

Dear Members

19th September 2011

PARAMYXOVIRUS INFECTION IN PIGEONS

John Shore and the writer attended a briefing/ discussion with the DPI last Wednesday evening. This meeting was attended by representatives of all of the Melbourne Federations as well as Country Organizations and the Fancy Breed Fraternity.

The main items to come out of the evening's discussions were that this disease (PMV1) is extremely virulent and deadly to pigeons. The vaccine that has been released is an unknown quantity and it was reinforced many times that it was "not the silver bullet" that would fix the situation.

The DPI stated that the disease has a real chance of burning itself out and that Racing and Fancy breed owners can assist this to happen by not racing, loft flying, road training, showing, exchanging or selling pigeons, i.e. no movement of pigeons.

This message was reinforced by the DPI report dated 19th September 2011 which states "Spread of infection is through moving of hobby pigeons between properties and the mixing of pigeons at sales, races, shows and other events; to stop the spread of the disease these activities HAVE TO CEASE."also" Irresponsible movement of pigeons risks introducing the disease to new properties where it will kill the majority if not all of the pigeons"

On receipt of this advice the VHA Executive would be negligent and guilty of disobeying a lawful directive of the DPI if we did not instruct our members that from this day forward they are NOT to

CONDUCT RACES

LOFT FLY THEIR BIRDS

TOSS THEIR BIRDS

CONDUCT SALES

ALLOW CONTACT BIRD TO BIRD OUTSIDE THEIR OWN LOFTS.

These actions are to remain in place until the DPI advises us that we can recommence normal activities and at that time we will assess whether or not racing will continue this year. I must say that this is highly unlikely due to time and weather constraints.

Furthermore the Executive will be requesting that any VHA member organising, participating in or transporting pigeons outside the DPI guidelines be disciplined, eg fined, banned etc.

We will also be asking for volunteers to be part of a sub committee that will formulate a racing program for the next year to allow two year olds to be utilised eg; Old bird sprint series alongside the Young bird series etc..

Stephen Kearsy

President