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Subject PRO/AH> Avian influenza, falcon - China (Hong Kong)(02): OIE

AVIAN INFLUENZA, FALCON - CHINA (HONG KONG)(02): OIE  
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A ProMED-mail post  
<<http://www.promedmail.org/>>  
ProMED-mail is a program of the  
International Society for Infectious Diseases  
<<http://www.isid.org/>>

Date: 26 Jan 2004

From: ProMED-mail <[promed@promedmail.org](mailto:promed@promedmail.org)>  
Source: Office International des Epizooties (OIE), Disease Information[edited]  
<<http://www.oie.int/Messages/040126HKG.htm>>

Avian influenza in Hong Kong, Special Administrative Region of the People's  
Republic of China, in a wild bird

Information received on 26 Jan 2004 from the Director of Agriculture,  
Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), Hong Kong:

Date of the report: 26 Jan 2004.

Nature of diagnosis: clinical, post-mortem and laboratory.

Date of initial detection of animal health incident: 19 Jan 2004.

Estimated date of primary infection: unknown.

On 19 Jan 2004 a single peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) was found  
dead near a residential development at Gold Coast, New Territories. The  
bird carcass was submitted for avian influenza surveillance testing. Tests  
were commenced on 19 Jan and results were reported on 21 Jan 2004.

Causal agent: avian influenza virus subtype H5N1.

Source of agent / origin of infection: migrating wild bird.

Other epidemiological details:

- The Hong Kong status of the peregrine falcon is scarce resident and  
winter visitor. It is estimated that only 10 to 50 are present in Hong Kong  
at one time.

- An intensive monitoring and surveillance system is in place on all  
poultry farms and an extensive wild bird viral surveillance system.

- All chicken farms are routinely vaccinated with H5N2 vaccination.

Control measures: extensive surveillance is conducted in wholesale and  
retail poultry markets and in bird parks and wild bird populations  
throughout Hong Kong.

OIE Animal Health Information Department  
<[information.dept@oie.int](mailto:information.dept@oie.int)>

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[Avian influenza in Hong Kong is practically a yearly occurrence since it  
first jumped to humans and killed 6 people in 1997, as the references below  
indicate. However, this posting and the previous one (Avian influenza,  
falcon - China (Hong Kong) [20040121.0243](#)) indicate that humans are not the  
only species threatened.

This occurrence of Avian influenza in a Peregrine Falcon [a predator, perhaps  
infected from eating a duck? - Mod.JW] should be distinguished from its  
occurrence in aquatic wild birds such as ducks or shore birds. The classic  
scenario for the emergence of new influenza strains often begins with duck or  
other aquatic wild bird strains of the virus contaminating water and  
resulting in fecal-oral transmission to pigs or chickens. Robert Webster  
provides an excellent overview of how this happens in the Emerging Infectious  
Disease paper (July-Sept. 1998 vol 4 number 3) Influenza: An Emerging  
Disease, which can be obtain online at  
<<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/eid/vol4no3/webster.htm>>. - Mod.PC]

[Regarding the use of H5N2 vaccine in an H5N1 outbreak: There will be cross  
protection, in theory, but the shedding of the wild virus might not be  
prevented. We also lack information on the kind of vaccine used (killed? live  
attenuated?)- Mod.A