

Minister for Primary Industries and Water Minister for Veterans' Affairs

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Mr Craig Garland MP
Member for Braddon
Email: haprocedure@parliament.tas.gov.au

24 SEP 2026

Dear Mr Garland

In Parliament on 3 September 2026, you asked the following question on behalf of your constituent:

My question comes from a constituent in Ulverstone. Two days ago, two dead birds, including a magpie, were reported near the constituent's property in an area with significant coastal exposure. The constituent was advised that Biosecurity Tasmania may collect the birds for testing, but ultimately they were not collected and advice was instead provided on their safe disposal. The constituent was also told a response team was receiving hundreds of reports. Given that not every reported bird is being collected or tested, will the Minister advise whether all community reports of sick and dead birds, including species, location and date are being recorded and geographically mapped, to help identify the possible spread of H5 bird flu? Will the Government make this surveillance information publicly available, including reports where birds are not subsequently collected or tested, so Tasmanians can better understand the geographic and species distribution of suspected cases across the state??

Firstly, thank you for the question on behalf of your constituents. The Government recognises that the community wants clear, timely and meaningful information about the spread of H5 bird flu across Tasmania.

Community reporting remains an important component of Biosecurity Tasmania's surveillance and response activities. While it is not necessary or appropriate to collect and test every sick or dead animal reported, these reports are important and are used to inform surveillance and how the response evolves.

The Government has recently launched a new bird flu dashboard and interactive map on the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania website. The dashboard brings together the latest information on the number of reports, tests and positive events, while the interactive map shows where bird flu has been detected and allows people to view information relevant to their local area. The dashboard can be accessed at www.nre.tas.gov.au/BirdFlu

Importantly, the Government's public reporting is focused on affected locations, species and events, rather than counting every individual bird reported or collected. This provides the community with more meaningful information about where the disease has been detected and which species are affected, while avoiding the implication that every report represents a confirmed case of bird flu.

The interactive map is updated in real time and shows detections from the previous 14 days. For privacy reasons, individual properties are not identified, but the suburb in which a detection occurred is provided.

The Government encourages Tasmanians to continue reporting sick or dead birds and other wildlife, including the type and number of animals, location and photographic or video evidence. These reports contribute to the broader surveillance picture, even where an animal is not subsequently collected or tested.

This approach ensures the community has access to useful, reliable information about the geographic and species distribution of confirmed detections, while reports received through community surveillance continue to inform Biosecurity Tasmania's assessment of how H5 bird flu is moving across Tasmania.

Thank you again for raising this matter on behalf of your constituents.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G Pearce'.

Hon Gavin Pearce MP
Minister for Primary Industries and Water