

# **HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES: 7.COMMUNICATIONS**

## **FAD PReP**

**Foreign Animal Disease  
Preparedness & Response Plan**



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Veterinary Services

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The Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Plan (FAD PreP) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) provide operational guidance for responding to an animal health emergency in the United States.

These draft SOPs are under ongoing review. This document was last updated in **December 2013**. Please send questions or comments to:

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## 7.1 Introduction

An internal and external communication process has been established to ensure an effective and efficient response in controlling and eradicating an outbreak of a highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) virus. Integrated communication forges a link among operational and support units to enable a common awareness of the incident and actions to achieve the objectives of the Incident Command (IC). Equipment, systems, protocols, and expertise are needed to achieve this integration. Procedures and protocols governing communication among the emergency responders must be established well in advance of the outbreak. Thus effective communication can help to restore consumer confidence in the safety of animal products. This standard operating procedure (SOP) provides National Preparedness and Incident Coordination (NPIC), Communication Group Supervisors, and associated personnel with guidance on choosing and using optimal communication methods during an HPAI outbreak.

If HPAI is detected in the United States, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will implement an emergency response tailored to the specific details of the detection and the appropriate response personnel will disseminate critical internal and external information. [Attachment 7.A](#), Draft Announcement Roll-Out Schedule, provides a draft communications roll-out schedule to support response activities. Several key documents complement this SOP and provide further detail when necessary:

- Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Plan (FAD PReP) documents:
  - Biosecurity SOP
  - Overview of Information Management SOP
  - Overview of the NRF and NIMS SOP
  - Incident Coordination Group Plan
  - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) FAD PReP Framework Manual 1-0: Chapter 5—Communication Strategy
  - USDA APHIS HPAI Response Plan: The Red Book
  - Stakeholder Coordination and Collaboration Plan: Strategy and Resource Guide
- National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials (NASAHO) Memorandum of Understanding (2009)
- Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) Communications Guide
- National Incident Management System (NIMS) Document
- Veterinary Services (VS) Guidance 12001

These documents are available on the internal APHIS FAD PReP website for those who have access to the APHIS intranet at <http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/vs/em/fadprep.shtml>, and they are available to the public at [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/emergency\\_management/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/emergency_management/).

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### 7.1.1 Goals

The following are overall preparedness and response goals to be utilized as part of an emergency response framework. These goals seek to:

- Establish a network of stakeholders and systems for communication, prior to an incident or outbreak.
- Test or exercise the systems for communication at regular intervals, before an outbreak.
- Develop message maps prior to an outbreak.
- Brief the media, public, industry, Congress, trading partners, and others on the HPAI outbreak and the actions being taken by USDA, the affected States or Tribes, and other partners to control, contain, and eradicate the disease.
- Highlight the importance of sound biosecurity practices and steps that producers and owners can take to protect against infection.
- Coordinate with the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS), Interior (DOI), and Homeland Security (DHS), State agencies, local agencies, Tribal entities, and Land Grant University-based cooperative extension services to ensure a consistent message regarding animal health, public health, and food safety.
- Assure consumers that USDA is working on the animal health issues in collaboration with HHS, which is working on human health issues.

During an HPAI event, the communication objectives are more defined. IC personnel should:

- Communicate actions the government is taking.
- Reassure the public that an HPAI detection in birds does not signal a human influenza pandemic.
- Reassure the public that properly prepared poultry, eggs, and egg products are safe to eat.
- Prepare the public for the possibility of more bird/animal cases.
- Prepare the public for the possibility of human illness from direct contact with infected birds.

Messages that need to be emphasized and reinforced by communications personnel include the effectiveness of surveillance, safety of commercial poultry and poultry products, and personal preparedness. [Attachment 7.B](#), Messages to the Public and Industry during an HPAI Event, provides examples of the messages that government officials may want to give during an HPAI outbreak event. [Attachment 7.C](#), USDA Key Messages for Avian Influenza—Three Scenarios, provides three scenario examples with messages for the public and industry.

### 7.1.2 Guidelines

Observe the following guidelines to ensure proper communication measures during an HPAI outbreak:

- 
- Regularly test communication networks and systems before an incident or outbreak. Have messages mapped for HPAI before an incident or outbreak.
  - Internal communication should aim at ensuring that informed and timely decisions are made. Establish point of contact lists for key personnel. Assign a Public Information Officer (PIO) to support the Incident Command System (ICS). The PIO represents and advises the IC on all public information matters relating to management of the incident.
  - External communications during an outbreak of HPAI should be designed to ensure that the public and media are kept fully informed. Ensure that they receive accurate and timely information. Develop messages that calm anxiety, instill confidence, and ensure compliance with emergency directives. Information, checked for accuracy by members of the IC staff, will be disseminated by PIOs working through a Joint Information Center (JIC). Arrangements will be made with the USDA Farm Service Agency, which maintains mailing lists of all producers in the country, to make periodic mailings to the producers with susceptible animals. A good working relationship with the press will be cultivated to provide timely, accurate information to the public. By gaining the public's trust, the need for emergency procedures that may temporarily irritate the public can be better tolerated. In addition, effective communication can help to restore consumer confidence in the safety of animal products.

### 7.1.3 Coordination

The communication activities outlined here should be implemented in coordination with other critical activities such as biosecurity, cleaning and disinfection, disposal, and information management. Please refer to the FAD PReP SOPs for more information.

## 7.2 Purpose

This SOP provides guidance on communication principles, policies, and procedures for animal health emergency deployments to APHIS VS and other official response personnel in the event of an HPAI outbreak.

The procedures serve as guidance for the Communication Unit Leader and associated personnel for communication activities; however, deviations from these procedures may be required in an event.

The first section of this SOP details the responsibilities of critical entities and appropriate personnel. The second section describes the procedures for creating an internal and external communications plan, and the third section provides information on implementation and training.

## 7.3 Responsibilities

The roles of communication response personnel will vary depending on the incident and may even vary during the same incident. The number of personnel and the command structure are dependent on the size, duration, and complexity of the incident. Large scale incidents may involve more than one premises and may cover large areas. As the response progresses, personnel requirements may change. All roles and responsibilities may be designated to available

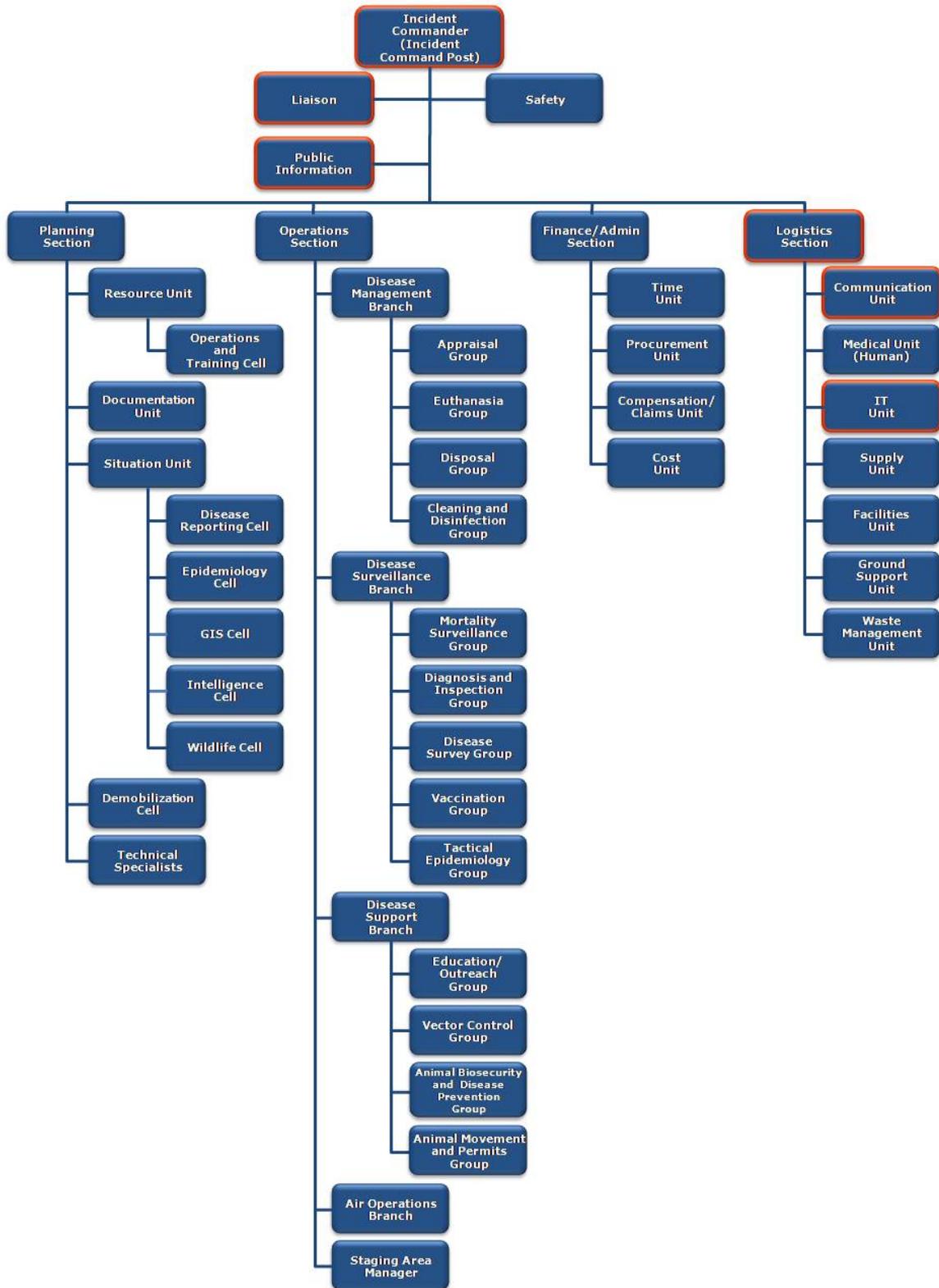
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and qualified personnel as needed. The command structure and positions below are provided as guidance.

The ability to conduct coordinated responses to large emergencies is reflected in the Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 issued February 28, 2003. This directive requires that all federal departments and agencies adopt the [NIMS](#) in their domestic emergency management. NIMS is designed to provide a consistent nationwide approach to Federal, State, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. Please refer to the Overview of the NRF and NIMS SOP for additional information about NIMS.

At the center of NIMS is the ICS. The ICS is a structural-type of management system designed to bring multiple responding agencies, including those from different jurisdictions, together under a single overall command structure when an incident occurs. Under the ICS, communications are handled by the Liaison, Public Information, and Logistics Sections. Within the Logistics Section, the Communication Unit and Information Technology Unit are responsible for communications. Under the ICS structure, the IC Communications Unit Leader directs all internal and external communications processes to disseminate critical information about the disease response to contacts quickly and accurately. See Figure 7-1 for the command structure at the incident level.

Figure 7-1. Example Incident Command Structure

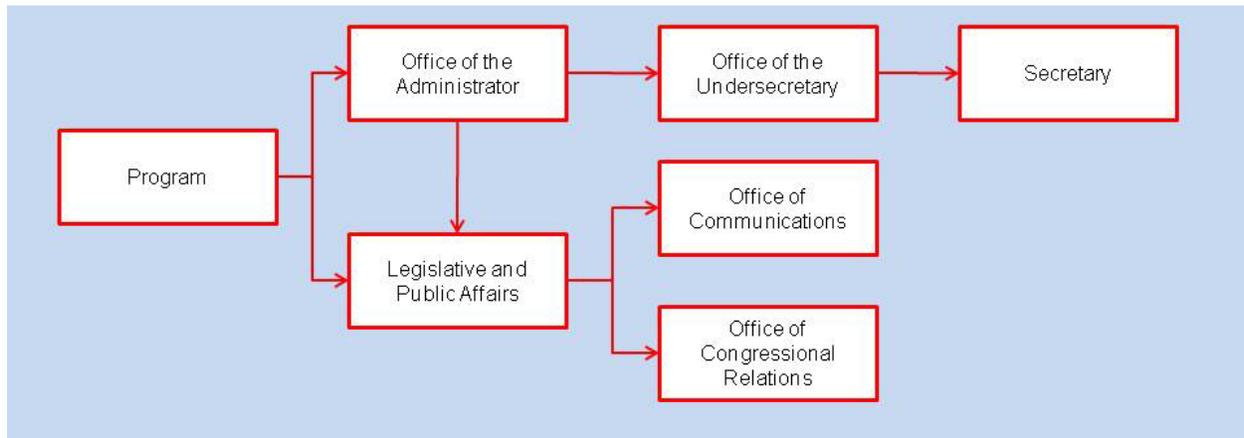


Note: GIS = Geographical Information Systems.

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When the ICS is activated, the emergency situation notification process ensures that all appropriate entities receive and disseminate accurate and timely communications. This SOP covers three tiers of notification: the VS/APHIS (Program), LPA, and USDA Office of Communication (OC) level. Figure 7-2 depicts the Emergency Situation Notification chart.

**Figure 7-2. Emergency Situation Notification**



Source: APHIS LPA Emergency Response and Communications.

### 7.3.1 APHIS/VS Level

During an emergency, the VS staff leads and coordinates rapid response efforts. The VS staff supports USDA, other Federal agencies, State agencies, and cooperators in responding to an animal disease outbreak and animal agriculture emergencies caused by natural disasters. VS coordinates the resources needed to develop Q&As, factsheets, and website content about the emergency. The Program Unit works with LPA and OC as needed.

#### 7.3.1.1 Emergency Management Leadership Council

VS is usually the APHIS lead when the emergency is an outbreak of a pest or disease, such as HPAI. If the emergency response requires Federal resources from outside the Program Lead Unit, the Emergency Management Leadership Council (EMLC) also becomes part of the chain of command. The EMLC must be informed of requests to the USDA Secretary for a declaration of emergency Federal funds.

EMLC duties during an emergency response include:

- Authorizing Marketing and Regulatory Programs Business Services to initiate emergency administrative support systems and to coordinate necessary services and support.
- Approving the use of the APHIS Emergency Operations Center (AEOC) in Riverdale, MD.
- Declaring a situation of total mobility within APHIS, if the emergency response requires APHIS personnel from outside the Program Lead Unit.

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- Initiating a national or international Response Coordination Team to coordinate the response to a specific agricultural health emergency.
  - Serving as APHIS' Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) group for an incident, unless the EMLC transfers this responsibility to a MAC for a specific incident.
  - Working closely with the APHIS Emergency Management Safety and Security Division to ensure adequate support for National Response Framework—Emergency Support Function #11 activations.

### 7.3.1.2 Legislative and Public Affairs Responsibilities

LPA will ensure that timely and accurate information is communicated to stakeholders, States, international partners, Congressional staff, the media, and the public.

LPA will develop or implement an incident communications plan that outlines key audiences, approved messages, overall goals and methods for conducting outreach to identified audiences (national or grassroots), informational materials needed, as well as a timeline for notifying audiences—for example international partners, Congressional staff, or the news media—of new incident developments. LPA will also provide strategic on-site support, conducting communications/media training to equip incident staff with approved messages to respond to media or to conduct outreach to stakeholders or the public. Also, LPA will closely coordinate with State and industry communications counterparts to ensure effective communications channels are in place.

### 7.3.1.3 LPA Public Information Officer

An APHIS Public Affairs Specialist (PAS) deployed to an incident is the PIO and is responsible for helping LPA to coordinate effectively with personnel and media on site. The PIO will:

- Establish and oversee processes for coordinating and clearing public communications.
- Ensure that an overall unified message is developed and communicated publicly.
- Coordinate this unified message with Incident Command, LPA and APHIS Management, State Departments of Agriculture, other U.S. Departments, as well as USDA's OC.

## 7.3.2 Joint Information System

A Joint Information System (JIS) provides the mechanism to organize, integrate, and coordinate information to ensure timely, accurate, accessible, and consistent messaging across multiple jurisdictions and/or disciplines with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector. A JIS includes the plans, protocols, procedures, and structures used to provide public information. Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, regional, or local PIOs and established JICs are critical supporting elements of the JIS.

### 7.3.2.1 Joint Information Center

A JIC is a central location that facilitates operation of the JIS. The JIC is a location where personnel with public information responsibilities perform critical emergency information functions, crisis communications, and public affairs functions. JICs may be established at various

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levels of government or at incident sites, or can be components of MAC Systems. A single JIC location is preferable, but the system is flexible and adaptable enough to accommodate virtual or multiple JIC locations, as required.

### 7.3.3 USDA Office of Communications Responsibilities

USDA OC will review and coordinate all information programs; maintain the flow of information; and provide liaison between USDA agencies, mission areas, other Federal agencies, the mass communication media, State and local governments (including public health), and the public; and conduct operations from a USDA JIC during an HPAI emergency. USDA will work with its Federal and State partners, as well as industry, to ensure that messages are accurate and consistent.

In the event of an HPAI detection in U.S. domesticated birds, OC, in coordination with other USDA agencies and other Federal departments will be the lead on all communications activities associated with avian influenza as an animal health issue. During this time, the OC emergency response staff will conduct operations from a USDA JIC and maintain, if warranted, 24/7 emergency communications coordination. If a case is identified, USDA will hold media briefings and work with its partners to communicate information to poultry owners, pet bird owners, hunters, and other interested persons on appropriate measures they can take to protect their animals and themselves.

When the JIC is activated, the OC will:

- Send a field PIO who will link back to the JIC in order to support the ICS.
- Upon direction from the JIC, the field PIO represents and advises the IC on all public information matters relating to management of the incident.
- The field PIO, in coordination with the JIC, handles on-scene media and public inquiries, emergency public information and warnings, rumor monitoring and response, media monitoring, and other functions to coordinate, clear with appropriate authorities, and disseminate accurate and timely information related to the incident, particularly regarding information on public health and safety and protection.
- In the event of an HPAI detection in commercial and noncommercial poultry, OC will actively communicate program project activities to other Federal agencies, media, State, Tribal, city, and county governments, industry and stakeholders, trade partners, and the general public. USDA will distribute specific messages to the public and to industry stakeholders via broadcast and print media channels. Please see [Attachment 7.B](#), Messages to the Public and Industry during an HPAI Event, for more information.

Figure 7-3 provides a breakdown of OC responsibilities by stakeholder group

**Figure 7-3. OC Outreach and Tactics**

Stakeholder	Tactics
Intergovernmental/stakeholder outreach	Internal USDA conference call with USDA agency public affairs and mission areas
	Federal Interagency conference call (White House, HHS, DOI, DHS, White House Homeland Security Council, and U.S. Department of State)
	Intergovernmental conference call with local and State governments (including animal health, human health, homeland security, and natural resources)
	Stakeholder conference call with poultry industry groups
	Congressional conference call or personal visits
Media outreach	Conduct press conference with HHS, State representative, and other relevant officials to discuss animal and human health implications, actions being taken, and guidance for the public
	Issue news release
	Issue media advisory listing available resources (b-roll Beta tapes, still photos, Q&As, fact sheets, updated sound bytes via web)
	Establish media briefing schedule to ensure predictable, established lines of communication with reporters to provide updates on management of the outbreak
	Distribute Q&A and fact sheet and post on website
	Provide b-roll tapes upon request (Ames laboratory testing/inspectors at processing plant)
	Provide still photos on website (laboratory testing/inspectors at plant)
	Offer updated sound bytes via website
General public outreach	Monitor media 24/7 to promptly correct misinformation
	Distribute public service announcements (PSAs) and sound bytes containing key messages to radio stations
	Post downloadable PSAs and sound bytes on USDA website

## 7.4 Procedures

### 7.4.1 Planning—Internal Communications Plan

In order to prevent HPAI spread, it is vital to maintain consistent communication at all times. Planning is essential to ensure that correct information is shared with the public, media, and industry groups. The Communications Unit Leader must prepare an incident-specific communications plan in consultation with the Safety Security Officer. The IC must approve the plan prior to implementation.

This section provides an overview of topics to be considered when preparing the site-specific communications plan.

#### 7.4.1.1 Establish Incident Communications Center

The Incident Communications Center (ICC) is the center of communication and information technology. The Communications Unit Leader takes the following steps to establish an ICC:

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1. Coordinates with the Facilities Unit Leader to secure an ICC location, which is
    - a. adjacent to the planning section,
    - b. adjacent to the ordering manager,
    - c. away from vehicle and personnel traffic,
    - d. away from noise,
    - e. capable of expansion, and
    - f. equipped with an operable phone, radio, and Internet capability.
  2. Ensures the orderly arrangement of supplies and equipment, minimizing
    - a. conversation interference between the radios and phones, and
    - b. people traffic.
  3. Assigns enough people to staff the ICC.
  4. Orders office supplies and equipment through the Supply Unit.<sup>1</sup>

The Communications Unit Leader directs all communications planning and communications equipment acquisitions, assembly, and maintenance from the ICC.<sup>2</sup>

#### 7.4.1.2 Create Internal Communications Plan

The Communications Unit Leader creates a plan to coordinate communications activities and resources to support informed and timely decision making. This plan is designed to ensure effective, accurate, and efficient communication between the field team and all involved parties and adherence to appropriate ICS guidelines. The communications plan consists of the communication logistics as developed by the command and general staff.

The communication plan will include a statement from chain of command inquiries that cannot be answered by the field team which will be added to an action list and answered when more information becomes available. It will also state that orders received from the IC, designated agency safety and health official, AEOC, or the Safety, Health and Employee Wellness Branch Chief will be repeated back by the field team, to confirm the order's intent and ensure clear understanding, and will be entered in the ICS 214 activity log form ([Attachment 7.D](#)).

The plan will also cover the following forms of communication:

- *E-mail communication.* A general e-mail address will be used for all e-mail to field team members. The e-mail address can belong to an APHIS employee or a general e-mail account established for a specific deployment. E-mail responses from the general account will be copied to all deployment members, unless otherwise directed.

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<sup>1</sup> National Wildlife Coordination Group, Incident Communications Center Manager J-257 Job Aid, October 2003, <http://www.nwccg.gov/pms/resources/J-257.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> FEMA, 2013. National Incident Management System, <http://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system>.

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- *Field team accountability.* A buddy system will be used in any hazardous area or unknown situation. The field team will regularly check in with the information officer as determined. Frequency of field team check-ins with headquarters will be appropriate for the potential hazards and assessed danger for each event. Best efforts will be made to maintain regular contact with the chain of command. If communications are not possible, the field team leader will make decisions on the basis of available information and as the situation warrants.
  - *Telephone communication.* All mobile telephone communications with the field team should be done in the order dictated by the IC. A satellite phone should only be used when regular cellular service cannot be obtained.
  - *Radio communication.* All radio communication will be supported by the Communication Unit Leader, who will assign equipment and manage frequencies.

The field team will maintain an activity log, recording all pertinent telephone calls and activities, including the date and time (See [Attachment 7.D](#)).

#### 7.4.1.3 Assess Communication and Technology Requirements

The Communications Unit Leader will gather information on the communication and technology requirements necessary to begin, monitor, and close-out an HPAI outbreak investigation.

For the technology requirements needed for an HPAI outbreak, the Information Technology Group incorporates the use of the APHIS Emergency Management Response System (EMRS) and the Resource Ordering Status System (ROSS). EMRS provides NPIC and the VS Districts real-time monitoring of FAD/emerging disease incident investigations, such as HPAI. When an Assistant District Director (ADD) initiates a HPAI investigation, EMRS generates automatic e-mail notices to select VS personnel. EMRS adapts easily to any incident regardless of size and complexity. During an incident, ROSS provides asset management information and communicates with EMRS. This allows the ICC to track the status and availability of personnel and physical assets. For more information on the technology used to support an HPAI outbreak please refer to the Overview of Information Management SOP.

#### 7.4.1.4 Establish Communications System

The Communications Unit must determine the required radio nets, establish interagency frequency assignments, and ensure the interoperability and optimal use of all assigned communications capabilities. Planning is required to ensure that an appropriate communications system is available to support incident operations requirements. This planning includes the development of frequency inventories, frequency-use agreements, and interagency radio caches.

The Communications Unit Leader should attend all incident planning meetings to ensure that the communication systems available for the incident can support tactical operations planned for the next operational period.

Most complex incidents will require an incident radio communications plan ([Attachment 7.E](#)). The Communications Unit is responsible for planning the use of radio frequencies, establishing networks, setting up on-site telephone and public address equipment, and providing any required off-incident communication links. Codes should not be used for radio communication: a clear

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spoken message—based on common terminology that avoids misunderstanding in complex and noisy situations—reduces the chances for error.

Radio networks for large incidents will normally be organized as follows:

- *Command net.* Links together IC, Command staff, Section Chiefs, Branch Directors, Division, and Group Supervisors.
- *Tactical nets.* Several tactical nets may be established to connect agencies, departments, geographical areas, or specific functional units. How nets are set up should be a joint planning, operations, and logistics function. The Communications Unit Leader will develop the plan.
- *Support net.* A support net may be established primarily to handle changes in resource status but also to handle logistical requests and other non-tactical functions.
- *Ground-to-air net.* To coordinate ground-to-air traffic, a specific tactical frequency may be designated or regular tactical nets may be used.
- *Air-to-air nets.* Air-to-air nets will normally be pre-designated and assigned for use at the incident.

## 7.4.2 External Communications Planning

The PIO will direct external communications. Communication activities for emergency response begin with a press release, press conference, and local media coverage and build as program activities escalate. In the case of a bioterrorist attack or outbreak of an FAD, media attention would be immediate, national, and most likely international.

The PIO must respond quickly, be candid, and explain the need for and effectiveness of response actions. Response information must be provided to four key audiences: media, stakeholders, the public, and public officials.

### 7.4.2.1 Create External Communication Plan

The PIO will develop an external communication strategy with short- and long-term goals. The IC must approve the strategy before implementation. The plan should include the following:

- Designated line and staff responsibilities for the information teams.
- Internal information verification and approval procedures.
- Agreements on information release authorities, including who releases what, when, and how.
- Regional and local media contact list, including after-hours news desks.
- Procedures to coordinate with the field response teams.
- Designated spokespersons for animal health issues and third-party validators in an emergency.
- Response team after-hours contact numbers.

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- Contact numbers for emergency response information partners (such as the Governor's Public Affairs Officer, the local Federal Bureau of Investigation Public Information Special Agent in charge, local or regional department of agriculture or veterinarian PIOs, and health and human services PIOs).
  - Agreements and procedures to join the JIC of the emergency operations center, if activated.
  - Procedures to secure needed resources to operate the public information and media operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, if needed, possibly including funding for an 800 hotline number.
  - Vehicles of information dissemination to public, stakeholders, partners (such as e-mail listservs, broadcast fax, door-to-door leaflets, and press releases) during a crisis.
  - Key messages to stakeholder groups.<sup>3</sup>

#### 7.4.2.2 USDA and APHIS Clearance Procedures

Press releases pertaining to specific emergency program actions and originating on site will be cleared with the IC by LPA. Press releases originating at APHIS headquarters or the Emergency Management Operations Center will be cleared by LPA and the APHIS management team. Anything pertaining to USDA policy will be cleared through the USDA OC.<sup>5</sup>

Fact sheets are cleared through LPA and the APHIS management team.

#### 7.4.2.3 Media Communications Protocol

Providing the public with accurate and consistent information about specific diseases and State and Federal efforts to eradicate it through the news media is essential to the success of the response. The media desk in the JIC serves as the contact point for all media inquiries regarding HPAI and response personnel activities.

If necessary, public information staff members assigned to the Incident Command Post will be dispatched to the field to liaison with media that arrive at a site where response personnel are conducting surveillance, depopulation, cleaning and disinfection, or other operations.

The PIO will use the following guidelines for media communication:

- Give all media equal access to information.
- Conduct press briefings and interviews when appropriate. Give local and national media equal time.
- Try to observe media deadlines.
- Escort media representatives to ensure safety.

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<sup>3</sup> Texas Department of State Health, Writing a Public Health Crisis and Emergency Risk Communications Plan, [http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/riskcomm/documents/Risk\\_Communication\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/riskcomm/documents/Risk_Communication_Plan.pdf).

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- Keep records of information released. Ensure that the IC receives copies of all released information.
  - Provide press releases when possible.<sup>4</sup>

#### 7.4.2.4 Stakeholder Communications Protocol

The Disease Management Branch Director and Appraisal Group Supervisor will communicate with animal owners and industry members to keep them informed and promote the health of animals. They should maintain lists of important contacts (home and work phone, fax, and cell phone numbers) in a database, updated frequently by the staff. These groups may become actively involved in supporting response efforts by issuing press releases, distributing information to local lawmakers, citizen groups, and the media.

It is important that communications pathways are established before an HPAI outbreak. For example, the NASAHO Memorandum of Understanding ([Attachment 7.G](#)) provides the memorandum detailing communication between NASAHO and the USDA APHIS-VS in the event of finding a potential high consequence disease such as HPAI. Contacts with industry and stakeholder groups should explain the response actions being conducted and the expected outcomes. These meetings (by phone or in person) dispel rumors among opinion leaders and special interest spokespersons, lend credibility to the emergency response, and allow industry to corroborate incident information.<sup>5</sup>

#### 7.4.2.5 Public Communications Protocol

To ensure public good will and reduce suspicion, fear, and anxiety, the general public and demographically significant groups must be kept informed. The news media will perform that role, but a serious emergency may warrant providing additional information via an 800 number hotline. The PIO will oversee the call center operation, train people answering phones in appropriate responses, and provide information to use in responding. If the line is not staffed, it must have a recorded message directing callers to the website and allow them to leave their name and numbers. Staff members should be assigned to collect messages and return calls.<sup>6</sup>

#### 7.4.2.6 Public Official Communications Protocol

State, county, city, and other Federal agencies; area legislators; and affected congressional delegations must be informed of program activities. They must be responsive to their respective publics: informing them quickly and accurately allows them to respond appropriately to constituents' questions.<sup>8</sup> The PIO will provide updates for local community leaders and other parties.

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<sup>4</sup> FEMA, 2013. National Incident Management System, <http://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system>.

<sup>5</sup> Texas Department of State Health, *Writing a Public Health Crisis and Emergency Risk Communications Plan*, [http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/riskcomm/documents/Risk\\_Communication\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/riskcomm/documents/Risk_Communication_Plan.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Texas Department of State Health, *Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Tools*, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/riskcomm/tools.shtm>.

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### 7.4.3 Communications Activities for Operations/Planning

Within 24 hours of an HPAI detection, a specially trained task team can begin to arrive at the site of the outbreak to implement the measures necessary to eradicate the disease. Task forces may consist of VS employees, State veterinarians, military support personnel, industry liaisons, and representatives from other USDA units.

Responsibilities of the Disease Reporting Cell Leader, a member of the IC Planning Section, include the following:

- Coordinates all reports of the HPAI investigation.
- Serves as the IC historian, documenting the HPAI outbreak with the most accurate information available.
- Serves as a reliable source for the most up-to-date summary of HPAI information, whether statistical, epidemiological, or diagnostic.
- Maintains an acute awareness of program policy and procedures and documents key dates and events in a summary format.<sup>7</sup>

## 7.5 Training

Having the appropriate training is an important part of responding to an HPAI outbreak. LPA is committed to ensuring that a PAS attends and passes ICS courses 100 through 400, 420, and 704 so that they are fully equipped to provide PIO support in the field and headquarters. LPA staff is trained in risk communications and provide the same training to program experts to help prepare them for becoming agency spokespeople. Any new PAS takes an in-depth risk communications and media training at the Institute for Crisis Management in Louisville, KY. Additionally, the staff works with the program in simulated pest or animal disease emergencies.

NIMS offers IS-704, NIMS Communications and Information Management, which is an interactive computer-based course that introduces students to the Communications and Information Management component of the NIMS. NIMS provides a consistent nationwide template to enable all government, private-sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work together during domestic incidents. Effective emergency management and incident response activities rely on flexible communications and information systems that provide a common operating picture to emergency management/response personnel and their affiliated organizations. Establishing and maintaining a common operating picture and ensuring accessibility and interoperability are the principal goals of the Communications and Information Management component of NIMS. Properly planned, established, and applied communications enable the dissemination of information among command and support elements and, as appropriate, cooperating agencies and organizations.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify the components of NIMS Communications and Information Management.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/riskcomm/tools.shtm>.

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- Identify capabilities required to achieve effective communications and information management.
  - Assess the communications and information management capability of your jurisdiction or agency.
  - Describe processes and forms for managing incident information flow.
  - Identify strategies for continually improving communications and information management systems and maintaining their readiness.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup><http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/NIMSTrainingCourses.shtm#item4>.

# Attachment 7.A Draft Announcement Roll-Out Schedule

Table 7A-1 provides a draft announcement roll-out schedule.

Date/Time	Event	Participants	Necessary Documents
XX a.m.	Release of media advisory announcing technical briefing	OC, LPA	Media Advisory
Several hours before announcement	Program shares materials and information with affected states	Deputy Administrator	Talking points, Q&A, factsheet
Several hours before announcement	OCR/LPA touch base with key Congressional offices and Ag LA's from affected states	OCR, LPA	Talking points, Q&A
Several hours before announcement	Program shares final materials with affected agencies	State Liaison, Deputy Administrator	Press release, talking points, factsheet, Q&A
XX a.m.	Address trading partners	FAS, Undersecretary, Administrator	Talking points, Q&A
XX a.m.	Meet with industry officials	Undersecretary, Administrator	Press release, talking points, Q&A
XX a.m. <i>*Leave for Hill Briefings after this call</i>	Courtesy call to industry and stakeholder groups not included in morning briefing	Deputy Administrator	Press release, talking points, factsheet, Q&A
XX a.m. – House	Hill briefings with House and Senate Agriculture Committees, and if requested, House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittees	Administrator	Press release, talking points, Q&A
XX a.m. – Senate		LPA, OCR	
XX p.m.	Additional courtesy calls	Undersecretary	Talking points, Q&A
Just prior to the announcement	Send talking points to APHIS and FAS posts, State Plant Health Directors, and ADDs in charge	APHIS, FAS	Abbreviated talking points, press release, factsheet
XX p.m.	Press conference. Only media can ask questions.	Secretary	Press release (external)
			Hot issues page (external)
			Remarks for technical briefing (internal)
			Talking points (internal)
			Q&A (internal)
			Timeline (internal)
			Factsheet (external)

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Date/Time	Event	Participants	Necessary Documents
			External materials will be posted on Web and sent to media, Hill, NASDA/COSDA, and industry/stakeholder contacts
XX p.m.	Courtesy calls with key members of NASDA and Industry	Administrator, State Liaison	Remarks, talking points, Q&A
Shortly after technical briefing	Courtesy calls with CFIA, Mexico	Administrator	Remarks, press release, talking points, Q&A
3:30 p.m.	Courtesy call for NGOs	Administrator, Program	Remarks, press release, talking points, Q&A

Note: OCR=Office of Congressional Relations; LA=Legislative Affairs, FAS=Foreign Agricultural Service, NASDA=National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, COSDA=Communicators of State Departments of Agricultures, CFIA=Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

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# Attachment 7.B Messages to the Public and Industry during an HPAI Event

## Public Messages

This detection does not signal the start of a human flu pandemic.

- Human illness overseas has resulted predominantly from direct contact with sick or dead birds.
- There is no evidence that this virus is spread easily from person to person.
- HHS is watching closely for any sign the virus has changed into a form that can more easily infect people.

We are responding quickly and decisively to eradicate the virus.

- We have activated our response plan and a response team is on the scene or on the way.
- We will establish a quarantine to limit movement in the area.
- The birds will be humanely euthanized.
- The area will be disinfected and will not re-open until tests show the area is free of the virus.
- We have increased monitoring in the region to ensure quick detection if there are additional outbreaks.

Properly prepared eggs and poultry are safe to eat.

- Keep your hands, utensils, and surfaces clean.
- Cooking poultry to 165 degrees kills this virus and other germs.
- Any questions: call the USDA meat and poultry hotline at 1-888-MP HOTLINE.

Safeguarding the food supply.

- All poultry is processed under Federal or State inspection.
- We restrict the importation of poultry and products from countries with HPAI in commercial or traditionally raised flocks (not wild birds).
- Food regulations and standards ensure that commercial poultry and egg products are safe.

## Industry Messages (Producers)

Protect your flocks and be vigilant in reporting signs of illness.

- Enhance biosecurity practices to prevent spread of the virus.

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- Permit only essential workers and vehicles to enter the farm to limit the chances of bringing the virus from an outside source.
  - Avoid visiting other poultry farms.
  - Disinfect shoes, clothes, hands, egg trays or flats, crates, vehicles and tires—all of which can carry the virus.
  - Protect your flocks from contact with wild birds.
  - Know the signs of avian flu.
    - Signs include respiratory problems, such as coughing and sneezing, watery diarrhea, swelling around the head, neck, and eyes, loss of appetite.
  - Report sick birds by calling 1–866–536–7593.
    - USDA has 600 veterinarians and a network of State veterinarians who can investigate a report of sick birds.
  - USDA compensates owners for domesticated birds/livestock destroyed as part of the eradication effort.

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# Attachment 7.C USDA Key Messages for Avian Influenza—Three Scenarios<sup>9</sup>

Educating the media and the public about the complexities of avian influenza as a disease among birds is one of USDA’s primary communications objectives.

As part of this effort, USDA, in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of the Interior, and Department of Homeland Security, have developed three scenarios in the event of a detection and/or outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in the United States.

The scenarios are:

- 1) A highly pathogenic avian influenza detection in the United States.
- 2) A highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza detection in wild birds.
- 3) A highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza detection in commercial poultry.

Each of these scenarios contains a series of key questions and answers about animal health, guidance for the public, as well as a summary of the actions USDA would take in the event of highly pathogenic avian influenza detection in the United States.

## USDA Key Messages for Avian Influenza

### Scenario 1: HPAI Avian Influenza Detection in U.S.

#### 1.1 What is bird flu?

Avian influenza (AI)—the bird flu—is a virus that infects wild birds (such as ducks, gulls, and shorebirds) and domestic poultry (such as chickens, turkeys, ducks, and geese). There is flu for birds just as there is for humans and, as with people, some forms of the flu are worse than others.

AI viruses are classified by a combination of two groups of proteins: the hemagglutinin or H proteins, of which there are 16 (H1-H16), and neuraminidase or N proteins, of which there are 9 (N1-N9). AI strains also are divided into two groups based upon the ability of the virus to produce disease in poultry: low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) and highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).

LPAI, or “low path” avian influenza, naturally occurs in wild birds and can spread to domestic birds. In most cases it causes no signs of infection or only minor symptoms in birds. These strains of the virus pose little threat to human health. LPAI H5 and H7 strains have the potential to mutate into HPAI and are therefore closely monitored.

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<sup>9</sup> [http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=avian\\_influenza.html](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=avian_influenza.html) (The links in this attachment have been updated to direct to current USDA and HHS information on Avian Influenza.)

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HPAI, or “high path” avian influenza, is often fatal in chickens and turkeys. HPAI spreads more rapidly than LPAI and has a higher death rate in birds. HPAI H5N1 is the type rapidly spreading in some parts of the world.

### **1.2 How can people become infected with avian influenza?**

AI is primarily a disease among birds, not people. Although the HPAI H5N1 virus does not usually infect people, more than 200 human cases have been reported since 2004. Most people who have become sick or died from HPAI H5N1 have had extensive, direct contact with infected poultry. Broad concerns about public health relate to the potential for the virus to mutate, or change into a form that could easily spread from person to person, a characteristic that could result in a human influenza pandemic. There is no evidence that this is occurring. Strains of AI that have been detected in U.S. poultry, including LPAI and HPAI, have caused no known human illnesses.

### **1.3 What if a suspected HPAI outbreak in the U.S. is confirmed?**

This is still a disease among birds, not people. HPAI has been detected in the U.S. three times and successfully eradicated. If there is a new outbreak, USDA would act quickly and decisively to eradicate it. We would work closely with Federal, State, and industry partners to monitor other bird species such as migratory waterfowl. We will be very transparent about any new developments or additional detections.

### **1.4 If an HPAI outbreak in the U.S. occurs, will consumer confidence in the safety of poultry be affected?**

Consumers have the power to ensure the poultry and eggs that they eat are safe. Although it is highly unlikely that infected poultry would enter the U.S. food supply, proper handling and cooking poultry to an internal temperature of at least 165 °F kills the AI virus, just as it does other food borne illness-causing germs.

### **1.5 Would an HPAI detection signal the start of a human flu pandemic?**

No. Human illness from HPAI H5N1 overseas has resulted predominantly from direct contact with sick or dead birds. There is no evidence that this virus is spread easily from person-to-person. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is watching closely for any sign the virus has changed into a form that can more easily infect people. We will be very transparent about any new developments.

### **1.6 If an outbreak occurs, what will USDA do to eliminate HPAI from the United States?**

In the event of a commercial outbreak, USDA will activate its response plan that includes five key steps: quarantine, eradicate, monitor, disinfect, and test. Specifically, USDA will:

- 1) Secure the affected poultry farm(s) and restrict movement of poultry and poultry equipment into and out of the control area.
- 2) Humanely euthanize all of the birds in any infected flock.

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- 3) Maintain the control area until tests confirm the farm is AI-free.
  - 4) Clean and disinfect the poultry houses and area after the birds have been depopulated.
  - 5) Test neighboring flocks and others in the area to quickly detect any spread.

In the event of a wild bird outbreak, USDA will conduct extensive testing in the flyway of other wild birds, commercial poultry operations, and backyard flocks. Specifically, USDA will:

- 1) Coordinate enhanced wild bird surveillance in the surrounding area where the event occurred.
- 2) Monitor potential wild bird threats to domestic poultry and assess the risk wild birds pose to the transmission of an HPAI virus to susceptible livestock and poultry.
- 3) Implement an enhanced surveillance plan for domestic poultry.

### **1.7 What happens if there is more than one HPAI outbreak in birds?**

USDA is ready to act. USDA has a network of animal health experts and laboratories capable of assisting with testing and response to bird outbreaks. We have 600 veterinarians and 1,300 experts nationwide who are capable of assisting as well as a network of 39 states and academic laboratories nationwide that are approved to assist with testing bird samples.

### **1.8 If there is an HPAI outbreak, who is in charge?**

USDA leads federal animal disease response and works in partnership with state and local animal health experts on response efforts. The U.S. poultry industry monitors and tests commercial flocks.

Federal agencies involved in the coordinated avian flu efforts include HHS, USDA, Department of the Interior, Department of Homeland Security, and others.

While a detection of HPAI in birds would NOT signal the start of a human flu pandemic, HHS leads the federal response and preparation activities that relate to public health. HHS works closely with state and local public health experts. Every citizen has a role in preparing for the possibility for any human pandemic. More information is available at <http://www.flu.gov/#>.

### **1.9 If there were an HPAI detection in the U.S., would it be safe to eat chicken and turkey bought at stores?**

Yes. All store-bought poultry has met USDA safety standards because it is processed under federal or state inspection. The majority of U.S. poultry is raised in very secure poultry houses, which significantly decreases the possibility of contact with other birds, animals, or people. To further ensure the safety of the U.S. food supply, USDA also prohibits the importation of poultry and poultry products from countries and/or regions where HPAI H5N1 has been detected in commercial or traditionally raised flocks (not wild birds).

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People have the power to protect themselves—properly prepared and cooked poultry is safe to eat. Just remember to always follow these basic common-sense practices in order to protect yourself from any foodborne pathogens:

- 1) Wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food.
- 2) Prevent cross contamination by keeping raw poultry meat and its juices away from other foods.
- 3) Cook all poultry to an internal temperature of at least 165 °F. This kills food borne germs that might be present, such as the AI virus.

**1.10 In the event of an HPAI detection, would it be safe to prepare and eat birds bought at live bird markets or raised at home?**

Yes, chicken, turkey, and wild birds are safe to eat when properly prepared and cooked. To protect yourself from any food borne causing germs, USDA recommends that you: wash hands and utensils before and after handling food; keep raw poultry meat and juices away from other food, and cook all poultry to an internal temperature of at least 165 °F. This kills the bird flu virus and other germs such as Salmonella and E. Coli.

Should you buy meat from a live bird market, it would be highly unlikely that infected poultry would be sold because of the rapid onset of symptoms in birds as well as the numerous safeguards in place, which include testing of flocks and Federal inspection programs.

If you raise poultry in your back yard, it is very important that you call your local or state authorities or USDA toll-free at 01-866-536-7593 if your farm birds are sick. When disposing of a dead bird, be sure to wear gloves, use a plastic bag, and wash your hands afterwards.

**1.11 If there are sick or dead birds, how can people protect themselves?**

Report sick or dead birds to local or state authorities or the USDA wildlife services office in your state. Do not touch sick or dead wild birds with your bare hands. If you come in contact with wild birds or droppings you should immediately wash your hands. Hunters and backyard farmers should wear gloves when handling killed birds. It is good practice to always disinfect gloves, tools, and materials that come into contact with killed birds. More information about reporting sick or dead birds, and disinfecting your gear, along with tips for states, communities, and individual families, are available at

[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=avian\\_influenza.html](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=avian_influenza.html).

**1.12 If there were an HPAI detection, what advice would you have for people who have pet birds?**

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Learn the warning signs of avian influenza in birds—breathing problems, watery diarrhea, and swelling around the head, neck, and eyes. Do not handle a bird that is showing any of these signs and call your veterinarian.

Buy birds from reputable sources and ensure that you have documentation of your new bird's origin. Smuggled birds could be a source of avian influenza, as well as other serious avian diseases. Be sure that you get your new birds checked by a veterinarian.

Keep your birds and areas around them clean and keep your birds away from other birds. If you have been around other birds, make sure that you clean your shoes, clothing, and other items. Do not forget to wash your hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds before and after handling your birds.

### **1.13 Are other animals susceptible to AI viruses?**

Wild and domestic birds are the most susceptible to AI. But swine are susceptible to some AI viruses (usually H1 and H3). However, there is no evidence of HPAI H5N1 being transmitted from pig to pig or pig to human.

Cats, rabbits, ferrets, rodents, and some primates are susceptible to some AI viruses. Exposure can come from preying upon infected or sick birds and droppings. Exposure is more likely in outdoor animals of these species. It is important to remember that these infections are very rare.

### **1.1 What food should I avoid?**

There is no reason to avoid any food. All poultry is processed under federal or state inspection. We do not import poultry or products from countries and/or regions where HPAI was found in commercial or traditionally raised flocks (not wild birds). Food regulations and standards ensure that commercial poultry and egg products are safe.

Consumers have the power to ensure the poultry that they eat is safe. Thorough cooking of poultry to at least 165 °F kills germs including the AI virus. As always, proper handling of poultry and eggs is important and the key to food safety. Wash hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds before and after handling poultry and eggs. Do not eat raw or undercooked poultry and eggs. If you have any questions, call the USDA meat and poultry hotline at 1-888-MP HOTLINE.

## **USDA Key Messages for Avian Influenza**

### **Scenario 2: Highly Pathogenic H5N1 Avian Influenza Detection in Wild Birds**

#### **2.1 In the event of a highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza (HPAI) detection in wild birds, what advice would you give to bird hunters?**

Hunters need to take precautions when handling wild game. They should wear gloves and wash hands with soap and warm water after handling wild birds and disinfect any materials that come into contact with dead birds.

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If hunters find dead birds, they can help by reporting the find. The first point of contact should be local fish and wildlife authorities. More information about reporting and disinfecting your equipment is at

[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=avian\\_influenza.html](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=avian_influenza.html) or <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/>.

## **2.2 What would you do to protect domestic flocks if the HPAI H5N1 detection is near a commercial poultry operation?**

USDA works with states and industry to monitor and test commercial poultry flocks for avian influenza as well as with states to monitor and test birds in live markets. We also have an education program for backyard flock owners about effective biosecurity practices—practical management practices that help prevent diseases—for protecting birds and identifying signs of avian influenza.

USDA would:

- 1) Coordinate enhanced wild bird surveillance in the surrounding area where the event occurred.
- 2) Monitor potential wild bird threats to domestic poultry and assess the risk wild birds pose to the transmission of an HPAI virus to susceptible livestock and poultry.
- 3) Implement an enhanced surveillance plan for domestic poultry.

## **2.3 What would be done in response to a detection of HPAI H5N1 in wild birds?**

USDA, in partnership with the Department of the Interior (DOI), would increase testing for HPAI H5N1 in the area. This would help us determine which bird species were affected so that we could track the migratory path of the birds in the United States.

We would alert our Federal, State, and local government partners as well as industry about the detection. The public plays a key role and could help by reporting to their State or local fish and wildlife authorities any groups of dead birds. We would track reports of dead birds to determine whether the virus is spreading in birds. Public land managers also would be alerted to increase their monitoring and educate visitors.

USDA would determine whether there are commercial poultry operations or bird markets in the area and would alert those operators to increase monitoring as a precaution. We would work with the media to help us alert backyard flock owners about the detection. Additionally, if we determine that there are free-range bird owners in the area, we would allow them to confine their birds indoors for animal health protection while retaining their free-range marketing label.

## **2.4 What would the next steps be in the event of an HPAI H5N1 detection?**

USDA and DOI would continue to confer with local, State, and Federal partners, as well as the commercial poultry industry to help get the message out. If the detection occurred in Alaska,

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USDA and DOI must ensure that subsistence hunters and sports hunters, wild bird rescuers, bird watchers, and others have been notified of potential risks and safety precautions.

USDA and DOI would expand the interagency bird monitoring and testing. Expanded sampling would continue to occur in the area of the detection. And experts would follow the infected bird species' flight routes based upon historical migration patterns.

### **2.5 In the event of an HPAI H5N1 detection in wild birds, who would be in charge?**

DOI, in partnership with USDA, would lead on the wild bird response with support from other federal agencies, as well as state and local officials. Because initial sample test results could indicate an H5N1 avian influenza virus, the USDA lab in Ames, Iowa will confirm the diagnosis and pathogenicity of the virus. However, the confirmatory virus isolation testing would take 7–10 days to complete. And, while a detection of HPAI H5N1 in wild birds would NOT signal the start of a human flu pandemic, HHS leads the federal response and preparation activities that relate to public health.

HHS works closely with state and local public health experts. Every citizen has a role in preparing for the possibility for any human pandemic. More information is available a <http://www.flu.gov/#>.

### **2.6 Who else would be involved in the response?**

Federal and State wildlife and animal health agencies would help with the response.

We would work with our international neighbors, Canada and Mexico, to assist with the wild bird monitoring.

### **2.7 What if more infected birds were found?**

That is likely because avian influenza is transmitted bird-to bird through saliva, feces, and other bodily fluids. Wherever large flocks of wild birds gather more cases might develop. Spread is possible in Alaska as birds from Asia and North America mix and after the North American birds head south to the lower 48 states through traditional flyways. Migratory birds enter North America from Asia as early as March. Wild bird managers and other organizations are proactively monitoring high-risk habitats where birds mix.

USDA would expand wild bird monitoring and environmental testing.

- 1) Coordinate enhanced wild bird surveillance in the surrounding area where the event occurred.
- 2) Monitor potential wild bird threats to domestic poultry and assess the risk wild birds pose to the transmission of an HPAI virus to susceptible livestock and poultry.
- 3) Implement an enhanced surveillance plan for domestic poultry.

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## **2.8 In the event of an HPAI H5N1 wild bird detection, could the situation remain under control?**

DOI and USDA would track the migratory path of the infected bird species and step up testing. We would continue to have hunter check stations in place to monitor for the presence of HPAI H5N1 as well as capture and test apparently healthy wild birds.

The U.S. government has several safeguards in place. Should this virus spread near commercial poultry farms or backyard flocks, USDA would activate the Incident Command System. We have great expertise in managing foreign animal disease emergencies.

USDA's National Poultry Implementation Program enables the industry to actively test flocks.

Chicken and turkey flocks are tested for avian influenza either on the farm or at the processing plants to prevent infected birds from entering the food supply.

In addition, the commercial poultry industry has firewalls in place to protect against avian influenza. They operate under established biosecurity practices that protect and prevent the introduction of new diseases onto a poultry farm. Because the industry is integrated, it is easier to eradicate the virus because in most cases the company owns or controls all aspects of the operation.

## **2.9 Would it be safe to clean and eat wild birds?**

Yes, properly cooked game is safe to eat. Like domestic poultry, game birds are safe to eat if the internal cooking temperature reaches or exceeds 165 °F. Just remember to always follow these basic common-sense practices in order to protect yourself from any foodborne pathogens:

- 1) Wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food.
- 2) Prevent cross contamination by keeping raw meat and its juices away from other foods.
- 3) Cook all game birds to an internal temperature of at least 165 °F. This kills foodborne germs that might be present, such as the AI virus.

## **2.1 What could I do to protect my pets if there were an HPAI H5N1 detection in wild birds?**

Keep your pet birds away from wild birds and their droppings. Watch for signs of avian influenza such as breathing problems, watery diarrhea, and swelling around the head, neck, and eyes. A loss of appetite might also occur in birds.

Pet bird owners should use good sanitary practices. Isolate new birds from your other birds for at least 30 days. Restrict access to your birds, especially from people who own birds. Clean cages, food, and water dishes on a daily basis.

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Use good animal health practices with all pets. Pet birds, cats, rabbits, ferrets, rodents, and some primates are susceptible to AI virus, although infection is rare. Keep pets away from sick and dead birds and bird droppings. Do not feed your pets' raw poultry, poultry products, or eggs. If your pet suddenly dies, call your veterinarian.

### **2.11 Should I be concerned about getting HPAI H5N1 from an aviary or pet store?**

Birds imported for the purpose of becoming pets are subject to a 30-day quarantine to ensure that they do not have disease. HPAI H5N1 has a high rate of illness and death in birds so it is unlikely it would go undetected. Try to purchase birds from a reputable dealer. And if you have been around other birds, make sure that you clean your shoes, clothing, and other items. And don't forget to wash your hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds before and after handling your birds.

## **USDA Key Messages for Avian Influenza**

### **Scenario 3: Highly Pathogenic H5N1 Avian Influenza Detection in Commercial Poultry**

#### **3.1 In the event of detection, what would USDA do to keep highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza from spreading further?**

USDA would implement our highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza (HPAI H5N1) national response plan to prevent spread of the virus. In the event of any HPAI outbreak in the United States, USDA would work with States and industry to respond quickly and decisively by following these five basic steps:

- 1) Quarantine—restrict movement of poultry and poultry-moving equipment into and out of the control area.
- 2) Eradicate—humanely euthanize.
- 3) Monitor region—broad area of testing.
- 4) Disinfect—kill virus.
- 5) Test—confirm that poultry farms are AI virus-free.

USDA has been working with governments worldwide to help slow further spread of HPAI H5N1. By helping other countries, we help to protect the United States. Our experts are assisting with education, eradication, and research overseas. We have dedicated tens of millions of dollars to assisting other countries with their response.

USDA is working to prevent spread of the virus from other sources. We prohibit the importation of poultry and poultry products from countries and/or regions where HPAI H5N1 has been detected in commercial or traditionally raised flocks (not in wild birds). USDA regulations require that import permits accompany properly sanitized poultry products, such as raw feathers.

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USDA quarantines and tests live birds entering the U.S. from all countries other than Canada. And a USDA smuggling interdiction team works with the Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Protection to prevent the illegal entry of birds and poultry products.

### **3.2 If there were a detection of HPAI H5N1 in U.S. commercial poultry, what can we expect to happen next?**

Our primary goal is to eradicate the virus from commercial flocks. USDA would activate its HPAI H5N1 national response plan and test samples from the infected flock to determine if it is the HPAI H5N1 virus.

The steps mentioned in 3.1 would then take place. The affected area would be cleaned and disinfected and would not reopen until testing confirmed the area was virus-free. Additionally, we would continue to do a high level of testing throughout the area to ensure that the virus had not spread.

USDA works closely with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and State public health officials to ensure responders are properly protected. We would be prepared to respond if the virus was detected elsewhere. We have 600 USDA veterinarians and a network of nearly 1,300 animal health workers ready to respond, if needed.

### **3.3 If there was detection, what advice would USDA give to operators of other commercial poultry flocks?**

We would encourage commercial poultry producers to intensify their biosecurity practices that they've long had in place. They should not loan equipment or vehicles to or borrow them from other farms. Birds from outside sources, such as live bird markets, should not be brought back to the farm.

They should permit only essential workers and vehicles to enter the farm. Poultry workers should disinfect their shoes, clothes, and hands. They should thoroughly clean and disinfect equipment and vehicles entering and leaving the farm and avoid visiting other poultry farms without proper cleaning and disinfection.

Also, they should report sick birds immediately. USDA compensates flock owners for birds that are euthanized, so that economic loss is minimized. The industry understands the importance of eradicating the virus as quickly as possible to protect the industry.

### **3.4 After a sample is taken, when would USDA have definitive test results on whether it is HPAI H5N1 or not?**

Confirmatory testing takes from 7–10 days to complete. The tests first determine and confirm the specific H and N proteins. AI strains in birds are divided into two groups: low pathogenic and highly pathogenic. Determining the pathogenicity (high or low) of the virus will take 7–10 days to complete.

We do not wait for confirmatory test results to take action. We would respond quickly and decisively—working side by side with local and state officials. We would have a team on the

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scene or on the way and would have activated our five-step response plan: quarantine, eradicate, monitor, disinfect, and test.

### **3.5 In the event of an HPAI H5N1 detection in a commercial flock, who would be in charge?**

USDA takes the lead when responding to HPAI in commercial flocks, working closely with Federal, State, and local partners. USDA veterinarians work with State counterparts to investigate the source and extent of the outbreak. And State and local officials assist with the alerts to other poultry producers/bird market operators/backyard flock owners in the region and help respond to reports of dead birds from the public.

USDA would report this outbreak to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and follow international scientific guidelines.

USDA also coordinates with HHS, DOI, Department of State, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). HHS closely monitors human health—including the health of our responders—and notifies local public health officials. DOI monitors the wild bird population and assists with notifying local wildlife service personnel. And DHS has offered support and assistance with inter-department coordination if we need it.

### **3.6 What could the economic impacts of an HPAI H5N1 detection in commercial flocks be?**

There is no way to predict the economic impact. We would take the appropriate action to prevent further spread of the virus, by controlling movement of poultry and poultry equipment into and out of the control area and humanely culling the birds. We would have increased our monitoring and testing throughout the affected area.

Because we follow international guidelines for AI responses, this should provide assurance to our trading partners that U.S. poultry is safe. And we would hope that our trading partners also would follow international guidelines in terms of their actions. International guidelines suggest that market closures be limited to the geographic area of the outbreak. We would be in close communication with our trading partners to answer their questions and provide updates.

It is important for the public to understand that properly prepared and cooked poultry is safe to eat. People have the power to ensure that their poultry is safe. Proper cooking kills the virus, as it does other germs.

All commercial poultry in the U.S. is inspected before it is processed. There is no evidence and no reason to believe that infected birds would be sent to processing plants. The chance of infected poultry entering the food supply would be extremely low because of the rapid onset of symptoms as well as the safeguards in place, which include testing of flocks, and Federal inspection programs.

### **3.7 Would you expect to find more outbreaks of HPAI H5N1?**

We would act quickly if additional cases were found. We have 600 USDA veterinarians and a network of nearly 1,300 animal health workers who would be ready to respond, if needed. The

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USDA lab in Ames, Iowa, along with our network of 39 approved state and university laboratories, have the combined capacity to conduct 18,000 tests per day. We have prepared for the possibility of multiple outbreaks.

We would intensify our monitoring and testing in the area and increase the number and types of samples tested. We would track reports of dead birds to monitor the potential virus spread and work with the industry to step up monitoring.

Additional cases in birds would not signal the start of a human flu pandemic. This virus continues to primarily affect birds, not people. There are no reports of human illnesses in the U.S. There is no evidence that this virus is spread easily from person to person.

### **3.8 Would producers be reimbursed for euthanized birds?**

Yes. Producers would be reimbursed for euthanized birds based on fair market value. Birds that are infected or are considered exposed to HPAI H5N1 would be eligible for reimbursement.

USDA also would pay for related items that might be seized or destroyed such as wooden crates, bird bedding, and open feed.

USDA humanely euthanizes infected and exposed birds to protect poultry and public health. Our primary goal is to eliminate the virus.

### **3.9 In the event of an HPAI H5N1 detection in U.S. poultry, would trade restrictions be imposed on the United States?**

Our adherence to international guidelines should provide assurance to our trading partners, however restrictions might be imposed on the U.S. but our control measures should minimize the effects. International guidelines suggest that market closures be limited to the geographical area of the outbreak. USDA would assure our trading partners that U.S. poultry continues to be safe to eat. USDA would notify trading partners of any and all new developments.

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## Attachment 7.D: ICS Form 214 Activity Log

For instructions on how to fill out this form, visit the FEMA website and/or right click on this link: <http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/JobAids.shtm>.







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# Attachment 7.F APHIS HPAI Factsheet

**APHIS**

**Factsheet**

Veterinary Services

May 2013

## Avian Influenza Diagnostics and Testing

Avian influenza (AI), commonly known as “bird flu,” is caused by an influenza type A virus which can infect poultry (such as chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, domestic ducks, geese, and guinea fowl) and some wild bird species (such as wild ducks and swans). AI viruses are classified by a combination of two groups of proteins: hemagglutinin or “H” proteins, of which there are 17 (H1–H17), and neuraminidase or “N” proteins, of which there are 10 (N1–N10). AI viruses are further classified by their pathogenicity—the ability of a particular virus strain to produce disease in domestic chickens.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) virus strains are extremely infectious, often fatal to domestic poultry, and can spread rapidly from flock-to-flock. Low pathogenicity avian influenza (LPAI) virus strains occur naturally in wild migratory waterfowl and shorebirds without causing illness. However, LPAI H5 and H7 viruses are capable of evolving into HPAI viruses in poultry. Because of this potential, infection of commercial poultry by LPAI H5 and H7 viruses—and certainly HPAI H5 or H7 viruses—is reportable to State, Federal, and international animal health authorities per World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) standards.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) works closely with States and the poultry industry to prevent AI from becoming established in the U.S. poultry population.

### Sample Collection

Commercial poultry, live bird markets, and avian importation quarantine facilities are systematically sampled and tested to monitor for AI viruses. Wild birds are monitored for AI viruses through investigation of large-scale avian mortality events and opportunistic sampling of live birds in conjunction with other mission projects. Samples are taken from live birds, dead birds, or the environment that they inhabit. In live domestic birds, samples are taken by swabbing the throat. Vent and throat swabs may be taken from wild birds, as well as environmental samples. Samples are placed into sealed tubes and taken to USDA-approved

laboratories for AI screening, or sent directly to USDA’s National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) for screening and confirmatory tests.

### Testing Facilities

Many of the AI screening tests, including those done on samples from wild birds and live bird markets, are conducted by one of more than 50 USDA-approved laboratories that are part of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN). The NAHLN is a cooperative effort between APHIS, USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD). NAHLN laboratories conduct nationwide surveillance testing for early detection of animal diseases and have the resources to test large numbers of samples during a disease outbreak.

Screening tests performed at these NAHLN laboratories determine whether AI virus is present in the sample and whether the virus is an H5 or H7 subtype. All positive samples originating from commercial poultry are forwarded to the NVSL in Ames, IA, for confirmation and additional testing. All wild bird samples testing positive for AI at a NAHLN laboratory are further analyzed to determine if the virus is an H7 or H7 subtype. Samples originating from wild birds containing H5 or H7 subtypes are forwarded to NVSL.

### National Poultry Improvement Plan H5/H7 LPAI Monitored Program

The National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) is a voluntary program administered cooperatively by USDA, States, and the poultry industry. The program’s H5/H7 LPAI Monitored Program requires the testing of meat-type chickens (broilers, roasters, cornish, and fryers), commercial table-egg layers, meat-type turkeys, meat-type waterfowl and game birds, and raised-for-release waterfowl and game birds. Screening tests are performed in 129 NPIP-authorized laboratories throughout the country.

APHIS operates secure data reporting systems that incorporate NPIP testing data in national AI surveillance. This information helps to assure international partners that the U.S. AI surveillance system is working to verify the safety of our poultry exports.

### Virus Detection

Screening tests conducted by the NVSL and NAHLN laboratories include polymerase chain reaction

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(PCR) assay and virus isolation. PCR testing detects the presence of the virus' genetic material in the sample. The PCR assays performed at these laboratories include assays targeting the matrix gene, which screens for type A AI viruses, as well as subtype-specific assays for H5 and H7 viruses. Neuraminidase-specific assays are also performed at NVSL for some subtypes in order to detect the specific subtype for the "N" component (e.g., N1). PCR testing can determine H5, H7, and available N subtypes within 24 hours; however, differentiating between HPAI and LPAI viruses requires additional testing.

The NVSL conducts all confirmatory testing, which include virus isolation, H/N subtyping, genetic sequencing, and determination of chicken pathogenicity. Results of confirmatory tests are generally available within 14 days after sample receipt.

Virus isolation is the gold standard test used to diagnose AI virus infections. The virus is isolated in embryos inside chicken eggs to specifically identify H and N subtypes of the AI virus. Positive virus isolation is an accurate method of confirming the presence of a viable virus (i.e., a virus that could infect other birds).

#### **Serology**

Serology may be used to detect the presence of antibodies to AI viruses in a bird's serum, or blood plasma. Antibodies are generated in response to exposure or infection with AI virus. While the presence of antibodies indicates previous infection, the bird may no longer be infected with that virus. Antibody detection (positive serology) for AI in commercial poultry requires confirmation at NVSL. Where H5 or H7 antibodies are found, field investigation and additional sampling are required per OIE-recommended standards, as serology results are not sufficient to confirm a "notifiable" AI infection.

#### **Pathogenicity**

Additional work at NVSL is conducted to confirm the pathogenicity of an AI virus. This includes genetic sequencing to determine the genetic profile of the hemagglutinin (H) part of the virus. HPAI viruses have a very specific hemagglutinin genetic signature that differs from LPAI viruses. Determination of chicken pathogenicity is performed per OIE standards; OIE defines HPAI as any AI virus that is lethal for 6 or more of the 8 chickens, or a 75 percent or greater mortality rate.

#### **Response to AI Detection**

Response actions depend on the subtype and pathogenicity of the AI virus and what animal compartment (poultry versus wild bird) the virus originated from. APHIS works cooperatively with States and the poultry industry to ensure proper

disease response, which helps protect public health and food safety and minimize economic hardships for producers. The National HPAI Response Plan and individual LPAI Initial State Response and Containment Plans (part of the NPIP LPAI H5/H7 Monitored Program) outline specific actions.

If an HPAI infection is found in a commercial poultry flock, all surviving birds are depopulated to prevent the spread of the virus. If laboratory testing detects LPAI H5 or H7 viruses, the infection may be controlled through depopulation or controlled marketing, depending on the Initial State Response and Containment Plan. Controlled marketing allows poultry that are infected with or exposed to H5/H7 LPAI to move to market on a limited basis, according to the process laid out by each State's response and containment plan. Under controlled marketing, infected or exposed poultry may not be transported for 21 days after the acute phase of the infection, and poultry must test negative for H5/H7 LPAI viruses within 7 days prior to slaughter. Testing reduces the risk of spreading H5 or H7 LPAI strains and maintains the safety of the controlled marketing process, while allowing producers to recover value from infected poultry. However, if animal health officials determine that an LPAI H5 or H7 virus poses a significant threat to avian and/or public health, it is likely that that flock(s) would be depopulated.

APHIS cooperates with State partners to conduct surveillance in the area surrounding AI-infected birds and enforces movement controls to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. APHIS reports all findings of HPAI, as well as findings of H5 or H7 AI viruses in commercial poultry, to the OIE.

#### **For More Information**

**USDA efforts to protect against and respond to bird flu:** [www.usda.gov/birdflu](http://www.usda.gov/birdflu)

**Report Sick Farm Birds:** If your farm birds are sick or dying, call USDA's Veterinary Services toll free at 1-866-536-7593 or your State veterinarian or local extension agent.

**Report Dead Wild Birds:** Dead wild birds can be reported to State or Federal wildlife agencies. Information on how to make contact with wildlife officials in your State is available at [www.usda.gov/birdflu](http://www.usda.gov/birdflu)

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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# Attachment 7.G NASAHO Memorandum of Understanding

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF STATE ANIMAL HEALTH OFFICIALS  
AND THE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE  
VETERINARY SERVICES

## ARTICLE 1 - PARTIES

The parties to this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are Veterinary Services (VS), a program within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials (National Assembly). The National Assembly represents State Animal Health Officials (SAHO) but has no regulatory or legally binding authority. Therefore this document is considered to be a consensus document only with the National Assembly serving as the general signatory on behalf of SAHOs.

## ARTICLE 2 - PURPOSE

The purpose of this MOU is to provide a detailed explanation of actions that will be taken by VS personnel and National Assembly members to effectively and clearly communicate in the event of an investigation or initial laboratory finding of a potential high consequence livestock disease. For the purposes of this MOU, a high consequence livestock disease is defined as any disease outbreak that spreads rapidly, involves multiple States, results in high morbidity or mortality, could affect public health, is novel, and/or could have significant trade implications. Diseases that are considered domestic or endemic to the United States do not apply. This MOU is not intended to replace VS Memo 580.4 (Procedures for the Investigation of Potential Foreign Animal Disease/Emerging Disease Incidents). Rather, this MOU complements VS Memo 580.4 by ensuring that communication between VS and the National Assembly occurs in a consistent, reliable manner. It is also important to clarify that this MOU is limited to communications between VS personnel and National Assembly members. APHIS already has an emergency communications plan in place to address external communication with the public, media and industry stakeholders in the event of a high consequence livestock disease investigation or incident.

## ARTICLE 3 – STATEMENT OF MUTUAL BENEFIT

This MOU defines communication actions for VS personnel and National Assembly members in the event of an investigation or initial laboratory finding of a potential high consequence livestock disease. The office of the VS Deputy Administrator will automatically activate this protocol in the event of such an incident. National Assembly leadership may also request

activation of this protocol for other incidents that they feel require regular and timely communication. Adherence to this MOU will result in consistent and coordinated communication between VS and the National Assembly.

#### ARTICLE 4 - VS RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Area-Veterinarian-in-Charge (AVIC) or their designee will immediately notify their Regional Office and State SAHO when they first become aware of a potential incident in their State.

2. When notified of a potential incident, VS will convene a conference call with relevant VS personnel and any affected SAHOs. In most cases, VS' National Center for Animal Health Emergency Management will be responsible for initiating conference calls, but in some cases this responsibility may fall to the Regional Offices. For the purposes of this MOU, we will generally reference VS. Affected SAHOs include those with potentially infected animals in their States and those with trace outs from the incident. Conference call information will be emailed by VS to AVICs, the relevant Regional Office(s) and SAHOs in affected States simultaneously with the word "Important" listed in the subject line. VS will make every effort to include all known affected States. SAHOs and AVICs from additional affected States will be included in calls, emails, etc. as soon as VS becomes aware of their involvement.

3. Unless SAHOs and VS personnel mutually and specifically agree to do otherwise, VS will hold at least one conference call each day with relevant VS personnel and affected SAHOs throughout the length of the initial incident. Ideally, this call will take place at the same time each day. Additional calls will be scheduled as needed by VS or upon request by SAHOs.

4. At least once each day during the initial investigation, VS will distribute a brief situation report that summarizes the status of the incident and will email the report to all affected SAHOs, AVICs and the relevant Regional Office(s).

5. VS personnel and National Assembly members will use the Emergency Management Response System (EMRS) to communicate trace information related to the incident. However, the AVIC responsible for entering the information into EMRS will provide notification of the first trace out to an affected State by calling and emailing the SAHO. The AVIC will courtesy copy the SAHO in their own State as well as the AVIC in the newly affected State on the email message. Thereafter EMRS will serve as the official notification system. Note: If multiple States are involved, a SAHO will receive multiple phone calls and emails if they have initial trace outs coming to them from more than one State.

6. If it is determined that the animals/animal involved in the incident were transported through an otherwise unaffected State(s) just prior to showing clinical signs, VS will provide courtesy notification of the investigation/incident to the appropriate SAHO(s) and AVIC(s). If multiple States are involved, VS will hold a conference call with these States to share available information. If appropriate, and depending on the circumstances of the situation, the SAHO(s)

and AVIC(s) may also be included in future daily conference calls with affected States and receive daily situation reports.

7. VS' National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) personnel will provide initial test results whether positive or negative to the AVIC in an affected State by phone and email. The email will be sent by return receipt and include a cc' to the Regional Director as well as other designated recipients in the AVIC's office to ensure the results are received immediately. The AVIC or their designee will then immediately notify their SAHO by phone and confirm personal notification was successful to their Regional Office. Please note that VS leadership at headquarters may be notified prior to AVICs and SAHOs. Only those results that have previously been provided to the relevant SAHO, AVIC and Regional Office will be reported or discussed on the daily conference calls that involve all affected SAHOs. Future notifications of test results will be provided electronically to the AVIC, relevant Regional Office and SAHO simultaneously using tailored email lists developed for each State.

8. If the test results from NVSL are negative, meaning that a high consequence livestock disease is not present in the United States, then VS will share this information on the daily conference call with all affected States (after responsibilities under No. 7 have been met) and issue a final situation report. VS and the affected SAHOs will stand down emergency operations and return to business as usual.

9. If the initial NVSL test results are positive, suspect or inconclusive (i.e., not negative), then the daily conference calls with affected SAHOs and daily situation reports will continue throughout the length of the incident. Call schedules and the frequency of situation reports may be adjusted as necessary in consultation with affected SAHOs.

10. In adherence with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture/Communication Officers of State Departments of Agriculture/APHIS Emergency Communications Plan, if a public announcement is made about the disease incident, all States will be notified via conference call at least one hour prior to public notification. Please note that the timing of this call may be impacted by political decisions outside of APHIS' control.

11. Should an Agency press release be issued, APHIS' Legislative and Public Affairs Office will work with their communications counterparts in the affected States in advance of its release to ensure a consistent, coordinated message.

12. Once information about the disease incident is shared with the public, VS will hold at least weekly conference calls that will be open to all SAHOs to provide updates on the status of the incident. Ideally, these calls will be held at the same time(s) each week and lead jointly by VS and National Assembly leadership. Call information will be emailed by VS to all AVICs, the Regional Offices and SAHOs simultaneously. In addition, SAHOs will be briefed by conference call prior to any USDA/APHIS press conferences about the incident. Press releases and other publicly released materials about the incident will be emailed to all AVICs, the Regional Offices and SAHOs simultaneously as soon as they are posted to the APHIS Web site.

13. At least twice weekly VS will produce a national situation report that will be emailed to all SAHOs, the Regional Offices and AVICs simultaneously. The frequency of these reports may be adjusted as necessary in consultation with the National Assembly's leadership.

14. This communication protocol will remain in effect until VS and the National Assembly's leadership jointly agree that there is no longer a need for conference calls and situation reports.

#### ARTICLE 5 – NATIONAL ASSEMBLY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The SAHO or their designee will immediately notify their AVIC when they first become aware of a potential incident in their State even if it is after normal business hours or on a weekend. If the AVIC is unreachable then the Regional Office should be contacted. In the event that neither the AVIC nor the Regional Office is reachable, the SAHO should call VS' foreign animal disease emergency hotline at 1-800-940-6524.

2. In the event of an investigation, or an initial laboratory finding of a potential high consequence livestock disease that impacts multiple States, affected SAHOs are responsible for the notification of adjacent, unaffected States. VS will not share information with SAHOs in unaffected States until just prior to a public announcement regarding the incident. This is in keeping with responsibility No. 10 under Article 4 of this MOU. Please note that it is VS' responsibility to notify neighboring countries of a disease outbreak. SAHOs should consult with VS to determine what information is being provided to border countries.

3. Affected SAHOs will notify their State wildlife health officials if the incident has the potential to impact wildlife species and their State public health officials if the incident has the potential to impact public health. VS will do the same for its Federal counterparts.

4. To ensure a consistent message and to minimize trade restrictions, affected SAHOs and their Communication Officers should consult with VS and APHIS' Legislative and Public Affairs Office before issuing a press release.

#### ARTICLE 6 – CONFIDENTIALITY

Unless instructed otherwise, information provided during conference calls and in situation reports should be considered confidential and for official use only until public notification is made. Official use allows for the sharing of information with other Government agencies and the affected industry. Should an exception to this article be necessary, it will be discussed by VS and the affected SAHOs. APHIS' Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) staff will provide information to the media, the public and external stakeholders. LPA will work with communication officers from affected States to ensure coordination of consistent messages.

#### ARTICLE 7 - AMENDMENTS

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## Attachment 7.H Abbreviations

ADD	Assistant District Director
AEOC	APHIS Emergency Operations Center
AI	avian influenza
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
CFIA	Canadian Food Inspection Agency
COSDA	Communicators of State Departments of Agricultures
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOI	Department of Interior
EMLC	Emergency Management Leadership Council
EMRS	Emergency Management Response System
FAD	foreign animal disease
FAD PReP	Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Plan
FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
HPAI	highly pathogenic avian influenza
IC	Incident Command
ICC	Incident Communications Center
ICS	Incident Command Structure
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
LPA	Legislative and Public Affairs
LPAI	low pathogenicity avian influenza
MAC	multi-agency coordination
NASAHO	National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials
NASDA	National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NPIC	National Preparedness and Incident Coordination
OC	Office of Communications
OCR	Office of Congressional Relations

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OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
PAS	Public Affairs Specialist
PIO	Public Information Officer
PSA	public service announcements
Q&A	question and answer
ROSS	Resource Ordering Status System
SOP	standard operating procedure
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
VS	Veterinary Services