



Investigation of pigeon mortalities – update for WA pigeon owners

12 August 2016

The Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (DAFWA) has been continuing to investigate the cause of mortalities in racing pigeons during May and June 2016 in the Perth metropolitan area.

Several lofts were affected in May 2016, with disease signs including diarrhoea, regurgitation and death. Mortalities were variable, but have been up to 20% in some lofts. Birds were submitted to DAFWA Diagnostic Laboratory Services - Animal pathology unit, which carried out full post-mortem examination and sampling. The outbreak of disease appears to have resolved, with no further cases reported to DAFWA since late June 2016.

All birds tested negative for the reportable diseases avian influenza, pigeon paramyxovirus type 1 and Newcastle disease. While initial laboratory tests at DAFWA and an epidemiological assessment suggested that the cause of mortality was due to an adenovirus, this has not been confirmed due to a lack of available tests for adenovirus Australia-wide. Further laboratory testing is ongoing at DAFWA, but it may take several months to diagnose the cause of the disease.

DAFWA recommends the pigeon industry practice strict biosecurity to help protect their birds from disease. Biosecurity advice is available on the [Department of Agriculture and Water Resources website](#).

DAFWA will provide an update to the pigeon industry with the results of further laboratory testing.

Any unusual illness or mortalities should be reported immediately to your private veterinarian, the Emergency Animal Disease hotline on 1800 675 888, or to Dr Emily Glass, DAFWA, on +61 (0)8 9368 3360 or Emily.Glass@agric.wa.gov.au.

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