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Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO THE AUSTRALIAN HORSE INDUSTRY  
AND AN EMERGENCY DISEASE RESPONSE AGREEMENT

To the committee

We ( my husband, Rob and myself) own and operate one of the largest standardbred studs in Australia and have a vital business and personal interest in your current inquiry.

**We are firmly opposed to permitting random EI vaccination for some horses in Australia when Australia is EI free.**

**We are firmly in favour of the signing of EADRA so that a co-ordinated response can be launched and funded for any future equine disease outbreaks.**

The response to the EI outbreak in 2007 was, we believe, very well managed by the various government authorities and deserve thanks and congratulations.

We believe the consequences of the horse industry failing to commit to EADRA would be disastrous and that the options currently under investigation for contributions by the horse industry and individual owners seem practical and equitable.

While much of the discussion regarding this matter has centred on EI, it is important that the larger picture of quarantine and disease prevention should not be ignored. Australia should never take it's relative disease free status( in the equine population) lightly or for granted.

Let's not risk even one of those disease free status (Equine Influenza) by giving in to the lobbying of one small, but powerful group in the horse industry – who, I believe, would later regret that decision because of the dire adverse consequences it would bring.

We believe that the proposal to allow use of EI vaccination in Australia as a mitigation measure is scientifically flawed; of no benefit from an economically and would have serious adverse implications in a variety of areas.

One of the main adverse impacts for the standardbred industry would be the impact on current unrestricted movement of horses between Australia and New Zealand for racing, breeding, yearling purchases etc. This would effectively be virtually wiped out with a huge impact on all concerned.

Another impact would be the cost (in time and money) involved in passport/ surveillance procedures and we believe strongly that such vaccinations would eventually mask an outbreak and lead to EI becoming endemic in Australia.

The majority of research confirms the view that the most cost effective method for all those involved with horses throughout Australia, whether for business or pleasure, is the effective maintenance of quarantine arrangements and the signing of EADRA to provide adequate provisions for any future outbreaks.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Julie Vandyke