



**AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS TRUST**  
**Outbreak status – 10 January 2008**

**Early Reports**

To date 16 suspected cases of AHS have been reported from various parts the country. All these appear to be isolated and are horses with a high-risk profile. Compared to the same period last season fewer cases have been reported this season. This is attributed to the improved level of protection of horses in the George/Knysna area (see Vaccination Campaign 2007 below).

The first report was received in September with suspected cases reported in October, November and December 2007. Whilst this appears unusual, it is the Trust's opinion that as a result of its efforts to raise awareness of the disease and improve the reporting systems, it has led to greater sensitivity and more cases being logged.

The suspected cases reported to date are as follows:

<u>Date Reported</u>	<u>Date Sick</u>	<u>Name of Horse</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Province</u>
10/01/2008	04/01/2008	Wellington	Howick	KZN
09/01/2008	05/01/2008	Soxs	Muldersdrift	GAU
07/01/2008	07/01/2008	Aphrodit	Brits	GAU
07/01/2008	05/01/2008	Boston Sox	Mogale City	GAU
07/01/2008	22/12/2007	Leonie	Broederstroom	GAU
01/01/2008	14/12/2007	Delta Dawn	Hillcrest	KZN
27/12/2007	22/12/2007	Pinto stallion Blesbok	Grahamstown	EC
21/12/2007	20/12/2007	Leoni	Broederstroom	GAU
04/12/2007	27/11/2007	Kamaal Shahwan	Vaalwater	LIM
27/11/2007	14/11/2007	Yearling filly 1	Grahamstown	EC
27/11/2007	12/11/2007	Stallion 1	Grahamstown	EC
27/11/2007	22/11/2007	Hollywood Wind	Durban	KZN
27/11/2007	23/11/2007	Mikaela	Walkerville	GAU
01/11/2007	27/10/2007	Emilie	Knysna	SC
28/10/2007	27/10/2007	Part Arab yearling	Kenton-on-sea	EC
23/09/2007	18/09/2007	Emerald Sky	Polokwane	NP

Further investigation into some of the above cases has indicated the following:

1	Polokwane	Vaccine Reaction
2	Kenton-on-sea	Vaccine Reaction
3	Knysna	Vaccine Reaction
4	Walkerville	Unknown
5	Durban	Negative

6	Grahamstown	Index case – Zebra?
7	Vaalwater	Index case – Zebra?
8	Broederstroom	Outbreak
9	Hillcrest	High Risk Profile

The area pattern of the first suspected cases of the season has mirrored previous reporting years, with the exception of the location of high-risk profile horses.

Limpopo: Vaalwater  
 Gauteng: Walkerville, Broederstroom and Muldersdrift  
 KwaZulu-Natal: Howick  
 Eastern Cape: Fish River

The suspected cases reported (01 January 2008) from established horse areas such as the greater Hillcrest/Summerveld district appear to have been as a result of the movement of unvaccinated/susceptible horses into the area. This has led to the restriction of movements of horses into the AHS Controlled Area in the Western Cape by the State Vet. Samples have been collected and are currently being analysed by Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute (OVI) which will assist in the confirmation of AHS and possibly determine the serotype.

Horses wishing to enter the AHS Controlled Area that are affected by State Vet imposed movement restrictions can do so by completing a 21 day step-wise movement at various equine holdings/districts that are free of AHS such as Port Elizabeth, Beaufort West etc. For further detail, please contact:

Dr Gary Buhrmann  
 Chief State Vet, Boland  
 021 808 5026

Now that South Africa is entering its high risk season, the AHS Trust recommends the following to all horse owners:

- **Implementation of preventative measures such as:**
  - **Stabling between dusk and dawn**
  - **Regular application of repellents**
  - **Regular monitoring of temperatures**
- **Reduction in the number of non-essential movements of horses**
- **Never to move horses away from known outbreak areas as this potentially can lead to the introduction of virus into new areas**
- **Report all suspected cases immediately to your local veterinarian (private and state) and via the AHS Trust website: [www.africanhorsesickness.co.za](http://www.africanhorsesickness.co.za)**

#### **Vaccination Campaign 2007**

It is still too early to confirm but it appears that the blanket vaccination campaign implemented by the AHS Trust in the Eastern and Southern Cape has limited the outbreak in those areas. This is in contrast to recent years where large numbers of horses have died. The AHS Trust acknowledges the contribution made by the following organizations: Western Cape Thoroughbred Breeders Club, Racing South Africa, Provincial State Vet Departments, Universities of KZN and Pretoria, private Veterinarians and local equine volunteers. A detailed report on last year's campaign will be available on the website in due course.

#### **Summary**

Due to the ongoing wet conditions experienced across most parts of the country (but especially in Gauteng), the *Culicoides* midge populations are expected to be very high this season which might lead to an above average outbreak during 2008.

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