



INDUSTRY UPDATE:

Interim arrangement for Australian horses to race in Hong Kong

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources conducted a verification visit to Hong Kong to assess the proposed interim arrangement for Australian horses to race in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HK SAR) under special biosecurity measures. The intent of the arrangement is to permit Australian horses to race in HK SAR under stringent biosecurity control and then return to Australia directly, without having to undergo 180 days residence in an approved country before returning to Australia. The interim arrangement is expected to remain in place whilst the assessment of HK SAR and the Conghua training centre in the People's Republic of China continues.

Two departmental officers undertook the verification visit in HK SAR from 28 February 2019 to 7 March 2019. During the visit, the department worked with the HK SAR Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) to gain assurance that there is sufficient oversight of the arrangement to meet Australia's appropriate level of protection (ALOP) from equine diseases and that AFCD can certify to the conditions of the interim arrangement.

The department is pleased to advise that the verification visit was successful and that the interim arrangement meets Australia's ALOP. The ongoing cooperation between the department, AFCD and the equine industry has been pivotal in the development and implementation of this arrangement.

The department and AFCD have negotiated health certificates for horses competing in HK SAR under the interim arrangement. The health certificates and associated conditions will be available on the department's Biosecurity import conditions database (BICON)

The interim arrangement will be implemented from 12 March 2019 and will be valid for an initial 12 month period. After this time, and subject to a facility audit and continued compliance with the conditions of the arrangement, re-approval will occur every two years.

The implementation of the interim arrangement will allow Australian horses to participate in the upcoming Champions Day at Sha Tin racecourse, HK SAR on 28 April 2019.