accurate identification of the property where the event is to be held. Options for identification of the location are the Certificate of Title Number or the Property Identification Code (PIC) number or the street address.
- The name of the District Council where the venue is located
- Major and minor roads around the venue
- If neighboring properties run horses (or other members of the horse family) then they should be indicated on the plan as “neighbor contact” with the name and contact details of the owner, lessor or responsible person listed in the emergency contact list (Appendix 4).

2. The **venue layout** is a more detailed map of the venue and will need to show:

- segregated areas for different activities
 - horse competition areas
 - horse exercise areas
 - tie-up stalls, yards and stables (including location and number)
 - event secretaries tent
 - parking areas for floats
 - parking areas for spectators and officials
 - spectator viewing areas
 - toilets
 - food/eating areas
- entry & exit points to the venue and traffic flow
- water courses and water access points
- roads, laneways and any nearby public trails
- buildings
- fences and type
- boundaries
- waste disposal site
- indicate how people and horse traffic will be managed for the purposes of separation e.g. placement of signage, security guards, stewards and fencing

APPENDIX 2 – DRAFT BIOSECURITY RULES

Biosecurity rules for [event]

1. All participants must present a signed Horse Health Statement (HHS - interstate horses only) or an Event Participant Declaration (EPD – SA horses) on arrival at the venue. Both forms are available on the PIRSA website. No participant will be allowed entry into the event without the appropriate form.
2. All participants must arrive in freshly laundered clothes.
3. All horses must have mud and dirt removed from their hooves and must be transported in clean, disinfected floats.
4. No participant may bring tack or equipment shipped from NSW or QLD in the 3 days preceding the event
5. Participants must not share tack or equipment unless they come from the same property.
6. All participants must bring their own feed and water buckets. These are not to be shared.
7. Participants will minimise their contact with other participants at the event.
8. Participants will have NO physical contact with ANY spectators at the event.
9. There will be no dogs at the event.
10. Participants must obey directions given to them by event organisers or officials including immediately leaving the venue if requested to do so.
11. Any suspicion of illness in any horse at the event must be immediately reported to the event organisers or officials.
12. After the event, all horses will be transported directly to the address nominated on the Horse Health Statement or Event Participant Declaration.
13. Once they are home, all participants will shower (including washing hair) and change into clean clothes before having contact with other horses.
14. Participants will closely monitor their horses for at least 7 days after the event and immediately report any signs of respiratory disease to PIRSA on 1800 675 888.
15. In the event of a state-wide standstill or quarantine, all participants will remain at the venue until cleared to leave by PIRSA or the event organisers.
16. In the event of a standstill or quarantine, each participant will be responsible for the care and maintenance of their horse including feeding and watering.

I have read the Biosecurity rules for this event and agree to abide by them.

Signed Date

(Parent or guardian should sign if participant is under 18 years of age)

APPENDIX 3 – AN EXAMPLE BIOSECURITY DOCUMENT FOR A SMALL EVENT

Biosecurity Plan for Dressage Event to be held at Boolaroo Show Grounds on the 23/2/2008

Event participants:

This event will be limited to 22 participants from South Australia and Victoria only. All participants will pre-register and will be sent a copy of the Event Biosecurity Rules (attached) and a copy of "Guidelines for the Horse Industry to Minimise the Spread of Equine Influenza". All participants must agree in writing to the Event Biosecurity Rules.

Spectators:

Spectators will be limited to immediate family members. Spectators will be confined to the area shown on the attached map and a double rope/flag barrier will be erected to separate spectators from the horses and competitors by a distance of at least 3 metres. Any spectator or riders breaching this barrier will be immediately removed from the event. Spectators and riders have separate amenities (see map).

Gate security:

There are two entrances to the grounds. Spectators and participants will enter by separate gates and these gates will be locked after all participants have arrived. The EPD or a copy of the HHS will be collected on arrival. Participants without a signed EPD or HHS will not be allowed into the event but SA participants will be given the opportunity to complete the Declaration on arrival. Horses will not be unloaded until a signed EPD has been handed in.

On arrival, each float will be inspected for cleanliness and each horse inspected for good health by an experienced club member. The unloading and inspection area is shown on the map.

All completed EPD and HHS copies will be kept by the club secretary for 7 weeks after the event.

Monitoring compliance:

A club official will be designated the "Biosecurity Marshall" and will monitor compliance with the event. The Marshall will have the authority to request any competitor, spectator, or uninvited person to leave the event if they breach the biosecurity rules. If anyone refuses this request, the police will be called for assistance.

Sick horses:

Any horse developing a temperature or other clinical signs of EI will be immediately isolated (see map) and both PIRSA and the owner's veterinarian will be notified. No horse will be allowed to leave the venue until the sick horse has been examined.

Contingency:

In the event of a standstill or event quarantine, all participants have agreed to be responsible for the care and maintenance of their horse. There is sufficient water on the venue site and feed can be purchased from local feed suppliers. Horses can be held in temporary yards (see map). The event organisers will cooperate with PIRSA to ensure the welfare and safety of the horses and participants.

Attachments:

Map of location, map of venue, Event Biosecurity Rules, Emergency Contact Information

APPENDIX 4 – EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

The following details are needed in order to notify event organizers in a timely fashion of any changes to the current EI situation. Please fill in as many details as possible. More information is needed for larger events.

Club Name	
Club Postal Address	
Club Street Address/Location	
Club Grounds Certificate of Title (if known)	
Owner of Grounds (e.g. Council)	
Club Office Phone Number	
Club Facsimile Number	
Club Email address	
*Event Coordinator Name and Mobile	
President Name and Mobile	
Secretary Name and Mobile	
Overseeing Peak Body	
Neighbors with horses:	
Name	Contact number

APPENDIX 5 - Biosecurity Plan check list

Items that should be in most Biosecurity Plans	Tick when in your Plan
You have Biosecurity Rules for the event and have sent them to participants	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participants will pre-register and agree to your biosecurity requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>
There will be security at the gates to the venue at all times	<input type="checkbox"/>
A log of participants/horses arrivals and departures will be maintained and kept for at least 7 weeks after the event	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisers will not allow entry to participants who have not registered	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Plan includes provision for dealing with entrants who do not have an EPD/HHS.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Horses and floats will be inspected on arrival	<input type="checkbox"/>
All officials, judges, coaches etc will be given a copy of the PIRSA document "Guidelines for the Horse Industry to Minimise the Spread of Equine Influenza"	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are no spectators or The venue map and Plan show how spectators will be separated from competitors and horses by at least 3 metres	<input type="checkbox"/>
No participant will use equipment shipped from NSW or QLD in the preceding 3 days.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participants will keep horses separated from each other	<input type="checkbox"/>
All horses will have separate water buckets and feed buckets	<input type="checkbox"/>
No dogs will be allowed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hand-washing facilities are provided and marked on the map	<input type="checkbox"/>
Footbaths (at least 1.2 m wide and 10 cm deep) are provided and marked on the map	<input type="checkbox"/>
For larger events, consideration has been given to how ambulance or other emergency vehicles might access the event without compromising the biosecurity.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maps showing the location and layout of the venue have been completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
An Emergency Contact list has been included	<input type="checkbox"/>