



Senator Glenn Sterle  
Chair  
Senate Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By email: rrat.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator Sterle

On 14 February 2023 I appeared as a witness before the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee Estimates hearing.

During the hearing Senator McKenzie asked in relation to Japanese Encephalitis:

**“Senator McKENZIE:** We heard earlier some questions about Japanese encephalitis and that there is an application before the APVMA around fast-tracking the four versus the three. Can you give us an update on how that's progressing through?

**Ms Hinder:** I understand that we've received some applications for research permits for a number of potential JEV vaccines. The APVMA prioritises any permit issue that's associated with either the management of an exotic animal disease or something that relates to a biosecurity response. There are commercial in confidence considerations around those vaccines, but I am pleased to advise that there has been one that has been issued with a research permit, and all of the state and territory chief veterinary officers are aware of the status of those.

**Senator McKENZIE:** The evidence from Dr Schipp was JEV4 versus JEV3?

**Senator Watt:** I think that's right.

**Senator McKENZIE:** Thank you. Can I just confirm that it's the four piece?”

In response, I indicated that ‘As I understand it, yes, but I will confirm if I'm wrong’.

I wish to provide further detail to this question.

Japanese Encephalitis Virus (JEV) has been classified into five genotypes. A human case reported in 2021 in Northern Australia was confirmed as Genotype IV. A closely related strain caused an outbreak in Eastern Australia commercial piggeries in 2022.

There is currently no animal JEV vaccine registered for use in Australia. The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has approved one research permit to test the efficacy and safety of a locally-produced JEV vaccine for pigs. Another research permit for a locally-produced JEV vaccine is in the final stage of assessment by the APVMA.

As the vaccines covered by these research permits are still being tested, it is not currently known whether the vaccines will be effective against all genotypes. Results will only be known after the completion of the trials.

I trust that this information will be of assistance to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

**Nicola Hinder PSM**

A/Chief Executive Officer

Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA)

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