



Dear Colleagues,

Re: Delay in AHS Vaccination date until 13 June 2016

Due to the current ongoing outbreak of AHS in the Surveillance zone and the intermittent warm weather and high *Culicoides* midge numbers, we believe it would be irresponsible to allow vaccinations to begin on the 1st June when this current outbreak has not yet been completely resolved.

We feel that by vaccinating when there are horses still potentially incubating the virus or undetected subclinical cases around, we would complicate the outbreak resolution should one of the recently vaccinated horses clinically react to the AHS vaccine. As you are aware there are numerous naïve weanlings due for their first AHS vaccinations now and the chance exists that we may have a clinical reaction which would then have to be distinguished from a potential outbreak case, causing unnecessary confusion. Furthermore, vaccinating with an attenuated live virus vaccine in the face of circulating virus (whether field or vaccine in origin) could potentially lead to recombination events, which could complicate matters even further.

We have therefore decided that it would be in the best interest of all to delay the first vaccination date, initially until **13th June**, which is 40 days after the last confirmed AHS case and in line with OIE stipulations. Should we have another case in the interim we may have to postpone the vaccination start date further until 1st July. We ask for your patience and support in this matter, and hope that clients understand the necessity and importance of this delay.

In the **Protection Zone** AHS vaccination may begin as scheduled on 1st June as there have been no cases in the zone and so no negative impact on the outbreak in the Surveillance zone is expected. However, we suggest taking environmental conditions into consideration when advising your clients in this regard. Remember that the reason for the restricted period for vaccination is because of the risk of vaccine virus transmission by *Culicoides* midges.

Currently according to the Movement Control Policy, movement from the infected zone anywhere into in the AHS Controlled area is only allowed if the horse has been vaccinated within the last 24 months and not less than 40 days ago. State Vet Boland will consider granting a **concession** for individual horses that are resident in the AHS Controlled Area, that have been vaccinated legally according to the Animal Diseases Act (e.g. during the correct time of year, with the correct permissions

granted), in order that these horse may move temporarily out of the AHS controlled zone into the infected zone and may return directly within the 40 days post vaccination. This concession will only be granted to horses that have applied for the Concession PRIOR TO MOVEMENT OUT OF THE CONTROLLED AREA. These horses must have been vaccinated at least three times by a veterinarian, in their life, and these vaccinations must be recorded in a passport accepted by the AHS Movement Control Policy. Any concession application should be applied for to Dr. Camilla Weyer at camillaweyer@gmail.com .

Movement within the **Controlled area** of the Western Cape will be allowed after AHS vaccinations during the period **1 June to 31 October** without the post AHS vaccination 40 days waiting period.

Movement between the **Protection and the Surveillance or Free zone** will require a Health Certificate – valid for 48 hours and notification of the movement, as per the normal requirements of the AHS Movement Control Policy.

Thank you sincerely for your understanding and continued cooperation in this regard. We have attached the relevant documentation for your information.

Yours sincerely,

Gary



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