

**BWRAC BASIC RESCUE TRAINEES
'RIDE-ALONG' INTERIM POLICY**

Purpose

To meet the changing regulations from Agriculture Victoria (Ag Vic) and Wildlife Victoria (WF) with regards to HPAI H5N1 clade 2.3.4.4.b (H5 Bird Flu), BWRAC has reviewed our current Basic Rescue Trainee 'Ride-along' process, and we have adopted this interim policy below.

Policy

Ag Vic notes that all bird species are considered susceptible to HPAI H5N1. WV has now instructed that only the person to whom the bird rescue case is allocated, may attend, no one else is allowed to attend.

To ensure the health and safety of our members, this now means that BWRAC Trainees can no longer 'ride-along' on any bird rescue cases from **3.30pm on Tuesday 25 August 2026, until further notice.**

Our Trainees can still 'ride-along' on other wildlife rescue cases for the time being. This may change in the future as the situation develops.

Members of the public and BWRAC trainees must follow the current Ag Vic/WV/Other government authority reporting and disposal guidance and must not independently handle suspected H5N1 wildlife unless specifically authorised/advised to do so.

LINK: <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/poultry-diseases/H5N1-avian-influenza-H5-bird-flu>

Moving forward, to ensure that BWRAC complies with WV regulations, we must not share any bird rescue cases in our BWRAC What's App group. We would encourage you not to share the details in any other groups that you may be involved in either, so you don't personally violate WV regulations.

You must ensure that you wear appropriate footwear, clean boots before disinfection, use appropriate hand hygiene & gloves, equipment/vehicle decontamination, appropriate PPE, and prevent contaminated equipment moving between rescue sites. You can refer to the Ag Vic website for more information.

Because the H5N1 situation and government controls are changing quickly, BWRAC will review this policy weekly, or whenever Agriculture Victoria/DEECA/Wildlife Victoria guidance changes. Ag Vic has introduced a statewide control order concerning wildlife carcass sampling, handling and disposal on public land, currently running to 17 September 2026 unless revoked. Please ensure you refer to the Agriculture Victoria website section on '[Guidelines for wildlife rehabilitators and rescuers](#)' regularly to keep informed.

BALLARAT WILDLIFE REHABILITATION & CONSERVATION INC (BWRAC)

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/poultry-diseases/H5N1-avian-influenza-H5-bird-flu/about-h5-bird-flu/control-order-wildlife-carcass-sampling,-handling-and-disposal-on-public-land>

Resources:

Agriculture Victoria website:

[H5N1 avian influenza \(H5 bird flu\)](#)

[H5 bird flu guidance for veterinarians and wildlife rehabilitators](#)

[Confirmed Events interactive Map](#)

[Resources for bird flu](#)

Wildlife Health Australia:

<https://wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au/Resource-Centre/H5-bird-flu>

How to put on (donning) and take off (doffing) PPE

<https://vimeo.com/1127017502?fl=pl&fe=vl>



Wildlife Victoria:

WV Members Facebook Group

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