



(as posted on <https://www.facebook.com/SAHorse/> 26.03.2020)

Today Horse SA has written to Ministers Greg Hunt MP (Health), David Littleproud MP (Agriculture), Stephen Wade MLC (Health SA), Corey Wingard MP (Rec, Sport, Racing SA), Tim Whetsone MP (Primary Industries SA) **RE: Essential services recognition - Horse and Animal Industries.**

It is well documented through university research studies on disasters such as bushfires, that owners are more likely to follow government instructions if advice includes their animals. **We are therefore writing to raise awareness about:**

1. An alert on the impending 'animal welfare silent tsunami' due to significant job losses.
2. The need to establish a cross-government, industry and non-profit special task force to advise the government on animal industries (agricultural and non-agricultural purposes) welfare, jobs and business sustainability.

In the letter, Horse SA discussed the following issues:

**DAILY CARE OF HORSES:** The keeping of horses on agistment, particularly around our capital cities and regional centres. The horse care service levels provided by the landowner vary, with DIY options prevalent. Often, there is no resident landowner who lives on-site, or who has horse skills-while some studs and stables may have staff. Solutions to allow for the ongoing care of horses, and owners to meet their obligations under state animal welfare laws.

**One possible solution is to recognise** the carrying a Property Identification Code (PIC) card to act as a form of evidence for the trip to visit horses for care.

**ISSUE: EMERGENCY CARE OF HORSES** There is a need for the formal recognition of veterinarians and veterinary nurses to as essential services, including the supporting industries of animal medicine and supplement manufacturers and transporters. To review state and national veterinary acts and veterinary pharmaceutical regulations to ensure remote/telemedicine treatment options are available. A veterinarian could be provided with the authority to issue legally recognised 'prescriptions' for a trade or skill for a non-essential person (as listed/not listed on a government COVID-19 response) to attend to the horse, where housing, fodder or water source is deemed a priority.

**ISSUE: ANIMAL INDUSTRIES SUPPORT SERVICES.** Essential for the care of horses and other livestock are stock feed transporters, Stock Feed and supplement manufacturers, processors, suppliers and stores. Essential services recognition for horse and animal transporters; these services undertake tasks including moving horses from stabling to pasture, to veterinary clinics, crematoriums or a new carer if the owner becomes sick or in isolation due to COVID-19. Further, there is a need for hoof, dental and animal breeding (artificial insemination) service providers (which may be by veterinary referral in emergencies). Finally, to consider rural contractors who undertake the spraying for toxic weeds and bury stock.

**ISSUE: THE SILENT ANIMAL WELFARE TSUNAMI.** The significant loss of jobs will see people unable to afford rent, food and unfortunately, to keep their animals. Abandonment of horses on agistment properties with unpaid fees, an increased caseload relating to neglect, 'dumping' of horses at already full rescue centres and issues surrounding the disposal of deceased horses. With the closure

of sale yards as a pathway to slaughter, the side effects from this situation alone are unknown. The RSPCA inspectorate is likely to find an increasing demand for services.

There is no single solution to the potential silent animal welfare 'tsunami', with one option to consider the establishment of a cross-government, industry and non-profit special task force to advise the government on animal industries (agricultural and non-agricultural purposes).

It is well documented through studies on disasters such as bushfires, that owners are more likely to follow government instructions if advice includes their animals.

While we are all hoping that more substantial future restrictions do not take place, it may be inevitable. Please do not hesitate to make contact to discuss any items further.

END

Footnote: Horse SA is a non-profit member-based organisation working with and for horse owners and organisations on a wide range of common interest issues and topics. For more information visit [www.horsesa.asn.au](http://www.horsesa.asn.au) If you are in a position to join, donate or sponsor Horse SA please visit <https://horse-sa.myshopify.com/collections/memberships-sponsorship-1>