



Pigeons hit by rare virus in Victoria

Australia's Chief Veterinary Officer Dr Mark Schipp called for the imposition of strict biosecurity measures in September when the avian virus, paramyxovirus (PMV1), was detected for the first time in Australia.

Victorian authorities discovered the outbreak in hobby pigeons near Shepparton. Infected pigeons appeared tired or showed neurological signs, such as circling or head flicking before dying suddenly.

Dr Schipp said the paramyxovirus virus could causes mild, short-term conjunctivitis or influenza-like symptoms in people. "Human infection is extremely rare and usually occurred after contact with an infected bird," he said.

On 28 September the Victorian Government issued a 90-day ban prohibiting shows, exhibitions, markets, sales, auctions, tossing and racing pigeons anywhere in Victoria.