

## WILDLIFE HEALTH AUSTRALIA NOTIFICATION - JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS VIRUS

Dear WHA Members,

### The Situation ([outbreak.gov.au](https://outbreak.gov.au)):

- In February 2022, Japanese encephalitis was detected and confirmed in piggeries in Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales, and on 4 March, cases were detected in South Australia.
- Japanese encephalitis is a mosquito-borne virus that can cause reproductive losses and encephalitis in pigs and horses. In rare cases, Japanese encephalitis can cause disease in people.
- The normal lifecycle of Japanese encephalitis is between waterbirds and mosquitos, which may then spill over to pigs and horses. Animals and people become infected through the bite of infected mosquitoes.

### Disease response([outbreak.gov.au](https://outbreak.gov.au)):

- The Australian, state and territory governments are working closely with human health authorities as well as the pig and horse industries through the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD) in response to this outbreak.
- Australia is well prepared to respond to animal disease incursions with national response arrangements in place. The [Japanese encephalitis AUSVETPLAN](#) outlines how the response to this disease will be managed.

Japanese encephalitis virus is a nationally notifiable disease which means if you suspect an animal is showing signs of the disease, you must report it.

You can do this by contacting your local veterinarian or simply call the national Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888. This will put you in touch with your state or territory's agriculture department.

### What is WHA doing?

- Wildlife Health Australia is providing technical and scientific advice, and linkage to experts. WHA is an observer on CCEAD and contributes through working groups as needed.
- Wildlife Health Australia has undertaken a rapid revision of the [WHA Fact Sheet on Japanese Encephalitis](#). The Fact Sheet summarises what is known of the current outbreak in Australia. Further updates of the WHA Fact Sheet are planned in coming days, to provide more detail on what is known of the potential role of wildlife in the epidemiology of Japanese Encephalitis.

### Where to find out more:

- See National pest & disease outbreaks website - [OUTBREAK.GOV.AU](https://OUTBREAK.GOV.AU) for more information.
- [Emergency animal disease alert for veterinarians](#) – including specific advice relating to pigs and horses.
- [Animal Health Australia – Japanese Encephalitis resources](#) and links to each state and territory.
- [Animal Health Australia AUSVETPLAN](#)
- [Emergency Animal Diseases Guide](#)
- [Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment media centre](#)

**Human health advice**

- People should try to prevent mosquito bites by using mosquito repellent containing picaridin, DEET or oil of lemon eucalyptus on all exposed skin and reapply every few hours.
- Wear long, light coloured and loose-fitting clothing as well as covered footwear when outside. Ensure accommodation, including tents, are properly fitted with mosquito nettings or screens.
- For updates on human health impacts visit [Australian Government Department of Health](#).