

## **BIAZA statement to members on *Avian Influenza***



As with all organisations that are concerned with conservation and the welfare of animals, BIAZA is concerned about the spread of Avian Influenza. We are currently working on both the European and UK level to mitigate against any possible risks.

BIAZA is currently working to minimise the risk of infection to birds in member collections. To this end, BIAZA recommended that all member collections have contingency plans that could be put in place with immediate effect and that they work closely with their local Defra Offices.

Given the number of confirmed and suspected cases of HP AI within the European Union, the risk of H5N1 arriving in the UK has changed. The risk has not necessarily increased through the movement of wild waterfowl as although the Lyons case is on the edge of the East Atlantic flyway, the birds are going away from the UK and cold spells, are not forecast in the coming weeks.

At the current level of risk, Defra is advising the increase of biosecurity measures, namely the minimization of contact between wild and captive birds. While not currently advising the bringing of birds indoors, they are advising that collections are ready to put contingency plans in place.

BIAZA is working closely with Defra on the issue of vaccination and biosecurity specifically with reference to the protection of genetic diversity.

BIAZA would like to emphasise that the risk of public getting Avian Influenza from any healthy bird, within or outside zoological collections, is minimal. However, it is not advised to have intimate physical contact with any bird.

BIAZA office  
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