



Biosecurity New Zealand

Ministry for Primary Industries

Manatū Ahu Matua

One Health approach for HPAI H5N1



A guide for how New Zealand will prepare, respond, and the intended long-term approach for the high pathogenicity avian influenza H5N1 strain.

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Published by the Ministry for Primary Industries
PO Box 2526, Wellington, New Zealand

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ISBN No: 978-1-991380-85-2 (Online)

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Foreword

Recent experiences in New Zealand have demonstrated that responses to incidents or events can be large, complex and fast-moving. In the event of a major response, a wide range of agencies and organisations are likely to be called upon to assist, each with their own expertise, responsibilities and tasks. There will be a diverse range of issues and activities to manage and services to deliver to protect the interests of New Zealanders.

High pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) poses a significant risk to New Zealand with the H5N1 2.3.4.4b (H5N1) strain currently circulating around the globe posing a concern. We must be ready to work closely together to minimise the impacts of the disease on wildlife, primary industries and human health. We also need to recognise the inherent challenges the H5N1 strain presents, and the long-term implications if it becomes established in New Zealand.

Government agencies are leading the work to get New Zealand ready for HPAI H5N1. However, they will not be preparing or responding to the disease alone. Local government, industry, communities, Māori and others also all have significant roles and responsibilities in preparing for and responding to HPAI H5N1.

This guide outlines how New Zealand is preparing for and intends to respond to HPAI H5N1. Careful consideration has been given to the practicalities of responding to the disease, the uncertainty of when it may first arrive, and how different parts of New Zealand and our communities may be affected.

This guide is written for senior officials who are part of the National Resilience System, and who participate in activations of the Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination (the ODESC system). It is intended for those who may be involved in a response from across government, within industry, or from within our communities.

We invite you to read this guide to see how we are getting ready and to provide reassurance to New Zealanders that we will respond effectively if HPAI H5N1 arrives here.

Stuart Anderson

Deputy Director-General Biosecurity New Zealand,
Ministry for Primary Industries

Stephanie Rowe

Deputy Director-General Biodiversity, Heritage and
Visitors, Department of Conservation

Dr Andrew Old

Deputy Director-General, Public Health Agency, Ministry
of Health

Dr Nick Chamberlain

National Director, National Public Health Service,
Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora

Purpose

The One Health approach for HPAI H5N1 guide provides a high-level outline of how the New Zealand Government, supporting partners and stakeholders are getting prepared to respond to the possible arrival of the HPAI H5N1 2.3.4.4b strain currently circulating the globe.

By reading this guide, those with a direct or indirect role in preparing and responding, or who may be affected, will gain an understanding of the approach being taken, those who will be involved, and the actions likely to be taken following the detection of HPAI H5N1 2.3.4.4b in New Zealand.

Scope

This guide includes the risk mitigation and readiness work, response activities, and the intended long-term approach to dealing with the wildlife adapted high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 2.3.4.4b strain in New Zealand. In this document, “HPAI H5N1” refers to the HPAI H5N1 2.3.4.4b strain.

Future recombination or mutation events that result in the emergence of other high pathogenic strains that are not adapted to persist in wild birds are not within scope.

Specific work related to the H7N6 strain detected in a New Zealand commercial poultry farm in

December 2024 is out of scope. Low pathogenicity variants are also out of scope for this document.

New Zealand, when used as a territorial description, means the islands and territories within the Realm of New Zealand. This includes the islands neighbouring the North and South Island: Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham Islands, the Kermadec Islands, Manawatāwhi/Three Kings Islands; and the New Zealand subantarctic islands; but does not include the self-governing states of the Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, or the Ross Sea region.

How this guide connects to others

guide is part of a set of documents developed to inform and instruct response activities related to biosecurity, including to HPAI.

This guide should be read in conjunction with the documents listed below:

- [New Zealand Government Biosecurity Response Guide](#);
- [National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan Order 2015](#);
- [Ministry of Health: New Zealand Pandemic Plan: A framework for action](#)
- [Avian Influenza: Part of the Communicable Disease Control Manual](#); and
- [National Resilience System Handbook](#).

Summary

New Zealand is preparing for the likely arrival of the H5N1 strain of HPAI currently circulating the globe.

What we know about HPAI H5N1

- New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific Islands remain free from HPAI H5N1¹. The arrival of the disease into New Zealand is expected to be via migratory birds.
- HPAI H5N1 can cause high numbers of deaths in poultry, waterfowl, shorebirds and seabirds. It has also been detected in mammals, companion animals and livestock.
- After arrival into New Zealand, HPAI H5N1 is expected to become widespread in New Zealand's wild bird population. Eradication of the disease from New Zealand won't be possible.
- The risk to public health posed by HPAI H5N1 is low. Human infection with HPAI of any strain is rare and is usually associated with people who have had a lot of contact with infected birds or other animals.
- HPAI is sensitive to heat treatment and is not a food safety concern where food has been properly prepared and cooked thoroughly.

How New Zealand is getting ready

- New Zealand has robust surveillance systems to detect the arrival of HPAI H5N1 and we have plans in place for when it arrives.
- For wildlife, efforts are focused on protecting New Zealand's critically endangered species and reducing human-induced spread of the disease.
- Health agencies are monitoring developments regarding the risks to human health and are working hard to ensure the health system is prepared for an outbreak.
- Government agencies are working with the commercial poultry industry to ensure good biosecurity measures are in place to protect commercial flocks and safeguard New Zealand's chicken and egg supply.
- Local and regional councils, iwi and hapū, industry and community groups will have important roles when HPAI H5N1 arrives and our focus is ensuring a coordinated preparedness approach and to provide input to plans, information and guidance.
- Communication will play an important role before and after the arrival of HPAI H5N1. Information will be designed and shared in ways to effectively reach New Zealanders. Targeted information will also be provided to groups who may be directly affected by an HPAI H5N1 outbreak.

¹ At time of publication, August 2025

Avian influenza and the risk to New Zealand

Avian influenza, also known as bird flu, is a viral disease of birds that can also affect mammals. Avian influenza virus strains are categorised as low pathogenicity (LPAI) or high pathogenicity (HPAI). HPAI can cause severe animal welfare issues, spread quickly, and can result in high mortality rates in some bird populations. Consequently, HPAI can have wider implications for food security, industry and communities.

Strains of HPAI have been circulating globally for many years, with some countries experiencing seasonal outbreaks. In 2020, a new strain of HPAI H5N1, clade 2.3.4.4b² emerged in both domesticated and wild birds, spreading across the globe. The disease has been confirmed in birds on the Antarctica Peninsula and some international sub-Antarctic territories. HPAI H5N1 has never been detected in Australia, and there are no reports of the disease spreading to the South Pacific³.

Unlike many biosecurity threats, HPAI H5N1 is not expected to be brought to New Zealand by human activity, but by migratory wild birds. For this reason, it is not likely that the disease could be kept out of New Zealand over the long-term. This also means the eradication of the disease from New Zealand is unlikely to be feasible.

HPAI H7N6 outbreak

In December 2024 New Zealand experienced its first outbreak of high pathogenicity avian influenza with the H7N6 strain detected in a commercial poultry farm. This outbreak is believed to have occurred after free range laying hens foraging outside were exposed to the LPAI virus from wild waterfowl (ducks, geese and swans), which has then mutated into HPAI H7N6. LPAI is known to be present in wild birds. Fortunately, the H7N6 strain was able to be quickly eradicated from the farm supporting the fastest possible return to trade and best animal welfare outcomes.

While H7N6 is a high pathogenicity strain, it is not the HPAI H5N1 strain that has caused deaths in poultry, wild birds, and mammals overseas. There is no evidence that the H7N6 strain of HPAI can spread from chickens back into wild birds. Testing has confirmed the strain is unrelated to the H7 strain of avian influenza identified in Australia in 2024. However, the response to HPAI H7N6 has provided valuable lessons and experience to ensure New Zealand is better prepared for the possible arrival of HPAI H5N1.

New Zealand's native species

The impact on New Zealand is hard to fully quantify, but HPAI H5N1 has caused high numbers of deaths in wild birds and in some mammal species overseas. As many of New Zealand's native birds occur nowhere else in the world, such losses would increase extinction risk and represent a major setback to ongoing species recovery efforts. Mitigating and managing the impacts of HPAI H5N1 on New Zealand native species will be a challenge if the disease is circulating in the wild bird population.

² In this document, HPAI H5N1 refers to the HPAI H5N1 2.3.4.4b strain.

³ At time of publication, August 2025

Commercial poultry and primary industries

HPAI viruses can cause high mortality rates in poultry (chickens, turkeys and quail) and waterfowl. In the event of an HPAI H5N1 outbreak in New Zealand, domestic supply of poultry products may be affected in the medium-term, particularly if several large-scale poultry producers are impacted simultaneously.

The arrival of HPAI H5N1 into New Zealand may impact our ability to export some primary products. If the disease becomes widespread in the wild bird population, infection from wild birds will continue to pose a risk to commercial poultry. However, internationally, countries with H5N1 have not generally experienced significant long-term disruptions to poultry supply and pricing.

In the United States, HPAI H5N1 has been detected to be spreading among dairy cattle. The initial infection came from a spillover event where wild birds infected cattle on a handful of farms. Disease spread on farms continues to be investigated, with possible pathways including through feed contamination, cow-to-cow contact, and milking practices. Further spread between farms and to other states has occurred through the movement of infected cattle.

Risks to human health

The World Health Organization currently assesses the public health risk posed by HPAI H5N1 to be low, and low to moderate for people occupationally exposed, depending on the risk mitigation measures in place and

the local avian influenza epidemiological situation⁴. Human infection overseas, while rare, has been linked to people who have had frequent contact with infected birds or animals. Mortality rates in human cases have been high, although the true rate is harder to identify as previous reporting is likely to be only from the most severe cases, which have occurred in countries with relatively poor access to medical care.

HPAI is sensitive to heat treatment and is not a food safety concern where food has been properly prepared and cooked thoroughly. Wider impacts to people and communities overseas have been significant in areas which have experienced high numbers of animal mortalities linked to HPAI. Public use of recreation areas and the natural environment has been disrupted. Communities such as farmers, backyard bird owners, hunters, wildlife rehabilitators, animal welfare organisations, zoos, and other groups have also been directly impacted.

Māori

Impacts on Māori from HPAI H5N1 may arise, such as increased risk of exposure through cultural harvesting practices and reduced access to bones and feathers for use in Ngā Toi Māori (creation of art and craft). Many of the potentially impacted species are also taonga for mana whenua, with any losses likely to have material impact for Māori as kaitiaki of taonga species.

⁴ Updated joint FAO/WHO/WOAH public health assessment of recent influenza A(H5) virus events in animals and people – July 2025



New Zealand's approach to HPAI H5N1

The uncertainty of when HPAI H5N1 might arrive, the potential scale of the outbreak, and the expectation that the disease will likely become widespread in wild birds requires New Zealand to take a collaborative and coordinated approach. This includes work across risk mitigation and readiness efforts, response activities if the disease arrives, and the intended long-term approach. Central government agencies, local and regional councils, iwi and hapū, industry, and communities all have roles to play in this approach.

Strategic objectives that guide our approach

1. Reduce the impact on native species

The full impact of HPAI H5N1 on New Zealand's native species is uncertain but expected to be significant. The focus of our approach will be on protecting threatened native species where this is possible and carrying out actions on conservation land in support of the response.

2. Maintain domestic supply of poultry meat and eggs and safeguard primary product exports

The commercially concentrated nature of the New Zealand industry and the absence of fresh poultry or egg imports mean medium-term supply issues cannot be ruled out. The ability for New Zealand to export some primary products may also be impacted in an outbreak of HPAI H5N1.

3. Reduce the impact on the commercial poultry industry

The commercial poultry industry may experience significant disruption from the arrival of HPAI H5N1. Government One Health partners are working with industry to respond to and manage HPAI H5N1, and to develop a long-term approach for commercial poultry operators.

4. Protect human health

While the risk to general public health from HPAI H5N1 is assessed to be low, health agencies are working hard to ensure the health system is prepared for an outbreak. This includes mitigating the risks of transmission to humans and the ability to identify and respond to possible human infection. HPAI is not a food safety risk in food which has been properly prepared and cooked thoroughly.

How we will respond

One Health approach

Overseas experiences have shown the importance of taking a 'One Health' approach to meet the challenges HPAI H5N1 presents to human, animal and environmental health. For HPAI H5N1, a One Health approach involves central government agencies working together with industry, local government, iwi and hapū, community groups and other key stakeholders to prepare for and respond to an outbreak.

Central government

The Ministry for Primary Industries is the lead central government agency and has overall responsibility for ensuring New Zealand is prepared and able to respond to HPAI H5N1⁵. In its role as lead agency, the Ministry for Primary Industries will monitor and assess the situation, plan and coordinate a response, and provide information to the public and stakeholders.

The Ministry for Primary Industries is also responsible for ensuring and supporting the commercial poultry industry is prepared and able to respond to HPAI H5N1 detections at premises or on-farm, both in the short-term and over the long-term.

In support of the One Health approach, the Department of Conservation will focus its actions on public conservation land and protecting threatened native species, where possible. The Ministry of Health and Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora will concentrate on protecting human health from HPAI H5N1. These agencies will utilise their own resources, expertise, and legislative tools to support the preparedness and response activities.

Māori

As Treaty partners to the Crown and members of the wider community, it is important that Māori are involved in preparedness, response and recovery work, as appropriate to the scale and impact of an outbreak of HPAI H5N1. One Health government partners are using their networks and relationships to effectively engage and support Māori.

Local government

Local government, which includes regional, unitary councils and territorial authorities, are responsible for the management of parks, publicly accessible spaces, and other large parcels of land. Regional councils, and unitary councils with regional council functions, have a leadership role in activities that prevent, reduce, or eliminate adverse effects from harmful organisms present in their region (pest management). As such, local government will play an integral role in response activities in their region.

Industry

New Zealand's commercial poultry industry is working hard to prepare for the arrival of HPAI H5N1 and mitigate impacts of the disease. The HPAI H7N6 outbreak and response efforts has shown the importance of continuing industry readiness efforts, including identifying areas to strengthen biosecurity resilience and capability over the long-term.

Industry bodies the Poultry Industry Association of New Zealand and the Egg Producers Federation are working with the Ministry for Primary Industries to finalise an Operational Agreement under the Government Industry Agreement (GIA) for Biosecurity Readiness and Response⁶. This is a formal partnership between participating primary industry sectors and the Government to deliver better biosecurity outcomes for New Zealand, through sharing responsibility, resources, costs and decision making.

⁵ On the basis that HPAI H5N1 remains primarily a biosecurity issue.

⁶ GIA discussions to finalise an operational agreement are progressing, as of August 2025.

Getting ready

Preparing for the potential arrival of HPAI H5N1 starts with monitoring international developments, including assessing the extent of spread and impact around the world. New Zealand is part of global networks that actively monitor and share information about the spread of HPAI. We're engaging regularly with our counterparts in other countries to understand how the disease is behaving as it spreads, and effective responses.

We are learning from the experiences of the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States where HPAI outbreaks have occurred. However, we need to consider what will work best in the New Zealand context. Our planning for a possible outbreak here includes a wide range of considerations, including improving biosecurity measures and practices to mitigate the impacts, as well as the practicalities and effectiveness of movement controls and vaccination.

A key priority for One Health partners is to ensure the capability of people, organisations and systems to respond to any suspected or actual risk promptly and effectively. Efforts are focused on engaging with key stakeholders to ensure a coordinated preparedness approach and to provide input to plans, information and guidance. Proactive communication is shared to a broad range of audiences, including the wider public.

Strengthening biosecurity

Strengthening New Zealand's biosecurity is a critical part of getting ready for any HPAI strain. This involves implementing biosecurity practices and measures to mitigate the spread and impact of the disease. Such action will help to mitigate human-induced transmission of the disease, improve the resilience of food supply chains, help protect New Zealand's wildlife and primary industries, and reduce risks to human health. Strengthening biosecurity before the disease is detected will also reduce the need for response interventions by central government One Health partners.

Improving on-farm biosecurity practices prior to an outbreak is particularly important for New Zealand's commercial poultry industry. Adjustments to operations, including improvements to on-farm biosecurity practices, ensuring appropriate resources and capacity are available, and enhancing industry capability will likely be needed.



Response to the arrival of HPAI H5N1

A confirmed detection of HPAI H5N1 in New Zealand will trigger a series of actions by One Health agencies and other partners based on established biosecurity response practices, which have been carefully planned and prepared beforehand. This will be a period of fast-paced, focused activity to assess the situation, potentially contain any further spread of the disease and identify strategic options to allow further planning and decisions to be made.

The Ministry for Primary Industries will lead the overall coordination of the response across multiple agencies, industry partners, service providers and key community stakeholders. Depending on the location and specific characteristics of the situation, One Health partners and other government agencies will activate response plans under their area of responsibility. The commercial poultry industry will initiate its own response activities aligned to the wider response.

Response structure

Central government agencies, including One Health partners, have well-developed incident response systems based on the Coordinated Incident Management System, referred to as CIMS. These separate systems are designed to be effectively joined into a single integrated system for the response to critical events. The resulting integrated response structure is flexible and agile enough to manage the different approaches that each party may wish to take within an individual response.

In large or complex responses that require close co-ordination between agencies, New Zealand's strategic crisis management arrangements, the Officials' Committee for Domestic and External Security Coordination (known as the ODESC system) may be activated. The decision to do this will depend on the scale, complexity, and specific characteristics of the situation.

Response governance is responsible for setting the strategic direction, and for timely and quality decision making by considering a broad range of factors that could affect a response. In a HPAI H5N1 response, governance will be led by the One Health agencies and support partners, with the ODESC system providing strategic governance if activated.

Determining what interventions are used

The uncertainty of time and location of a possible HPAI H5N1 outbreak creates challenges for One Health partners to prepare and plan. Agencies and other organisations will consider a range of factors to ensure a consistent approach is taken to decision making processes, the interventions selected and communication provided.

The exact interventions carried out in a HPAI H5N1 response will be influenced by factors such as

- when it arrives;
- where in New Zealand it is first detected;
- how quickly it spreads around the country;
- if the disease is detected in commercial poultry flocks;
- if it spills over to mammals; and
- changes in risks to human health.

Native, wild, and non-commercial birds and mammals

The responsibility of dealing with free living (wild), non-native birds and mammals will be dependent on their location. One Health partners will not seek to intervene or apply controls for these species. Landowners, including local and regional authorities, and other government agencies, will be responsible for animals that are infected or dead from the disease on their land, in accordance with published advice from One Health partners.

In most circumstances, the Department of Conservation will not actively manage infected populations on public conservation land other than to reduce disturbance. In the case of threatened species, additional protection measures may be put in place to improve the resilience of the population to the potential losses from HPAI H5N1. One Health partners will use their regional networks and relationships to support councils, iwi and hapū, and other significant landowners where native birds and mammals are likely to be found.

Because we cannot control the movement of wild birds, eradication of HPAI H5N1 from New Zealand's wild bird population will not be attempted.

Actions undertaken or considered during a response

- Vaccination to protect threatened native birds may be carried out where feasible, based on the vaccination trial conducted during 2024.
 - Access to some areas of public land may be restricted during active outbreaks to avoid risks to wildlife and people.
 - Advice will be provided for non-commercial bird keeping, wildlife hospitals and sanctuaries, and other bird handling activities.
 - Dead and sick wildlife may need to be removed on some sites to protect human health or to prevent further disease spread.
 - Consideration will be given to whether increased management efforts are appropriate, and if other stressors on endangered wildlife populations can be relieved, e.g. through improved predator control.
 - Information will be provided for people to protect their animals from HPAI H5N1 and actions to take if an infection is suspected.
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Commercial poultry

In the event of commercial flocks becoming infected, operators will be supported by the Ministry for Primary Industries to mitigate the impacts on operations and food supply chains. A rapid depopulation of infected flocks followed by decontamination of sites may be required. Readiness action beforehand will mean many operators can manage an outbreak of HPAI themselves. In such instances, the Ministry for Primary Industries will provide general support and oversight towards the elimination of the disease on the affected property.

Actions undertaken or considered during a response

- Animals which are suspected or confirmed to be infected with HPAI will be humanely euthanised and disposed of.
 - Investigation and tracing of animals and risk goods movements on and off infected properties will be carried out to identify other potential sites with HPAI H5N1.
 - Decontamination of sites, vehicles and other high-risk items will be carried out following an infection.
 - Restrictions on the movement of products, vehicles and equipment off known infected poultry production facilities may be applied.
 - The World Organisation for Animal Health and international markets will be notified of the loss of our HPAI-free status, and trade in HPAI-susceptible animal products may be suspended.
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Human health

The Ministry of Health and Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora will support the One Health response to minimise the risks of transmission to humans from infected environments, animals and humans. A number of human health focused activities will increase, including surveillance and testing, case and contact investigation and management and communication with the public and health sector.

Actions undertaken or considered during a response

- Surveillance and testing will be increased, including an increase in the proportion of influenza A-positive samples that are subtyped.
 - Communications to at-risk workers and other groups will be increased to ensure comprehensive advice on risk-reduction measures is available.
 - Health New Zealand will communicate with the health sector to ensure clinicians are alert to the outbreak and the possibility of human cases.
 - Investigation of any suspected or confirmed human cases (including laboratory testing, epidemiological investigation, contact tracing, and laboratory characterisation of virus).
 - Monitoring exposed people for symptoms, which may include providing antiviral post exposure prophylaxis to people who had close exposure without PPE.
 - Clinical assessment and management of suspected and confirmed human cases (including antiviral treatment, and additional medical treatment as needed).
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Communication

The potential scale of an HPAI H5N1 outbreak means communication will play an important role before and during a response. A communication strategy has been developed by One Health partners which includes a phased approach; as the virus moves closer to New Zealand, communications to the public and stakeholders will ramp up.

Communication will be supported by a public awareness campaign to communicate the risks of HPAI H5N1, what is being done about it and why. A key focus for communication will be ensuring people understand what to do (for example, follow possible restrictions to public land), any consequences or risks of not doing what is required, and where to seek help to cope with the impact of HPAI H5N1.

Information will be designed and shared in ways to effectively reach New Zealanders. Targeted information will be provided to groups who may be directly impacted by an HPAI H5N1 outbreak. This will include wildlife hospitals and sanctuaries, environmental NGOs, bird owners and other bird interest and welfare groups. This approach will utilise and maximise relationships and communication channels already in place.

Stakeholders

HPAI H5N1 preparedness and response activities involve a broad range of stakeholders and interested parties, including:

- Central government (including Ministers)
- Other government agencies
- Māori
- Commercial poultry industry sector (including GIA partners)
- Local government
- Public Health and Forensic Science (PHF Science)
- Veterinary sector
- Regional civil defence and emergency management personnel
- Response operational service providers, including commercial laboratories
- New Zealand Fish and Game Council
- Antarctica New Zealand
- Animal health and welfare organisations
- Wider health sector
- Dairy and livestock sectors including associated farming support services
- Feed manufacturers
- Environmental NGOs
- Consumers of egg, poultry and dairy products
- Supermarkets and other egg/poultry retailers
- Hunters/fishers/birdwatchers/trampers
- Other bird owners (e.g. backyard poultry, bird fanciers, rare breed keepers and pet birds).



Recovery and long-term management

Following the initial response, New Zealand will move to a recovery phase to support those people, businesses and communities impacted. What the recovery will look like is dependent on several factors, including the scale and impact of the initial response.

Complimenting the recovery phase is the consideration of how HPAI H5N1 will be managed over the long-term. A significant consideration for this is the expectation HPAI H5N1 will become widespread in the wild bird population. This means the eradication of the disease from New Zealand is unlikely to be feasible. Planning for the long-term approach for HPAI H5N1 is already under way as part of preparedness work the One Health partners are undertaking.

Native species

Recovery efforts for native species will be focused on species most impacted, where practical to do so, and building population health and resilience for other high-risk species. The Department of Conservation's long-term management approach will include supporting wider native bird populations through species recovery programmes and activities. This may also include the vaccination of a limited number of native species.

Commercial poultry

Internationally, countries which have had HPAI H5N1 outbreaks have not generally experienced significant long-term disruptions to poultry supply and pricing.

This has been the result of strengthening on-farm biosecurity practices prior to and during an outbreak, a pragmatic approach when a response is underway, and a timely re-establishment of flocks in commercial premises which had previously experienced an outbreak.

If HPAI H5N1 becomes widespread in the wild bird population, infection from wild birds will continue to pose a risk to commercial poultry. Therefore, an industry-led approach to the long-term management of HPAI, including responding to outbreaks, will be appropriate. An industry-led approach acknowledges the poultry industry has the operational understanding and expertise to drive sector preparedness and management plans. This approach also recognises that commercial poultry operators will develop and implement biosecurity measures in alignment with their business plans.

Human health

Once HPAI H5N1 is widespread in New Zealand's wildlife, and people undertaking high-risk activities are well accustomed to risk-reducing measures, the human health aspect of the response will largely transition to an employer-led workplace health and safety model. Information for the public will remain available and appropriate to the level of risk and any new epidemiological developments.

If needed, health agencies will continue to respond to individual cases/clusters of disease as per clinical guidance.

Who will be involved

The initial risk mitigation and readiness efforts, response activities, and recovery work for HPAI H5N1 will involve a wide range of stakeholders and support partners. The level of their involvement will be proportional to the size and scale of an HPAI H5N1 outbreak.

Ministry for Primary Industries

The Ministry for Primary Industries is the lead agency and responsible for several nationally significant risks on New Zealand's National Risk Register. This includes the Pests and diseases risk. Avian Influenza is classified as an Unwanted Organism and Notifiable Organism⁷ under the Biosecurity Act and the arrival of HPAI H5N1 into New Zealand will prompt the Ministry for Primary Industries to take action. The Ministry also has responsibility for animal welfare, rural communities and food safety.

Biosecurity New Zealand, the biosecurity arm of the Ministry, leads and coordinates response operations to biosecurity hazards and their impacts. This includes post-border surveillance, investigations and responses to incursions of exotic organisms. It may also include the declaration of a biosecurity emergency to enable the use of emergency powers.

Department of Conservation

In a HPAI H5N1 response, the Department of Conservation is responsible for actions on public conservation land and protecting threatened native species, where possible. This will include the management of species recovery programmes through improving baseline health and increasing population resilience.

Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health is the Government's chief steward of the health system. The Ministry of Health advises the Government on policy, sets direction, and regulates and monitors the health system to ensure it performs well and delivers better health outcomes for all. The Public Health Agency is a directorate of the Ministry, responsible for developing effective public health knowledge and surveillance systems.

Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora

The National Public Health Service (NPHS) is a delivery directorate within Health New Zealand (Health NZ). NPHS lead the planning and operational delivery of public health services and are responsible for core public health components within the publicly funded health system; along with the Public Health Agency (within Ministry of Health). Health NZ – NPHS leads human health operational readiness and response to HPAI H5N1, and will undertake public health management of HPAI cases, outbreaks, and exposures.

Local government

Local government consists of regional, district and city councils, as well as unitary authorities. While many local government roles and functions are the same across places, some vary from place to place depending on the type of council, community size, and local needs. As well as participating in some biosecurity operations, local government will engage with and provide information to the communities they serve.

Māori

Māori have special relationships with the land, environment, government and one another. This places them in a unique position to guide, provide wisdom and insight, and help manage biosecurity risks where they occur, including within their own rohe (areas). Māori participation through engagement, collaboration and partnership will support the delivery of biosecurity outcomes for New Zealand.

Industry

The commercial poultry industry will have a lead role in the operational response at the farm-level, managing risks over the long term, and improving overall industry resilience to HPAI H5N1. Under the provisions of the GIA⁸, industry partners will participate in decision-making as part of Response Governance. Industry representatives will also help to facilitate communication between industry and government agencies and help share and collect information to support recovery efforts.

⁷ Official New Zealand Pest Register

⁸ Industry bodies are finalising an Operational Agreement with the Ministry for Primary Industries under the GIA for Biosecurity Readiness and Response.

Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Provides advice and support on regional economic development and supporting impacts.

National Emergency Management Agency

Provides advice and support to agencies and local government for any readiness, response, recovery management and activities.

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Leads and coordinates government responses to emerging risks or crises through activation of the ODESC system.

Department of Internal Affairs

Facilitates and helps with co-ordinating local government engagement in response and recovery efforts.

New Zealand Institute for Public Health and Forensic Science

The New Zealand Institute for Public Health and Forensic Science (PHF Science) is New Zealand's public research organisation dedicated to enhancing the health, wellbeing and safety of our communities. In the event of HPAI H5N1 being detected here, PHF Science will contribute to the surveillance of human health.

New Zealand Fish and Game Council

Fish and Game is responsible for monitoring and reporting suspicious adverse health events in game bird populations and for assisting with local response activities and public communication.

Wildlife sanctuaries, hospitals and zoos

These facilities will play an important role supporting the welfare of wild birds and the long-term survival for some species. Facilities will need to take a pragmatic approach around receiving new birds and are encouraged to have strict biosecurity measures to help prevent disease spread to other animals at the facility and the staff who work there.

Environmental NGOs and community wildlife groups

These groups will support the dissemination of response information and help provide information on notification and extent of spread of infection.

General public and landowners

General public will have an important role reporting suspected HPAI H5N1 cases to Ministry for Primary Industries and following advice and guidance to protect human health and limit disease spread. Private landowners will be responsible for wild birds on land they own or are responsible, in accordance with published advice.



Appendix 1 – Other government agencies

A large response or emergency may require the involvement of other government agencies.

Some agencies also have large land holdings and will be responsible for animals which are infected or dead from HPAI H5N1 on their land on their land, in accordance with published advice.

Ministry for the Environment

Is responsible for the advice and support for impacts to the land and water and provide oversight and policy for landfill sites and Resource Management Act applications.

Environmental Protection Authority

Regulates human activities that impact the environment and people of New Zealand with a particular focus for environmental protection and enhancing New Zealanders' way of life and economy. Considers and approves the use of hazardous substances.

New Zealand Police

Police may be involved in managing community safety and control in the affected area. Police powers may be needed to support field operations in the areas impacted by the response.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand

Protects and preserves life, prevents or limits injury, and prevents or limits damage to property, land and the environment. Will also play a role in reducing the consequences of major responses by helping communities respond and become more resilient.

Land Information New Zealand

Manages around 2 million hectares of Crown-owned land, including land held for Treaty settlements, beds of lakes and rivers, forest land, high country pastoral land in the South Island and residential and commercial properties, closed schools, courthouses and prisons.

Ministry of Social Development

Provide advice and support to food insecure communities and individuals whose income is impacted by response activities.

Te Puni Kōkiri

Is the Government's principal policy advisor on Māori wellbeing and development.

Crown Law Office

The Crown Law Office provides legal advice and representation services to the government in matters affecting the executive government, particularly in the areas of criminal, public and administrative law.

Appendix 2 – Legislation

Legislation which may support readiness and response actions for HPAI H5N1.

The Biosecurity Act 1993

Is the primary legal framework used by government, administered by the Ministry for Primary Industries, to manage biosecurity risks. It gives key agencies a range of powers to deal with harmful organisms. During readiness and response activities, use of those powers may include entry onto property, imposing movement controls, destruction of infected property or animals, and official direction to compel certain actions.

The Biosecurity Act also provides for compensation to be paid when the use of powers to manage or eradicate an organism causes financial losses to people, specifically from the damage to or destruction of property and losses arising from movement controls⁹. Being able to claim compensation encourages people to report any suspected unwanted pests or diseases and to fully co-operate with response activities.

The Biosecurity Act 1993 gives regional councils a leadership role in activities that prevent, reduce, or eliminate adverse effects from harmful organisms present in their region (pest management). This role complements the national pest management leadership role of the Director-General for Ministry for Primary Industries under the Biosecurity Act.

Conservation Act 1987, Reserves Act 1977, National Parks Act 1980, Marine Reserves Act 1971

Can provide support to biosecurity responses, including through restricting or limiting access to certain areas.

Health Act 1956

Deals with the improvement, promotion and protection of public health. Matters relevant to biosecurity include the powers and duties of local authorities, provisions relating to diseases that require quarantine, and regulations relating to public health, including prevention of the spread of infectious diseases.

Animal Welfare Act 1999

The Act sets out the obligations of animal owners or people in charge of animals, and around people's conduct towards animals generally. Animal owners have to meet an animal's physical, health, and behavioural needs, and must alleviate pain or distress. All people are prohibited from ill-treating animals. The Codes of Welfare, which are secondary legislation made under this Act, will need to be considered when planning and carrying out response activities.

Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002

This Act creates a framework within which New Zealand can prepare for, deal with, and recover from local, regional and national emergencies. Key objectives including encouraging the co-ordination of emergency management across the range of agencies and organisations with responsibilities for preventing or managing emergencies, and requiring local authorities to co-ordinate Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) through regional groups during reduction, readiness, response and recovery activities.

Animal Products Act 1999

Regulates the production and processing of animal material and animal products to minimise and manage risks to human or animal health. This Act also facilitates the entry of animal material and products into overseas markets by providing the controls and mechanisms needed to for entry into those markets.

Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 (HSNO Act)

Protects the environment and the health and safety of people and communities by preventing or managing the adverse effects of hazardous substances and new organisms. This includes new organisms that have breached containment, conditional release or other controls. The HSNO Act may also apply (and compliance with an approval may be required) if a response involves using hazardous substances.

⁹ Under the provisions of the GIA, industry partners will participate in decision-making as part of Response Governance. This will include the use of actions which trigger compensation.

Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)

Promotes the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. The RMA prohibits discharges of contaminants onto water or land unless the discharge is authorised by a regional council, resource consent or regulation. Activities during a response may require resource consents or exemption.

Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act 1997 (ACVM Act)

Includes regulatory control of agricultural compounds, including veterinary medicines, and their importation, manufacture, sale and use. If a response involves application of agricultural compounds then this Act is likely to apply.

Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

Applies to all New Zealand workplaces, employees and contractors. The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 gives protection from workplace health and safety risks, including risks to both physical and mental health.

Local Government Act 2002

Is the main piece of legislation defining the power and responsibility of local authorities. The Act provides a framework and powers for local authorities to decide which activities they undertake and the way they will undertake them, promotes accountability of local authorities to their communities, and provides for local authorities to play a broad role in promoting the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of their communities.

Wildlife Act 1953

Protects specified wildlife while permitting the hunting of some wildlife at certain set times, for example, mallard ducks, game birds including pheasants and partridges, pūkeko, and other species.

Treaty Claims Settlement

Treaty claims settlement acts are legislation passed giving effect to agreements reached between the Crown and iwi regarding historical Treaty of Waitangi claims. As part of their actions to plan and respond to HPAI, agencies will need to have regard to arrangements put in place as part of the settlements.

Ministry for Primary Industries
PO Box 2526
Wellington 6140
New Zealand
0800 00 83 33
www.mpi.govt.nz



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government