

**DEPARTMENT RESPONDS TO CASE OF AVIAN 'FLU IN DORSET**

**The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's National Disease Control Centre (NDCC) Management Committee met this afternoon to discuss the confirmation of the presence of high pathogenic H5N1 avian 'flu in three dead wild mute swans in Dorset, England.**

**The Committee was briefed on the most recent information available from the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in Britain and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) in Northern Ireland.**

**Officials from the Department have been in contact throughout the day with colleagues from Belfast, London and Brussels. It was noted that the British authorities have put in place the required EU control measures, including a Wild Bird Control Area and Monitoring Area, within which bird keepers are required to house birds or otherwise isolate them from contact with wild birds.**

**The Department reminded poultry flockowners of the need for continued vigilance and of the need to exercise the highest standards of biosecurity.**

**The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food has taking expert ornithological advice from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and BirdWatch Ireland on current migratory patterns between Britain and Ireland. The most recent information available is that there is currently little migration and that the migratory pattern is stable and, as such, the risk to Ireland remains low.**

**Department officials advised the Minister of the current situation and will be monitoring developments in Dorset carefully in the coming days.**

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