



## **EXERCISE TO TEST OPERATIONAL READINESS TO DEAL WITH A BIRD FLU OUTBREAK SUCCESSFUL**

The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority's (AVA) fourth operational exercise to test our emergency preparedness to respond to an outbreak of bird flu was successfully conducted according to plan.

2 Code-named "Ex Gallus IV", the exercise was carried out on 4 Oct 2006 and involved some 230 personnel, including officers from AVA, Ministry of Health, Singapore Civil Defence Force as well as external cullers from cleaning and construction companies.

3 The key objectives of the exercise were met. Our systems were found to be robust and efficient. Emergency response staff involved in the exercise responded promptly when activated and complied with the personnel protection procedures. All agencies involved worked well together and interagency coordination was smooth. The decontamination process was also carried out efficiently and effectively.

4 The external cullers were fit and strong and responded very well to the training and culling operations. They were able to quickly adapt to the culling process while observing the required biosafety protocols. These external cullers will form a suitable pool of manpower reserve should the need for mass culling arise.

5 Some areas for improvement were identified through the exercise. These are operational refinements such as ensuring a better fit of the personnel protection equipment (eg. boots and goggles) for the comfort of the cullers.

6 The exercise reinforced our operation readiness to deal with a bird flu outbreak. In the event that bird flu is introduced into Singapore, we will be able to swiftly mobilize manpower and other resources without compromise to public health to contain and eradicate the disease.

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