

HAZARD ALERT

Bird Flu

Avian Influenza (H5)

29 June 2026

References:

Department of Environment and Water SA
Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Federal
Australian Centre for Disease Control Federal

OBJECTIVE

To ensure worksites are aware of information relating to the detection on H5 bird flu in South Australia and communicate the recommended actions to be taken.

BACKGROUND

On Wednesday 24 June, South Australia recorded its first confirmed case of H5 bird flu in a vagrant migratory seabird found on a beach on the Fleurieu Peninsula. Testing by CSIRO's Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (ACDP) returned a positive detection. Importantly, this is currently being treated as an isolated incident. Testing of the two seabirds found near Fowlers Bay on Eyre Peninsula has returned negative results.

The spread of avian influenza viruses from animals to humans is rare but may happen with some strains. Humans are at greatest risk of avian influenza infection when in close contact with infected animals, even if the animals are not showing signs of infection. People can be infected with avian influenza by:

- Inhalation: breathing in contaminated dust or infectious particles in the air – some activities, such as slaughtering and butchering infected animals, may carry a higher risk of infection than standard duties (e.g. cleaning housing areas).
- Direct contact: touching infected animals, carcasses, animal secretions (e.g. faeces, respiratory secretions, or urine) or animal products (e.g. feathers, hides) without recommended protection and then touching the eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Indirect contact: having contact with contaminated items (e.g. farm equipment) or environments where infected animals live, and then touching eyes, nose or mouth.

Typically, avian influenza does not easily spread among people. Rarely, person-to-person spread has happened after close, prolonged, contact with a person with avian influenza.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The State Government is asking the public to avoid, record and report any deceased or sick birds or other wildlife to the Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888:

- Avoid contact with sick or deceased animals, including marine mammals and birds and keep pets away.
- Use PPE if a deceased animal must be moved: disposable gloves, goggles and masks (N95 or P2)
- If a sick animal is sighted, keep all persons away and ring the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.
- Record relevant details, including date, time, location, species and numbers. Take photos or videos if safe to do so.
- Report all observations of sick/deceased animals to the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

For enquiries or further information, please contact your Safety Business Partner at CSaIM or ring the CSaIM Office on 8210 8101