



International Animal Health Division

International Animal Disease Monitoring

Preliminary Outbreak Assessment



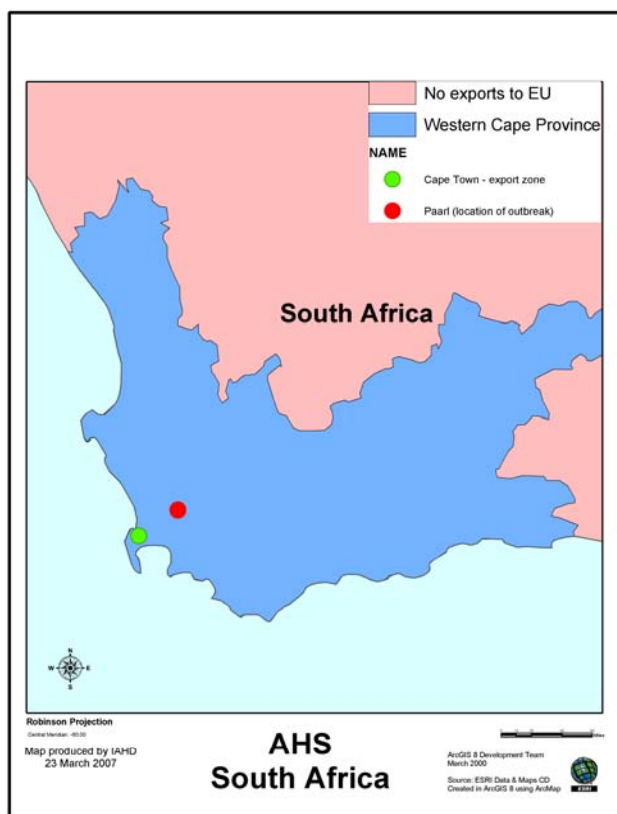
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African Horse Sickness (AHS) in South Africa (Surveillance Zone)

Note: Defra's International Animal Health Division (IAHD) monitors outbreaks of specified disease around the world. African horse sickness (AHS) is among those diseases of concern.

Disease Report

The South African authorities have reported an outbreak of AHS at Kunneburg, Paarl, Western Cape Province (OIE, 2007). This outbreak is in the AHS surveillance zone approximately 50 km from the European Union (EU) approved export zone for registered horses in municipal Cape Town (see map). A single horse was affected and died of the disease. Seventeen other horses were not affected. Vaccination and other control measures have been applied. The last outbreak of AHS in the surveillance zone was in 2004.



Situation Assessment

Under EU rules, temporary admissions and permanent imports of registered horses are allowed subject to quarantine and official certification. These imports are only permitted from the 'AHS-free zone' in the municipal area of Cape Town, Western Cape Province. For this purpose, South Africa has established three zones within the Western Cape Province (A map of the AHS control zones in the Western Cape Province may be seen at

<http://www.nda.agric.za/vetweb/Animal%20Disease/AHS%20new%20boundaries%20RSA.pdf> while another map showing AHS outbreaks in South Africa from December 2005 until April 2006 may be seen at <http://www.nda.agric.za/vetweb/images/AHS22March.htm>.

AHS is a non-contagious viral disease of equidae that is mainly transmitted by midges of the genus *Culicoides*. Mosquitoes and biting flies may also act as biological or mechanical transmitters of the disease.

TRACES (an EU electronic notification system) indicates that six horses have been imported from South Africa during the past 3 months, the last import being in mid February.

Conclusion

As a consequence of this outbreak, Defra has now banned imports of horses from South Africa. The risk of the disease being introduced to the UK before this outbreak is considered to be negligible because the existing controls in place would be sufficient to mitigate against the potential risks of the disease being introduced to the UK.

Defra continues to monitor the developments with AHS in South Africa.

References

OIE. (2007). OIE Alert Message ZAF 23-03-07. Received by e-mail 23 March 2007.