

# The African Horse Sickness Trust

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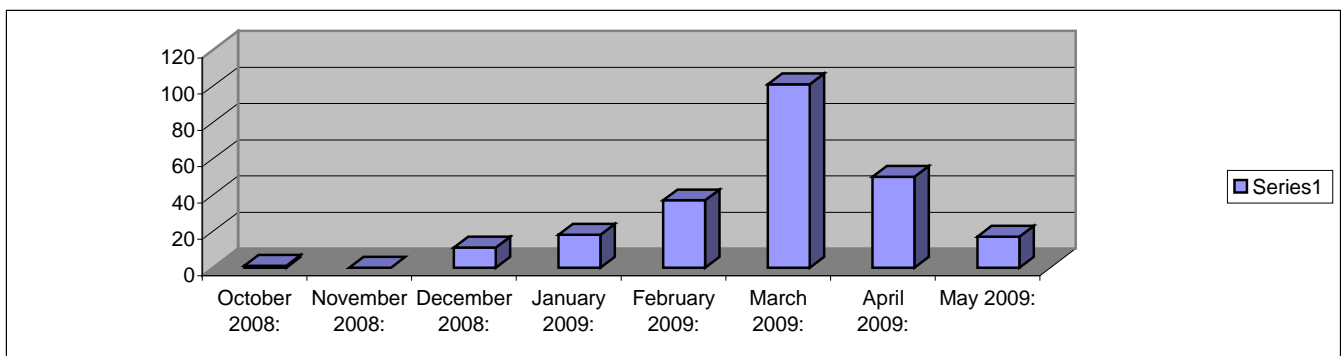
Douglas Welsh - Chair  
 Secretariat: Sheila de Villiers  
[www.africanhorsesickness.co.za](http://www.africanhorsesickness.co.za)  
 P O Box 40, Durban 4000

email: [dougw@tiscali.co.za](mailto:dougw@tiscali.co.za) cell: 082 965 4082  
 email: [sheilad@goldcircle.co.za](mailto:sheilad@goldcircle.co.za) tel: 031 314 1926  
 fax: 031 314 1402

## Report for end July 2009 Outbreak 2008/09

The following were the results of the 2008/9 outbreak of African Horse Sickness as reported on the AHS website\*

Overall Outbreak Statistics	
Outbreak duration (months):	8
Total suspected cases approved:	235
Number of horses that died:	139
Number of horses that survived:	96
Suspected cases reported by PROVINCE	
Gauteng:	33
Mpumalanga:	22
North-West Province:	12
Free State:	10
Limpopo:	33
KwaZulu Natal:	92
Northern Cape:	26
Eastern Cape:	5
Western Cape:	0
Namibia:	0
Lesotho:	0
Other countries:	2
Suspected cases reported by MONTH	



\* Note all suspected cases reported to the AHS Trust are submitted to the local State Veterinary Office and are only ever regarded as "unofficial". However, the AHS Trust aims to provide an early warning system to assist the equine industry in protecting their horses. Equally, this assists

in controlling movement into South Africa's export zone in the AHS Controlled Area in the Western Cape.

A meeting of the trustees was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2009 and all the statutory requirements of the Trust were accomplished and the financial statements were agreed and signed.

As per our mandate I do believe we have come a long way in achieving the short, medium and long-term goals of the trust.

In brief:

1. Establish a reporting system that assists the industry in
  - Understanding when and where outbreaks are happening
  - Assisting the maintenance of the free zone in the Western Cape by having an early warning system of outbreaks.
  - From 2005 to current reports have increased by 62% based on DOA prior reports
  - A far better picture of AHS outbreaks has emerged assisting with the current economic impact study by Pretoria University.
2. Implementing a blanket vaccination programme in high risk areas and for indigent populations of horses
  - Now four years on we vaccinate in excess of 1000 horses per annum and are represented in 5 specific areas.
  - The vaccination programme has developed high awareness in these rural areas.
  - In the George/Knynsa area no further outbreaks have occurred subsequent to our blanket vaccination programme
3. Increasing awareness of AHS in the equine industry
  - During the 08/09 outbreak period many press, radio and TV reports released
    - 46 radio reports
    - 22 press articles
    - 3 TV interviews
  - AHS Information booklet distributed nationally
4. Establish an information portal – [www.africanhorsesickness.co.za](http://www.africanhorsesickness.co.za)
  - In excess of 50 000 hits on the website and currently no 1 on all search engines for AHS
  - Distribution of information pertaining to AHS – outbreaks, protection, treatments etc
  - Information gathering of AHS outbreaks
5. Support research into AHS
  - Supported Equine Research Centre – Samples and outbreak information
  - Supported KZNU – Costs, information and samples
  - Supported UPE – Information
  - Supported Dr Baltus Erasmus – Samples
  - Supported OVI – Samples and Information

- Supported Bloem Uni – Information
- Supported DoA with outbreak information and samples to OVI

The ongoing work of the trust can only be achieved with the financial support we receive for donors specifically Racing South Africa for which we are grateful. In these current pressing financial times, the Trust will need to identify additional funding resources to continue our work

Some good news in respect of the new vaccine that has been developed by Equine Research Centre. In brief the first trials have been completed on the Canary Pox vectored AHS vaccine for serotype 4 and have been published. It appears to be a huge success however still a few years from market. Prof Alan Guthrie has extended his thanks to the Trust for our support for this project.

The Trustees have agreed to support the "Riding for Horses" project by Lloyd Gillespie which has commenced last week. Lloyd will be riding around the borders of South Africa promoting awareness for AHS. We wish him success with this epic ride that will take approx 1 year.

In order to provide an "early warning system" for the industry, the Trust's reporting emphasis is different to that of the State's. Reports of SUSPECTED cases are sent to our data base of interested and effected parties in the equine community on a two weekly basis. Official reports of confirmed cases based on results received from OVI, the State's accredited laboratory, originate from the DoA. It should be noted that the ERC's results cannot be used "officially" as their laboratory is not yet accredited. However, since the ERC developed the RT PCR diagnostic test, results are processed far more quickly which supports the "early warning system".

**The following reporting SOP was agreed with the DoA at the start of this year's outbreak:**

- Reports received from:
- A. Owner
  - B. Private Vet
  - C. AHS Trust Website
  - D. Rumour
  - E. Other (late and updated reports)

***Section A      Owner reporting to Trust***

- Step 1.      Trust to Request samples and or collect samples
- Step 2      Fill in DOA Forms
- Step 3      Post samples to ER and OVI with DOA Form
- Step 4      Sheila de Villiers (AHS Trust) to submit DOA Form to Local State Vet (failing this to Provincial Director)
- Step 5      Log case onto website as SUSPECTED
- Step 6      Update case on website when Lab results received from OVI or DOA  
Note - The case will always remain as suspected on website as confirmed case map was removed as per agreement with DOA.
- Step 7      Update owner/Private vet with results if ever available.

