

Updated Outbreak Assessment number 6

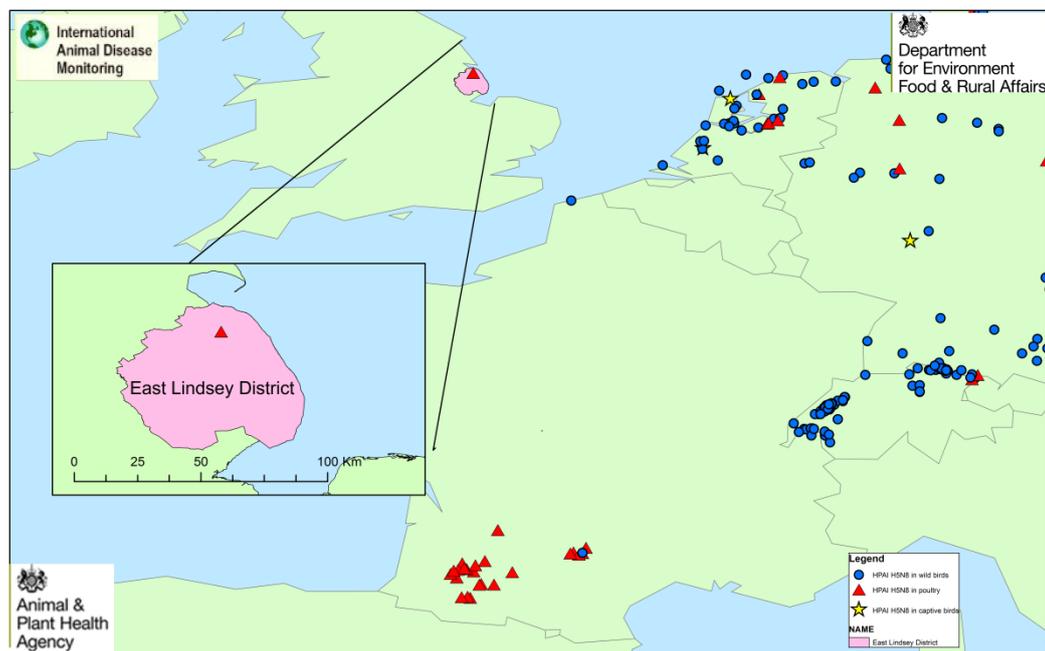
Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N8 in the UK and Europe

20th December 2016

Ref: VITT/1200 Avian Influenza in UK & Europe

Disease Report

Since our last update on the 7th December, the UK has now reported a single outbreak on a turkey fattening farm in the region of East Lindsey, East Midlands (see map). Clinical signs were first reported to a private veterinarian on the 11th December and initially thought to be a bacterial infection. Mortality increased significantly over the next two days and on the 15th December disease was reported to the Competent Authority when official samples were taken and the premises put under restriction. Disease was confirmed by UK CVO on the 16th December as H5N8 with subsequent confirmation as HPAI on the 17th December.



Date Prepared 20/12/2016

Outbreaks of H5N8 HPAI in poultry, captive and wild birds
October - December 2016 Inset: Outbreak in UK

Actual Scale 1:37,500,000

Map prepared by IDM

0 50 100 200 300 400 Km

Tracings from the infected premises indicate no exports or EU trade to other countries had taken place since the birds were brought to the farm for rearing in August. This was a seasonal production unit. Epidemiological investigations are continuing into the source of disease and potential spread to other kept birds. Disease control measures in line with Directive 2005/94/EC have been put in place, including a 3 km surveillance zone and 10

km protection zone and all the remaining birds were culled on the 17th December. Preliminary cleansing and disinfection was completed on the 18th December and takes effect as of 14:15 on 19/12/2016.

There is a Prevention Zone in place across England, Scotland and Wales in which owners must take all practicable measures to prevent contact between domestic and wild birds. There is now a change to rules applying to bird gatherings, which is in place for the duration of the Prevention Zone: all gatherings with poultry or captive birds of the anseriforme and galliforme orders are now banned and a new licence for other gatherings, with increased biosecurity requirements, is now available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu#bird-fairs-markets-shows-and-other-gatherings> ;

<http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/poultry/bird-gatherings-advice/?lang=en> ;

<http://gov.scot/avianinfluenza>

For up-to-date information on the situation in the EU, also see the Commission website at https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/control-measures/avian-influenza_en

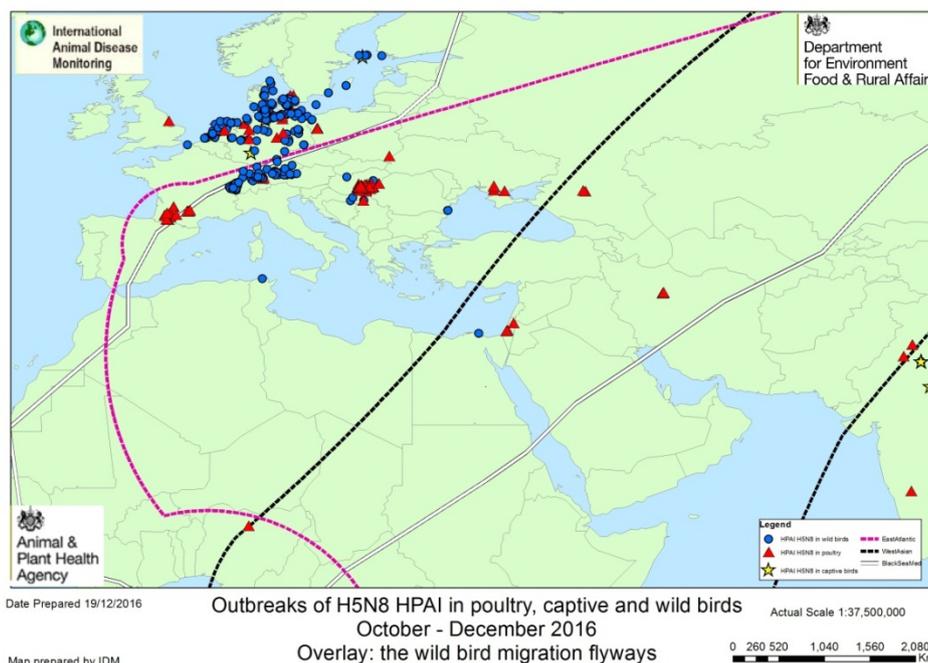
See also our interactive map at <https://iadm.carto.com/me>

Situation Assessment

Across Europe the disease continues to cause outbreaks with France, Netherlands, Germany, Poland and Hungary reporting more outbreaks in commercial premises, and Greece now reporting a case in wild birds. Further afield, Ukraine has reported more outbreaks and Nigeria has now reported H5N8 HPAI. Nigeria is in a region currently affected by H5N1 HPAI where disease continues to spread through live bird markets and gatherings. Given the level of geographic spread across Europe and Africa, we should expect this virus to remain an issue and pose a continuing risk to our poultry sector for a considerable time.

The risk level for the UK has now been increased to “**HIGH**” for an incursion of an infected wild bird (ie that we consider they may already be present in the UK), and the risk to poultry on individual premises has subsequently increased to “**LOW TO MEDIUM**” dependent on the biosecurity and geographical region of the premises.

The pathogenicity of this strain means that poultry, particularly may exhibit severe clinical signs and high mortalities but clinical signs vary and less severe disease may also occur. The data are sometimes difficult to interpret as it depends on the time to report disease but high mortality (>30%) has been seen in some outbreaks of H5N8 in all commercial poultry types. It is absolutely paramount that poultry keepers remain vigilant and alert the authorities to any suspicion of avian influenza to prevent any further onward spread.



As a result of the increase in cases in wild birds in Europe, we ask that the public use the **Defra helpline (Tel: 03459 33 55 77)** to report findings of dead wild birds. In particular, any wild ducks, wild geese, swans or gulls and where more than five birds of any species are found dead in the same location. Not all birds may be used for testing but we will monitor where the cases are found determine where testing is needed so it is important that we gather this information.

Further information is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu> including updated biosecurity advice for poultry keepers which they should take note of: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu#prevention-zone>

Conclusion

The prevention zones will remain in place until the 6th January 2017 at which point they will be reviewed, taking account of the risk level according to the disease situation in the UK and in Europe, the climate and the appropriateness of the biosecurity measures. We will continue with the epidemiological investigations on the premises and report any additional findings to the OIE and EU.

We would like to remind all poultry keepers that there are several pathways for the introduction of any notifiable avian disease into a poultry farm and housing alone will not be enough to reduce the risk of some of these pathways. Environmental contamination will remain as a significant hazard, especially if wild waterfowl or gulls have regular access to the site, so personal biosecurity is key to helping prevent contamination from being brought into a poultry house.

We will continue to report on the situation

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References

For all disease outbreaks, more information is available on the OIE website at
http://www.oie.int/wahis_2/public/wahid.php/Diseaseinformation/WI



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