

African Horse Sickness outbreak in Thailand – 28 April

The World Animal Health Organisation (OIE) was [notified](#) on 27 March by the Department of Livestock Development (DLD), the veterinary authority of Thailand, of an outbreak of African Horse Sickness (AHS) in the Pak Chong district, Nakorn in the north-east of the country. In the initial notification, 341 horses were reported susceptible, of which 62 were confirmed infected. Out of these 62 horses, 42 are reported to have died.

Up to 28 April, outbreaks have been confirmed in seven provinces, with a total of 1,829 susceptible horses, of which 394 have died out of 438 confirmed cases.

As a result of the outbreak, the OIE has suspended the AHS-free status of Thailand.

AHS is spread by insect vectors such as midges, some types of mosquitos and ticks. All species of equidae can be infected by the disease. Horses and mules often die from the infection, while donkeys are much less susceptible and zebras rarely show clinical signs. The disease can be caused by any of nine serotypes of the virus. This outbreak has been caused by serotype 1.

Please visit the [OIE website](#) for more information on AHS.

Having been briefed by DLD, the Thailand Equestrian Federation (TEF) immediately took measures, restricting movement of horses by their members. The Federation is also in contact with the FEI Veterinary Department and Jack Huang, FEI Vice President and Chair of FEI Regional Group VIII. TEF has reported that Equestrian horses have not been as badly impacted by the outbreak as racehorses.

DLD initially reported that the following measures were taken:

- Movement control inside the country
- Surveillance outside containment and/or protection zone
- Surveillance within containment and/or protection zone
- Quarantine
- Zoning
- Disinfection
- Control of vectors
- Vector surveillance
- Vaccination permitted (if a vaccine exists)
- No treatment of affected animals

The OIE arranged a webinar on 28 April during which DLD presented their strategy to eradicate the virus. Key elements are zoning and strategic vaccination using a South African vaccine aimed at regaining the country's AHS-free status. Countries in the region have increased their preparedness for a further spread of the disease with vector protection, increased surveillance and restriction of movement of horses.

The FEI is working closely with its partners – the OIE and the International Federation of Horse Racing Authorities (IFHA) under the umbrella body, the International Horse Sport Confederation (IHSC) – to support the Thai authorities and sport horse industry to stop this outbreak. The OIE arranges technical [webinars](#) that are well attended by private and public stakeholders.