

Western Australia's Action Plan for 'H5 Bird Flu'

Preparing for, managing and adapting to H5 High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (H5 Bird Flu)

H5 High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza, commonly known as H5 Bird Flu, is affecting wild birds and other animals in eastern Australia. It has impacted wildlife and poultry in many other parts of the world. There is an increasing risk of the disease arriving in Western Australia through migratory bird pathways.

While the risk to human health is currently considered low, bird flu has the potential to affect wildlife, biodiversity, agriculture, food systems, regional communities and government services. International experience demonstrates that the consequences can extend beyond animal health.

Once bird flu is detected and confirmed as having spread into our local wildlife, it will be considered established in WA.

The Western Australian Government is planning so we are ready to respond at every stage.

Government agencies, local governments, industry, wildlife organisations, Traditional Owners, volunteers and communities all have a role to play in helping to prepare for and manage the impacts of bird flu.

Our approach is guided by three phases.

- **Prepare WA**
Preparing before bird flu becomes established in WA.
- **Support WA**
Managing impacts when bird flu becomes established in wildlife.
- **Sustain WA**
Protecting industries, food systems, communities and the economy while supporting recovery and long-term adaptation.

The plan outlines the broad actions government may take during each phase.

Each phase is flexible, not fixed. Government may move between phases depending on the situation and the consequences being experienced across Western Australia.

It is expected that bird flu may impact different regions and communities at different times and to different extents.

Government will continue to monitor:

- detections in migratory birds and neighbouring jurisdictions
- disease establishment in local wildlife
- impacts on threatened species and biodiversity
- impacts on poultry and agriculture
- food supply and industry disruption
- community concerns and social impacts
- demands on government services and recovery arrangements.

Any change in response phase will be informed by scientific advice, consequence assessments and consultation with key stakeholders.

For the latest information, preparedness advice and regular updates visit **wa.gov.au/birdflu**.

If you observe sick or dead birds or marine mammals, report them to the **Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888**.

If you observe orphaned or injured wildlife, report them to the **Wildcare Helpline 9474 9055**.

Prepare WA

Preparing Before Arrival

Bird flu may have been detected but has not yet become established in Western Australia. It remains an increased threat through international and interstate pathways. Surveillance, monitoring and preparedness activities are underway.

What you need to know now

- WA is preparing now.
- Government agencies are strengthening readiness and coordination.
- Wildlife and poultry surveillance is ongoing.
- Industry and community engagement and preparedness activities are underway.
- The risk to human health remains low.

What Government is doing

Preparing Government:

- Establishing and refining governance and coordination arrangements.
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities.
- Developing decision-making frameworks.
- Strengthening our workforce and operational capabilities.
- Conducting exercises and preparedness activities.

Preparing wildlife management:

- Establishing a Bird Flu Wildlife Advisory Committee.
- Offering Bird Flu Wildlife Resilience Grants.
- Enhancing wildlife surveillance and monitoring.
- Identifying priority species and locations.
- Supporting land managers to prepare.
- Strengthening environmental intelligence and reporting.

Preparing Industry:

- Working with poultry producers and industry groups.
- Improving understanding of food system vulnerabilities.
- Strengthening biosecurity preparedness across the poultry sector.

Preparing the public:

- Providing clear and consistent public information.
- Raising awareness of preparedness and biosecurity measures.
- Encouraging people to get the facts and stay informed at wa.gov.au/birdflu

How you can help

Everyone can help to improve our awareness of the risk of H5 Bird Flu.

Know the facts: Avoid, Record, Report

- Report sick or dead birds or marine mammals to the 24-hour Emergency Animal Disease Hotline.
- Follow biosecurity advice.
- Stay informed through official government channels.
- Support local preparedness activities.
- If you keep poultry or birds, maintain good biosecurity practices and report any unusual illness or deaths immediately.
- Protect your pets – follow advice.
- The risk to human health is low.
- Visit wa.gov.au/birdflu for preparedness information and updates.

Report Bird Flu Concerns

If you see sick or dead birds or marine mammals:

1. Do not touch the animal.
2. Keep people and pets away.
3. Record what you see and the location, if safe to do so.
4. Call the **Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888**.
5. Visit **wa.gov.au/birdflu** for further guidance, including on carcass disposal.

Support WA

Managing Wildlife and Community Impacts

This phase commences when bird flu has become established in local wildlife populations and is expected to remain present in the environment. Wildlife mass morbidity and mortality events may occur and environmental consequences become increasingly apparent.

During this time, people may see increased numbers of sick or dead birds and other wildlife, temporary closures or access restrictions at some locations, increased biosecurity measures, and more public information and advice from government agencies.

The community will play an important role in reporting wildlife impacts and following public health and biosecurity advice.

What you need to know

- Government agencies are actively managing impacts.
- It is important to leave sick birds alone. Moving them may cause more distress.
- Dead birds may need to be disposed of. If so, follow advice and do so safely.
- Biosecurity measures may need to be increased to protect poultry and other animals.
- The risk to human health remains low, and public health advice should always be followed.

What Government is doing

Protecting Wildlife and Biodiversity:

- Managing impacts on priority species and sites.
- Supporting wildlife response operations.
- Monitoring biodiversity impacts.
- Implementing measures to protect threatened species.

Supporting and preparing the public and impacted communities:

- Providing timely public information.
- Responding to community concerns.

- Working with landowners and managers on managing social amenity impacts.
- Managing impacts on tourism and recreation.
- Supporting affected communities.
- Encouraging people to get the facts and stay informed at wa.gov.au/birdflu

Strengthening Biosecurity:

- Increasing protections for poultry and captive birds.
- Supporting industry adaptation.
- Monitoring risks to food systems and agricultural sectors.

Coordinating Government Action:

- Maintaining situational awareness.
- Coordinating multi-agency activities.
- Planning for recovery needs.
- Scaling governance arrangements as impacts evolve.

How you can help

The WA Government will provide regular updates, public information and practical guidance throughout the event.

Know the facts: Record and report. Protect your pets. Help wildlife.

- Leave sick birds alone. Moving them may cause more distress.
- Keep children and pets away from affected wildlife.
- If dead birds need to be disposed of, do so safely and according to advice.
- Follow advice and instructions in wildlife areas.
- Follow public health and biosecurity advice.
- Keep up to date with where the disease is on the **H5 bird flu dashboard**.
- Report unusual bird or animal deaths. Contact the 24-hour **Emergency Animal Disease Hotline (1800 675 888)** to report sick or dead birds or marine mammals.
- Stay informed through official updates. Visit **wa.gov.au/birdflu** for outbreak information, affected area advice and community updates.

Sustain WA

Protecting Food Systems and Supporting Recovery

This phase commences when bird flu has affected commercial poultry or is causing broader impacts across communities, industry and the economy. Government efforts are focusing on managing biosecurity, adaptation, supporting recovery and strengthening long-term resilience.

During this time, outbreaks may periodically occur in commercial poultry, and some impacts on food production and supply chains may be experienced. Government, industry and communities will work together to minimise disruption, support recovery and strengthen long-term resilience.

People will continue to see sick or dead birds and wildlife, temporary closures or access restrictions at some locations, increased biosecurity measures, and more public information and advice from government agencies.

What you need to know

- Government is responding to poultry outbreaks and actively supporting food supply and industry continuity.
- Poultry and egg supplies may experience local disruptions.
- Recovery programs may be implemented.
- It is still safe to eat properly cooked chicken meat and eggs. Commercially pasteurised milk products are safe to consume.
- Government agencies will continue surveillance and management activities.
- The risk to human health remains low, and people should continue to follow public health advice.

What Government is doing

Supporting Industry and Food Supply:

- Responding to eradicate outbreaks in commercial poultry.
- Working with industry and supply chain partners to minimise impacts on food production and supply.
- Minimising economic disruption.
- Maintaining public confidence in food systems.

Preparing the public and supporting communities:

- Providing recovery assistance.
- Supporting affected workers and communities.
- Maintaining access to information and services.
- Developing adaptation initiatives where required.
- Encouraging people to get the facts and stay informed at wa.gov.au/birdflu

Protecting the Environment:

- Implementing biodiversity recovery activities.
- Supporting priority species recovery programs.
- Monitoring long-term biodiversity impacts.

Building Long-Term Resilience:

- Improving industry resilience.
- Investing in long-term adaptation measures.
- Applying lessons learned to future planning.

How you can help

Know the facts: Protect your pets. Help wildlife. Minimise biosecurity risk. Follow public health advice.

- Follow public health advice.
- Avoid contact with sick or dead wildlife.
- Continue practising good biosecurity.
- If you work or live on a farm, know the signs and symptoms of bird flu and follow any control measures. Report any unusual illness or death in poultry immediately.
- Support local businesses and communities.
- Stay informed through the **H5 bird flu dashboard** and updates at **wa.gov.au/birdflu**.
- Continue reporting unusual bird deaths to the **Emergency Animal Disease Hotline (1800 675 888)**.

Human Health

Current evidence indicates bird flu remains primarily an animal disease and the risk to the wider community remains low. Human infections are rare and typically associated with close contact with infected animals.

What you need to know

- The risk to human health is currently low.
- Bird flu does not spread easily between people.
- Properly cooked poultry and eggs remain safe to eat.
- Public health advice should always be followed.

If you find sick or dead birds

- Do not touch them.
- Keep children and pets away.
- Record the location if safe to do so.
- Report the sighting by calling the **Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888**.
- Visit [wa.gov.au/birdflu](https://www.wa.gov.au/birdflu) for the latest advice and information.

Working Together

Managing bird flu is a shared responsibility.

Government, industry, local government, Traditional Owners, wildlife organisations, volunteers, researchers and communities all have an important role in preparing for, managing and adapting to the impacts of bird flu.

Strong partnerships, informed communities and coordinated government action will help Western Australia protect its environment, support its industries and maintain community confidence as the situation evolves.

Stay Informed

For information about bird flu preparedness, wildlife impacts, public advice and government updates:

wa.gov.au/birdflu

To report sick or dead birds or marine mammals:

Emergency Animal Disease Hotline (24 hours)

1800 675 888

To report injured or orphaned birds:

If you observe orphaned or injured wildlife, report them to the Wildcare Helpline 9474 9055.