

Press release: Poultry farmers and bird keepers urged to prepare for winter Avian Flu threat

The Chief Veterinary Officers across the UK are encouraging all poultry keepers to take action now to reduce the risk of disease over the winter.

Since June 2017, there have been no detections of avian influenza in poultry or kept birds in the UK and the UK has retained its OIE country freedom status since September 2017.

There are some simple measures that all bird keepers, whether they are running a large commercial farm, keeping a few birds in their back garden or rearing game birds, should take to protect their animals against the threat of avian influenza in the coming winter months. These include:

- Keep the area where birds live clean and tidy, control rats and mice and regularly disinfect any hard surfaces.
- Clean footwear before and after visits.
- Place birds' feed and water in fully enclosed areas that are protected from wild birds, and remove any spilled feed regularly.
- Put fencing around outdoor areas where birds are allowed and limit their access to ponds or areas visited by wild waterfowl.
- Where possible, avoid keeping ducks and geese with other poultry species
- For poultry keepers in England, Wales and Scotland, sign up to [a free APHA service to receive text or email alerts](#) to any outbreaks of bird flu in the UK. In Northern Ireland, all bird keepers are encouraged to subscribe to a [free text alert service](#) by simply texting 'BIRDS' to 67300.

These measures are particularly important if you are in or close to one of the GB Higher Risk Areas. You can check whether or not you are in a Higher Risk Area by using our interactive maps.

A joint statement by all four of the Chief Veterinary Officers in the UK today said:

Avian flu continues to circulate in many parts of the world and with the colder months soon upon us the risk of disease from migrating birds is increasing. It is critical that all keepers of poultry, including game birds and pet birds, act now to reduce the risk of transmission of avian flu to their flocks.

Good biosecurity should be maintained at all times, including regularly cleaning and disinfecting the area where you keep birds and separating them from wild birds wherever possible.

Keepers should also ensure they register on the Great Britain

Poultry Register and we are pleased that new forms are now in place to simplify this process. Keepers in Northern Ireland must register their birds on the DAERA Bird Register. This can now be completed and submitted on-line.

All bird keepers across Great Britain should also register their birds on the [Great Britain Poultry Register \(GBPR\)](#). If you have 50 or more birds, this is a legal requirement, although keepers with fewer than 50 birds are also strongly encouraged to register. New simplified and user-friendly forms will speed up the process this year.

In Northern Ireland it is a legal requirement for all bird keepers to register every bird on the DAERA [Bird Register](#), other than pet birds kept in the owner's home.

Registering your birds means the government can contact you in the case of an outbreak and provide information on the steps to take to limit the chances of your birds getting the disease.

Last winter, the H5N6 HPAI strain of bird flu was only detected in wild birds and there were no outbreaks in domestic birds, either in commercial or small holdings. Although there have been no findings in the UK since June 2018 the virus is still circulating in wild birds in North Europe (including Denmark and Germany) and has caused outbreaks in poultry. In addition, the H5N8 HPAI virus continues to circulate in Eastern Europe, highlighting the need to stay vigilant.

The Government continues to monitor for incursions of avian flu and is working with the poultry and game bird industries; hen rehoming and pure and traditional poultry breeds stakeholders to help prevent incursions.

[Press release: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence](#)

On 25 November 2018, the international community in Palestine launches a joint campaign “#HearMeToo: Voices against Violence” to mark the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence in Palestine. Civil society organizations and media outlets also join this national initiative to end violence against women and girls. The 16 Days campaign, annually commemorated worldwide, commences on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and lasts until 10 December, the Human Rights Day.

Women and girls from all corners of the world continue to experience violence and abuse. And because such acts are often overlooked and invisible to many,

the survivors are routinely shamed into silence. Tragically, violence against women and girls is mainly perpetrated by men close to them, such as intimate partners and family members. In addition, violence is taking an increasing number of forms – ranging from verbal and sexual harassment in the streets to domestic violence and femicide in the worst-case scenario.

Violence against women and girls is a serious challenge in Palestine as well. As the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women indicated in her report following her visit to Palestine in 2016, violence against women in Palestine occurs both in private and public spheres and women suffer from multiple sources of violence including from the Israeli occupation, whether directly or indirectly, and also from the tradition and culture, with embedded patriarchal social norms and outdated legal frameworks.

Moreover, the protracted humanitarian crisis in Gaza, particularly because of the unceasing blockade, has exacerbated gender-based violence in all its forms, including sexual violence, domestic violence and child marriage. According to the Gender-based Violence (GBV) Sub-Cluster in Palestine, cases related to sexual violence are further under-reported due to stigma, lack of capacity and attitudes of service providers as well as concerns over safety and security of both the survivor and service providers.

The silence over violence against women and girls is usually reinforced by a non-supportive legal system that fails to criminalize domestic violence. In many countries, including Palestine, the applicable penal laws do not criminalize the acts of domestic violence, which stems from a traditional belief that family issues should be managed within the boundaries of the family. The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) Palestine Report reveals that 1 in 4 Palestinian men reported witnessing their mother being beaten by their father or a male relative during their childhood, while 63 per cent of Palestinian men agreed that a woman should tolerate violence to keep the family together.

Recently, however, as a result of the strong advocacy of civil society organizations and women's movements from various parts of the world, many countries, including some Arab States, have begun to adopt specific legislation to respond to family violence. Palestine is in the final stage of the review of the Family Protection Bill, which is expected to be shortly submitted for consultations and to the President for endorsement. The Family Protection Bill is expected to provide measures to prevent and combat violence, as well as due protection, reparation, and empowerment of survivors of violence, while holding perpetrators accountable for their acts. The endorsement of the Family Protection Bill will be a critical milestone in the journey towards ending violence against women and girls in Palestine. The real success, however, will come only with proper implementation and translation of the commitments embedded within the bill through responsive policies, services, and practices. To ensure that the Family Protection Bill passes with the full support of civil society, the civil society should be consulted on any amendments to the texts.

It is important that national and international stakeholders continue and expand their financial commitment to combat violence against women and girls

in Palestine. Various actors have been working together to finance programmes aiming at ending violence against women (EVAW). Currently, EVAW programmes in Palestine are generously funded by the Palestinian Government, UN Agencies, International development partners such as Canada, Sweden, Italy, Netherlands, the European Union, Spain, Belgium, Norway, Switzerland, Britain, Denmark, Japan, and others.

Violence against women cannot be eradicated without investing in gender equality. Therefore, it is also crucial to financially support the continuous efforts of the government and civil society organizations towards the effective implementation of the Concluding Observations of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee, which includes a recommendation to give high priority to the adoption of the Family Protection Bill, to ensure gender equality and realize women's human rights in Palestine, and a recommendation to narrow and close the pay gap.

Let us unite to end violence against women and girls and provide a safe and just place where survivors of violence can speak up and seek justice. We are all responsible for shifting the narrative from blaming the survivors to ensuring the accountability of perpetrators, and for providing preventive measure such as the Family Protection Bill and the revision of the Labor Law through the gender lens.

The international community stands ready to support the Palestinian Government as it works towards creating a legal, policy and cultural environment that recognizes women as equal members of society and valuable contributors to the development of Palestine, who deserve a life free from violence.

END.

[News story: UK to benefit from new 'project manager' degree apprenticeship](#)

The four year scheme will create project managers for any industry, not just nuclear, equipping people with an internationally recognised project management qualification and a Bachelor of Science degree.

The development of the apprenticeship was led by Sellafield Ltd, with support from high profile companies like British Airways, BBC, British Telecom, Rolls Royce and BAE Systems.

The Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, Anne Milton, said:

It is fantastic news that the project manager apprenticeship standard is now up and running.

It will give people of all ages and backgrounds the chance to demonstrate their potential and learn important leadership skills. They can then in turn use those skills to support businesses across the country to grow.

The University of Cumbria (who lead the Project Academy for Sellafield), Cranfield and the University of Greenwich provided the support of academia.

John Oliver, Sellafield Ltd Projects Director, said:

This brand new qualification demonstrates that Sellafield Ltd is leading the way in developing project skills for the UK.

To have global companies looking to Sellafield Ltd and the University of Cumbria to help to develop their project managers, shows that Cumbria and the UK remain at the forefront of project education and skills.

Project delivery is a key part of our mission of making Sellafield safer, sooner, and the skills are required to support our 100 year decommissioning programme.

The academy is just one of the interventions we have made to create the next generation of project professionals, for Cumbria and the UK.

Rob Nitsch CBE, Chief Operating Officer for the Institute for Apprenticeships, said:

This is an excellent example of the sort of higher level degree apprenticeship that employers have been calling for and stands to make a substantive contribution to filling this skills gap – project managers take on a great deal of responsibility and therefore require first rate training.

Congratulations to the trailblazing employers who played a leading role in developing this apprenticeship.

The Project Academy for Sellafield was launched with University of Cumbria in April 2016 to help increase project capability across the country.

You can find the latest prospectus here [project academy prospectus](#)

Wesley Robinson from Sellafield Ltd led the development of the project manager degree apprenticeship.

He said:

The approval of the 'project manager' degree apprenticeship is significant news for the project management profession.

As chair of the project management employer development group I am extremely proud that within three years we have produced both a level 4 and a degree level apprenticeship in project management, made possible by the dedication of companies involved in the group and the support of our Government advisors and the Association for Project Management.

For further information on the project manager degree apprenticeship visit the institute for apprenticeships website or email project.academy@sellafieldsites.com

[News story: Overspeed at Sandy South Junction](#)

At around 14:32 hrs on 19 October 2018, an LNER service from Aberdeen to London's King's Cross passed through an emergency speed restriction of 20 mph at approximately 120 mph (193 km/h).

The emergency speed restriction had been applied at around 13:50 hrs on the previous day because track maintenance staff had found a defect (a crack) in a crossing, part of a set of points. Marker boards and associated automatic warning system (AWS) magnets were in place to provide warning of the emergency speed restriction and denote where the restriction commenced and terminated. The driver of the train had not received any notification of the existence of the emergency speed restriction prior to the journey.

No injuries were caused and no damage was recorded to the train, which continued to London King's Cross.

Our investigation will establish the sequence of events. It will also consider:

- factors influencing the actions of the driver
- the rules and procedures applicable to the application, implementation and advanced communication of speed restrictions, including the ways in which train drivers are made aware of the existence of emergency speed restrictions
- any relevant underlying management factors

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry

or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any safety recommendations, at the conclusion of our investigation; these will be available on our RAIB website.

You can [subscribe](#) to automated emails notifying you when we publish our reports.

[News story: Bryan Sanderson confirmed as Chairman of the Low Pay Commission \(LPC\)](#)



[Bryan Sanderson](#) has today (Tuesday 27 November 2018) been confirmed as the Chairman of the Low Pay Commission (LPC). He will take up his role with effect from 1 January 2019 having previously served for 2 years as interim Chair.

Mr Sanderson is currently trustee of several charities, an Emeritus Governor of the LSE and has continuing business interests.

The independent LPC is made up of employers, worker representatives and labour market experts – and provides recommendations annually to the government about National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage rates.

Prior to Bryan's current role, he was a Managing Director and CEO of BP Chemicals. He was the Chairman at Standard Chartered Bank, Northern Rock, the Learning and Skills Council and BUPA. Bryan has more than 40 years' experience in the energy, chemicals and financial sectors.

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