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**GENERAL NOTICES • ALGEMENE KENNISGEWINGS**

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**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES****NOTICE 770 OF 2018****ANIMAL DISEASES ACT, 1984 (ACT NO 35 OF 1984)****Veterinary Procedural Notice for African horse sickness control in South Africa or “AHS VPN” under the Animal Diseases Act, 1984 (Act No 35 of 84) and the Animal Diseases Regulations (R.2026 of 1986)**

I, Senzeni Zokwana, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries hereby

- (a) invite all interested institutions, organisations and individuals to submit written comments on the draft AHS VPN, and to do so within 90 days of the date of publication of this notice to the following address:

The Director  
Directorate: Animal Health  
Department of Agriculture  
Private Bag X138  
PRETORIA  
0001

E-mail: [KerryL@daff.gov.za](mailto:KerryL@daff.gov.za) and [Camilla@saehp.com](mailto:Camilla@saehp.com)

- (b) inform all interested parties that the draft AHS VPN can be obtained from the Director: Animal Health or alternatively can be accessed on the DAFF website <http://www.daff.gov.za/daffweb3/Branches/Agricultural-Production-Health-Food-Safety/Animal-Health/information/dahpolicy>

**MR. SENZENI ZOKWANA**

Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION NOTICE:****VETERINARY PROCEDURAL NOTICE FOR AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS CONTROL  
ALSO KNOWN AS THE "AHS VPN"**

African horse sickness (AHS) is a viral disease of equids (horses, donkeys, mules and zebras) that is transmitted by *Culicoides* midges. The disease is capable of causing severe illness and death in horses, which may adversely affect the livelihoods of the owners of working and sporting animals and the communities that depend upon them. AHS also has a significant impact on the international trade and movement of horses, donkeys, mules and zebra.

The majority of South Africa is considered to be naturally infected with AHS (endemic for AHS) and in this infected zone vaccination and decreasing exposure to midges are the main protective measures against AHS.

There is a region in the Western Cape Province (WCP) with low AHS infection pressure and this area is home to many horses, mules and donkeys that are naive and therefore vulnerable to severe infections of AHS. These areas in the WCP have been legislated under the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84) as the "AHS controlled area". The AHS controlled area relies on movement control, vaccination control and surveillance to prevent incursions of AHS and safeguard its vulnerable equids and the status of the area.

The AHS controlled area is also an area from which trade in equids can take place internationally. There is great potential for rapid expansion of the equine industry and beneficial research into enhanced AHS preventive and treatment methods; especially should trade and competition with international markets be opened for South Africa.

Since 1996, various guidelines and procedure documents are used to manage AHS in South Africa. These guidelines and procedure documents for AHS control have been revised into a single, updated document, which is also in line with evolving international legislation, the current scientific knowledge on AHS and technological advances in animal traceability and database management. This consolidated document is known as the "Veterinary Procedural Notice for AHS Control" or "AHS VPN" and is applicable to persons who keep equids in the AHS controlled area or who want to move equids to or within the AHS controlled area. The draft of the consolidated AHS VPN, along with its associated standard operating procedures, is hereby presented for consultation before official approval of the document.

This notice serves to invite comment on the draft Veterinary Procedural Notice for African horse sickness control for a period of three (3) months from the date of publication of this notice. A copy of the draft AHS VPN can be accessed on the DAFF website (<http://www.daff.gov.za/daffweb3/Branches/Agricultural-Production-Health-Food-Safety/Animal-Health/information/dahpolicy>) or obtained on request from [Kerryl@daff.gov.za](mailto:Kerryl@daff.gov.za) and [Camilla@saehp.com](mailto:Camilla@saehp.com).

Comments on the draft Veterinary Procedural Notice for African horse sickness Control must be sent in writing, before the end of the consultation period, to the Director: Animal Health at the above address or preferably via email to [Kerryl@daff.gov.za](mailto:Kerryl@daff.gov.za) and [Camilla@saehp.com](mailto:Camilla@saehp.com)