



SITUATION REPORT: AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS IN CEDERBERG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY: 20 April 2021

Introduction

On the 13th of April 2021, the provincial veterinary authorities of the Western Cape Province were notified of the deaths of three horses on a farm in the African horse sickness (AHS) protection zone of South Africa. An investigation was immediately planned and samples from a fourth horse that died (after the initial notification) on the 13th of April 2021 were taken later that same day by the Animal Health Technician working in that region. The samples were tested, and AHS virus was detected on the 14th of April 2021.

Control

Outbreak controlled area and movement restrictions

The suspect cases occurred in the African horse sickness Protection Zone. Having regard for the Animal Diseases Act (Act 35 of 1984) and the Western Cape Department of Agriculture's contingency plan for AHS (version 3 dated 3 March 2019) a preliminary outbreak-controlled zone has been designated that is encompassed by the Cederberg Local Municipality and is specifically defined by:

- An eastern border delineated by the border between the Western Cape Province and the Northern Cape Province
- A western border delineated by the Atlantic Ocean
- A northern border following the existing AHS protection zone border
 - from the Atlantic ocean (between Cape Donkin and Lamberts Bay)
 - crossing the N7 4.5 km south of Trawal and indicated by an AHS controlled area signboard
 - following the Cederberg local municipality border east along the Doring river until the Northern Cape/Western Cape boundary
- A southern border following the Cederberg local municipality border
 - east from the Atlantic ocean, approximately 14.5km south of Elandsbaai
 - linking to the N7 at the western base of the Piekenierskloof pass
 - following the N7 to the R303 at Citrusdal
 - following the R303 for approximately 19km to the Middelberg mountains to link back to the southern border of the Cederberg Local municipality and

extending east to the border between the Western Cape Province and the Northern Cape Province

A website hosted to provide up to date information on this outbreak has been made available at www.myhorse.org.za/ahs2021

The map of the outbreak-controlled zone is available at that link and shown below in Figure 1. No equines will be allowed to move out of, into, through or within the outbreak-controlled area without a permit issued by the Western Cape Department of Agriculture's Veterinary Services. Any roads that make up the border of the outbreak-controlled area are not included in movement restrictions, and transport of equines along these roads is permitted. All permit applications in relation to the outbreak-controlled area can be submitted to info@myhorse.org.za. Forms for outbreak associated movement permits can be obtained at the outbreak website above. If any member of the public has information regarding the movement of horses within the outbreak-controlled zone while movements are restricted, they can send this information to info@myhorse.org.za Please include details on location and associated vehicle registration number.

Vaccination

Currently no vaccination against AHS is permitted within the outbreak-controlled area. Due to the time of year, there is no vaccination against the disease allowed within the overall AHS controlled area. Even when no outbreaks of AHS are occurring in the control zones, vaccination against AHS is prohibited in the AHS surveillance and protection zones in the high vector risk period which is between 1 November and 31 May each year. A map of the AHS control zones can also be found at the outbreak website link above.

Owner actions

Horse owners are encouraged to stable their horses from two hours before sunset until two hours after dawn to decrease the risk of the vector of the disease having contact with their horses. Owners should also make use of a registered insect repellent and insecticide on their horses during the vector feeding periods as indicated above. Further protection of the stabled horses can be achieved by covering all stable openings with 80-100% shade cloth. Any owner within the AHS controlled area, and specifically within the outbreak-controlled area, detecting illness in horses involving unexplained fever, swelling of the head and neck and difficulty breathing should report the case to their local State Veterinarian as quickly as possible. Links to contact details are available at the outbreak website link above.

Response and current situation

An initial census and surveillance programme by state officials in the area surrounding the affected property is underway to determine the extent of the outbreak. The census and surveillance programme is two pronged. Officials will be working outwards from the index farm with a focus on sampling all horses within the

10 km zone (i.e., the active investigation zone), along the main road on which the affected farm is located. Other officials are working on the area immediately surrounding the active investigation zone, and this effort is primarily focused on census and clinical surveillance. It is not currently known when the outbreak-controlled zone and associated control measures will be relaxed.

As of late 19 April 2021 a total of 8 cases of AHS have been reported. These are all deaths on the affected farm with the one animal with confirmed AHS laboratory results. Two trace forward properties have been sampled. A further two deaths in the area have been sampled. These results are currently pending.

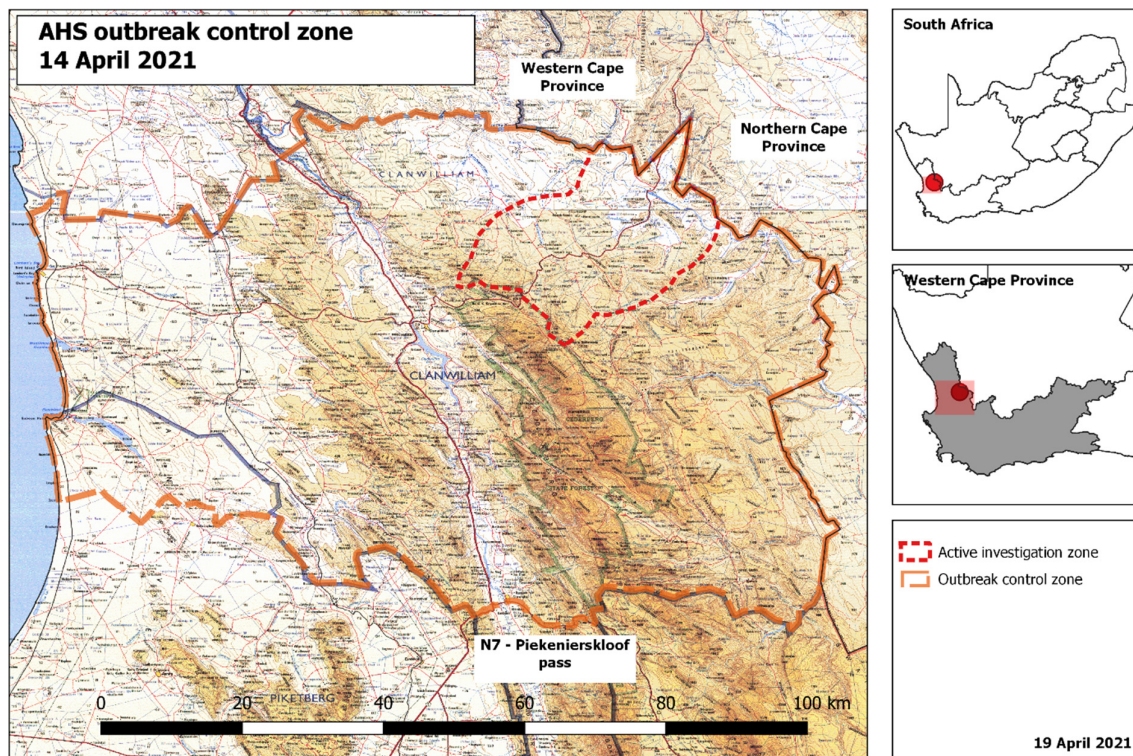


Figure 1: A map showing the current outbreak-controlled zone with the active investigation zone

Private veterinarians in the affected area have also been requested to inform the State Veterinarian of any suspect AHS cases or cases indicative of infectious disease both within the outbreak-controlled zone and within the AHS controlled area. All reports are followed up on and where necessary samples are taken to exclude AHS.

Source and type of infection

The source and AHS type of infection has yet to be established.