HPAI Response

Control Area Release

February 17, 2022

Please note: These procedures may be revised as the situation develops.

Background Information

Release of the Control Area also relates to other highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) response activities that are not covered in this document. For information on restocking approval, please see *Timeline, Eligibility, and Approval for Restocking.* For information on environmental sampling, please see *Post Cleaning & Disinfection Environmental Sampling Guide.* The document *HPAI Zones and Premises* provides an overview of the designations used in an HPAI response. These documents can be found at www.aphis.usda.gov/fadprep.

General Guidance

Release of the Control Area (including the release of associated movement controls and permit requirements) is allowed when all the following conditions have been met:

- The last Infected Premises in the Control Area has been depopulated; the compost pile has been set (capped), or mortality buried, or mortality removed from premises for appropriate disposal.
- Initial virus elimination activities on the last Infected Premises are completed (including, but not limited to, outside areas of premises, equipment, trucks, and other potential fomites used in depopulation activities). This does not include barn interiors.
- Required outbreak surveillance in the Control Area (commercial premises and backyard premises) has been completed; there is no evidence of HPAI infection in the Control Area.
- Surveillance requirements for international or bilateral trade are conducted and may continue.

If there have been no positive diagnostic results for HPAI in the Control Area for 14 days since depopulation and initial virus elimination activities have been completed on the last Infected Premises, AND these conditions have been met, the Control Area may be released.

The Control Area may be released prior to the date in which restocking is allowed on the last Infected Premises.

These requirements may be modified during an incident.

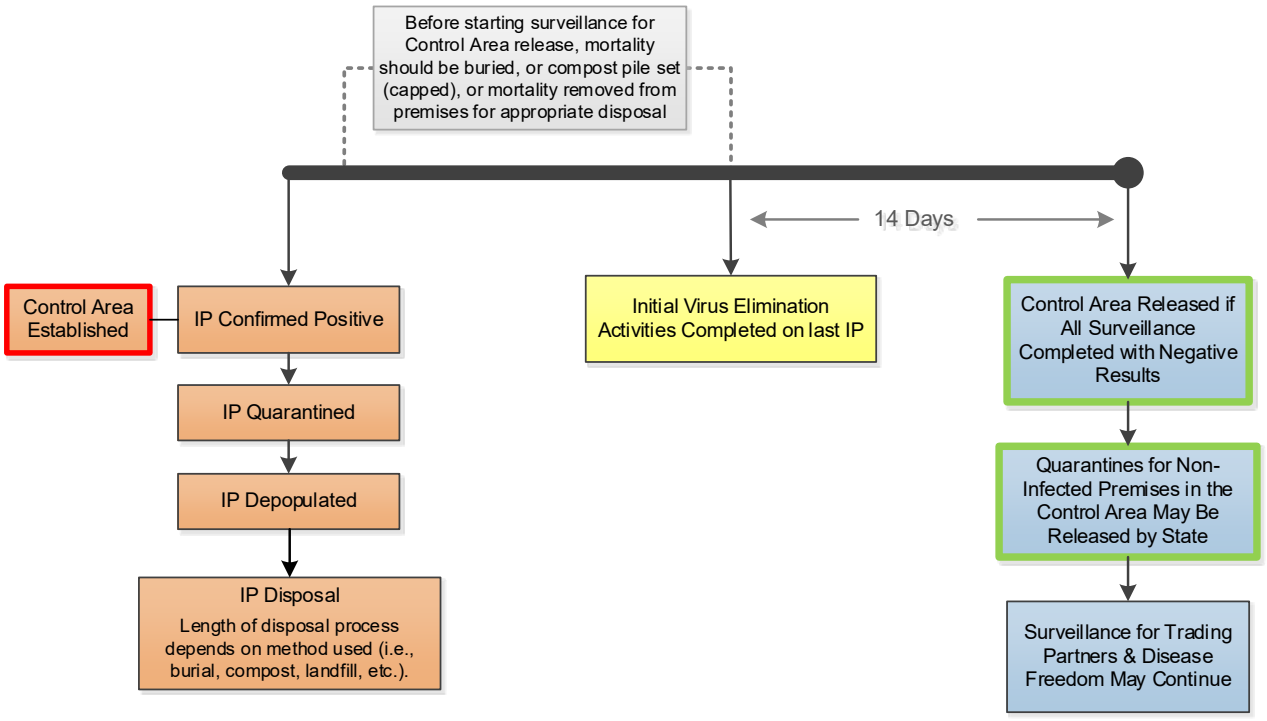
Timeline for Releasing Control Area & Associated Movement Restrictions

The Control Area and associated movement control restrictions are maintained until at least 14 days have elapsed since the initial virus elimination of the last Infected Premises and negative results of all surveillance activities.

For more information on surveillance for proof of disease freedom for both commercial and backyard premises in the Control Area (Infected Zone and Buffer Zone) and Surveillance Zone, please see the *HPAI Response Plan*, *Appendix D*.

Figure 1 shows a timeline for the release of the Control Area.

Figure 1. Release of Control Area



Note: IP=Infected Premises

The Control Area may be released prior to the date in which restocking is allowed and the quarantine released on the last Infected Premises. Information on Infected Premises timeline, eligibility, and approval for restocking and quarantine release is provided in separate guidance and can be found at www.aphis.usda.gov/fadprep.

SURVEILLANCE INFORMATION

For information on surveillance in the Control Area, please see the following (www.aphis.usda.gov/fadprep):

- *Surveillance of Backyard Flocks Around Infected Premises*
- *Surveillance Sampling for Commercial Premises in Control Area*

SURVEILLANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL & BILATERAL TRADING PARTNERS

Enhanced surveillance for international and bilateral trading partners may be necessary both prior to and after the release of the Control Area. The extent, frequency, and type of enhanced surveillance required will depend on many factors, such as (but not limited to) the density of poultry in the region, epidemiological information, species, and commodity exported.

The objective of this surveillance is to provide evidence of the absence of HPAI infection to satisfy international and bilateral trading partners. Active and passive surveillance schemes may be used.

RECOVERY OF HPAI-FREE STATUS IN THE STATE OR COUNTRY

While the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) does not grant official recognition for freedom from HPAI, the United States can self-declare freedom and submit all relevant documentation and evidence of freedom, per the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code to the OIE in order to demonstrate freedom to trading partners.

The OIE defines a country or zone free from infection with HPAI viruses in *poultry* as follows (Article 10.4.3):

> A country, or zone may be considered free from infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses in poultry when:
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> 1. Infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza is a notifiable disease in the entire country;
> 2. There is an ongoing awareness program to encourage reporting of suspicions of high pathogenicity avian influenza;
> 3. When, based on surveillance in accordance with Articles 10.4.26 to 10.4.30, it has been shown that infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses in poultry is absent in the country or zone for the past 12 months, although its status with respect to low pathogenicity avian influenza viruses may be unknown;
> 4. An awareness program is in place related to avian influenza viruses risks and the specific biosecurity and management measures to address them;
> 5. Commodities are imported in accordance with Articles 10.4.7 to 10.4.22.
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> Surveillance should be adapted to parts of the country or existing zones depending on historical or geographical factors, industry structure, population data and proximity to recent outbreaks or the use of vaccination.

If infection has occurred in *poultry* in a previously free country, the free status in the State or country can be regained after a minimum period of 28 days (i.e., two *flock*-level *incubation periods*) after a stamping-out policy (including disinfection of all affected establishments) is applied, providing that surveillance in accordance with Article 10.4.28 has been carried out during that 28-day period.

Articles 10.4.26 and 10.4.30 provide broad information on surveillance and the interpretation of positive test results. As stated in Article 10.4.26, "The impact and epidemiology of avian influenza differ widely among different regions of the world and therefore it is impossible to provide detailed recommendations for all situations. Variables such as the frequency of contacts between poultry and wild birds, different biosecurity levels and production systems, and the commingling of different susceptible species including domestic waterfowl, may require different surveillance strategies to address each situation." A science-based approach should be used to demonstrate disease freedom.