

The National High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (H7N8) Eradication Program - Victoria

PROJECT AGREEMENT FOR PEST AND DISEASE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PROGRAMS

Table 1: Formalities and operation of schedule	
Parties	Commonwealth Victoria
Duration	<p>This Schedule is expected to expire on 31 December 2026.</p> <p>For the purposes of Clause 10 of the <i>Project Agreement for Pest and Disease Preparedness Programs</i>, this Schedule also expires on completion or termination of the National High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (H7N8) Victorian Response Plan (the Response Plan), as determined by the National Management Group (NMG). However, in those circumstances this Schedule still allows for the processing of any payments for milestones met up to termination.</p>
Purpose	This Schedule will support the delivery of the Victorian Response Plan to contain and eradicate High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) (H7N8) as quickly and cost effectively as possible.
Project Elements	<p>The Victorian response to the HPAI outbreaks of H7N8 in the Shire of Strathbogie will deliver the actions as detailed in version 4.1 of the Response Plan. Version 4.1 of the Response Plan was approved by the NMG on 26 May 2025.</p> <p>The project elements for the Eradication Program are:</p> <p>(a) Treatment: Eradicate HPAI (H7N8) using <i>stamping out</i> through destruction, disposal, and decontamination activities.</p> <p>(b) Surveillance: Initial surveillance activities will be aimed at identifying new cases, with a focus on premises in the Outside Area (OA) and Control Area (CA); delimiting the extent of the disease and demonstrating HPAI (H7N8) is not present in the CA and OA. This includes commercial poultry farm(s), wild birds and rare / valuable animals and will confirm the presence of any susceptible species.</p> <p>(c) Community engagement: Development of a public communications strategy incorporating use of social media to keep the community well informed of updates including the declared area movement restrictions.</p> <p>An engagement plan will be implemented to encourage poultry owners, veterinarians, and other livestock industry service personnel to undertake high level biosecurity practices and report any disease suspicion.</p>

	<p>(d) Science: An epidemiological assessment will be done focusing on commercial poultry farms monitoring health records and sampling dead birds where available.</p> <p>(e) Containment: Implementation of Biosecurity Controls including housing requirements, quarantine of Infected Premises (IP) in conjunction with the declaration of Control and Restricted Areas. Depopulation and disposal of poultry on IPs and instigation of IPs site security.</p> <p>(f) Policy and planning: The Victorian eradication program will be conducted under the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA). Activities will be undertaken in accordance with the <i>Livestock Disease Control Act 1994</i> and related legislative provisions. The program strategies and surveillance activities are aligned with the AUSVETPLAN, Avian Influenza (AI) Response strategy (v5.2, 2003) and World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).</p> <p>(g) Support services: The National Avian Influenza Wild Bird Surveillance Program collects surveillance data for AI virus and includes exclusion of AI virus from mass mortality and morbidity events in wild birds.</p> <p>A Wild Bird Advisory Group has been established and will assist Agriculture Victoria establish the role of wild birds aiding in determining potential for dissemination of disease.</p> <p>Engage with a compost consultant to assess risk and provide advice on requirements to ensure AI virus inactivation.</p>												
<p>Estimated financial contributions</p>	<p>The Commonwealth will provide an estimated total financial contribution to Victoria of up to \$21.5 million in respect of this Schedule.</p> <p>The agreed maximum financial contribution for the H₅N₈ (H7N8) Eradication Program for Victoria is outlined in Table 1 and payable in accordance with the milestones set out in Table 2.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="423 1352 1412 1608"> <thead> <tr> <th>Table 1 (\$ million)</th> <th>2025-26</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Australian Government</td> <td>16.3</td> <td>16.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Industry Contributions*</td> <td>5.2</td> <td>5.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maximum Australian Government contribution to Victoria</td> <td></td> <td>21.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* The poultry industries share of the total response budget will be split between Australian Chicken Meat Federation, Australian Duck Meat Association and Australian Eggs Limited. Compensation costs are being confirmed, the industry split will be finalised once this is determined. See clause 2.3 for information on payment arrangements relating to industry contributions.</p> <p>Note: table 1 reflects financial year in which response activities are conducted and may differ to the financial year of payment which is shown in table 2 below. All payments are exclusive of GST. Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand and are outlined in full in table 2.</p>	Table 1 (\$ million)	2025-26	Total	Australian Government	16.3	16.3	Industry Contributions*	5.2	5.2	Maximum Australian Government contribution to Victoria		21.5
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<p>Additional terms</p>	<p>1. The Program will be conducted as a response under the EADRA deed.</p>												

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Reporting obligations are set out in Table 2, however, circumstances may give rise to additional reporting being sought. Victoria will provide such additional reporting at the request of the Commonwealth as is reasonable. 2. Each party will contribute funding in accordance with the financial commitments as agreed by the NMG 26 May 2025. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Final contributions, of 'Up to' the Commonwealths maximum, will be based on actual expenditure and determined by the custodian, Animal Health Australia (AHA) in accordance with the EADRA and the Response Plan. 2.2. Industry party contributions will be apportioned as detailed in the 2021 Deed of Agreement between Australian Chicken Meat Federation Inc, Australian Eggs Limited, Australian Duck Meat Association and AHA. 2.3. The Commonwealth's maximum potential payments are set out in the Table 2 milestones and may, where applicable, be adjusted to match the Commonwealth's maximum share of actual expenditure as determined under additional term 2.1. 2.4. Where the Industry Party is not able to meet its cost sharing obligations either directly, or from funds held on its behalf, the Commonwealth will initially meet that Industry Party's Cost Sharing obligations as set out in EADRA section 11.4 (b). Each Industry Party will subsequently meet its cost sharing obligations to the Commonwealth, arising as a result of the Commonwealth meeting Industry Party obligations pursuant to Schedule 7 of the EADRA. 2.5. The Commonwealth may, at its discretion, move all or part of an underspend against a milestone in a financial year to a milestone in another financial year. Such circumstance may arise where the NMG has agreed the Response Plan can be varied to include additional cost-shared activities, or extend duration, without increasing the overall maximum contribution under this schedule. 3. This Schedule will be reassessed in conjunction with reviews of the status of the HPAI (H7N8) Response Plan and decisions by the NMG.
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Table 2: Victoria – Performance requirements, reporting, and payment summary			
Output	Performance milestones	Report due	Payment
Eradicate High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (H7N8) including by using <i>stamping out</i> through destruction, disposal, and decontamination activities.	<p>Milestone 1</p> <p>Commonwealth acceptance of evidence of claimed expenditure to support the progress towards the Project Elements noted above, and as contained in the Response Plan for the period February 2025 to March 2025 verified by AHA as eligible for cost sharing.</p>	15 July 2025	Up to \$13,000,000.00 subject to the additional terms.
	<p>Milestone 2</p> <p>Commonwealth acceptance of evidence of claimed expenditure to support the progress towards the Project Elements noted above, and as contained in the Response Plan for the period April 2025 to June 2025 verified by AHA as eligible for cost sharing.</p>	15 August 2025	Up to \$6,000,000.00 subject to the additional terms.
	<p>Milestone 3</p> <p>Commonwealth acceptance of evidence of claimed expenditure to support the progress towards the Project Elements noted above, and as contained in the Response Plan for the period July 2025 to November 2025 verified by AHA as eligible for cost sharing.</p> <p>Commonwealth acceptance of final (Proof of Freedom) report for work completed from February 2025 to November 2025 endorsed by Consultative Committee Emergency Animal Disease (CCEAD) demonstrating satisfactory completion of Response Plan for the eradication program.</p>	15 November 2025	Up to \$2,474,741.96 subject to the additional terms.

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this schedule as follows:

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by

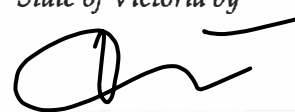


The Honourable Julie Collins MP
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

[Day] [Month] 2025

12 December 2025

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by



The Honourable Michaela Settle MP
Minister for Agriculture

[Day] [Month] 2026

15/5/26