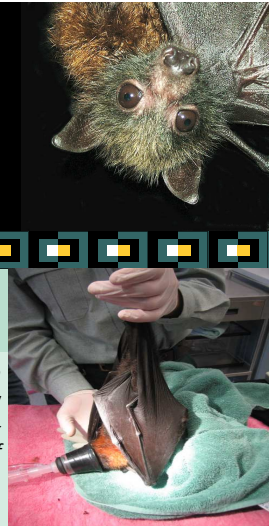


# ABLV BAT STATS

ABLV Update, December 2010

## Australian Bat Lyssavirus report December 2010

This report presents the latest information on Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABLV) testing across Australia. Information has been made available by CSIRO Australian Animal Health Laboratory (CSIRO-AAHL), The Sub-Committee on Animal Health Laboratory Standards (SCAHLs), QLD Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), QLD Health, The Australian Registry of Wildlife Health, Australian Wildlife Health Network subscribers and State/Territory representatives of the Chief Veterinary Officers, and is collated by the Australian Wildlife Health Network as part of wildlife disease reporting requirements. More detailed information is available in the wildlife health information system (eWHIS), [www.wildlifehealth.org.au](http://www.wildlifehealth.org.au).



### Positive ABLV cases for 2010

There were nine positive cases of Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABLV) in bats reported in Australia for 2010 (Table 1). Eight of the cases were from Queensland and one from Western Australia.

### Queensland:

Of the eight positive bats in Queensland, four cases were diagnosed in Little Red Flying-foxes, *Pteropus scapulatus*, two cases in Black Flying-foxes, *Pteropus alecto*, one in a Grey-headed Flying-fox, *Pteropus poliocephalus*, and one in a Spectacled Flying-fox, *Pteropus conspicillatus*.



Grey-headed Flying-fox  
Photo courtesy of halleydesign.com

### Western Australia:

One positive ABLV case was reported in Western Australia. This case was in a Little Red Flying-fox, *Pteropus scapulatus* from Cable Beach, Broome. This is the first positive case seen in WA since 2002. The presenting symptoms were not reported.

### Public Health Significance

Five of the nine positive cases reported involved contact with the potential for ABLV transmission to humans.

Infected bats are debilitated and as a result are typically found on or near to the ground. This brings them closer to humans and animals, increasing the probability of contact.

Six of the eight positive bats presented with neurological signs and typical ABLV symptoms. The presenting symptoms of the other two bats were not reported. Five cases involved contact with the potential for ABLV transmission to humans.

### Positive ABLV cases to date

Historically, there have been 195 confirmed positive ABLV infected bats reported to December 2010 (Table 2). The vast majority of these have been in Flying-foxes.

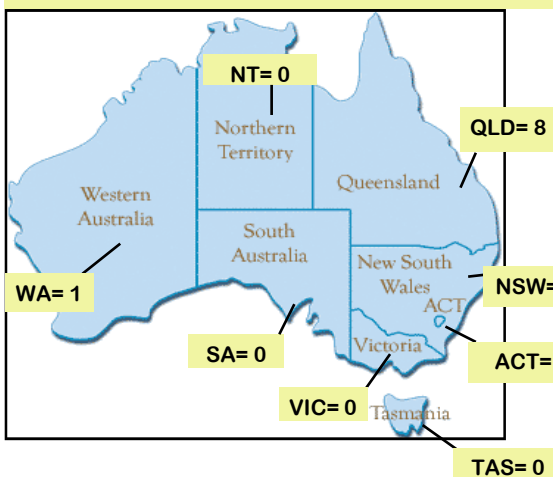
Table 1: ABLV positive cases in bats in Australia (Jan-Dec 2010)

STATE	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Total 2010
QLD	3	1	1	3	8
WA	-	1	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>

Table 2: ABLV cases in bats as confirmed by FAT, PCR, IHC and/or Virus Isolation<sup>^</sup> in Australian bats to 2010. \*

	NSW	NT	QLD**	VIC	WA	TOTALS (By Year)
1995	0	0	1 <sup>#</sup>	0	0	1
1996	1	0	9	1	0	11
1997	7	1	27	0	0	35
1998	1	0	26	0	0	27
1999	0	0	6	0	0	6
2000	1	0	14	0	0	15
2001	0	0	9	1	4	14
2002	4	0	10	2	1	17
2003	6	0	3	2	0	11
2004	5	0	6	1	0	12
2005	6	0	5	0	0	11
2006	2	0	4	0	0	6
2007	6	0	2	0	0	8
2008	0	0	0	0	0	0
2009	2	0	10 <sup>§</sup>	0	0	12
2010	0	0	8	0	1	9
<b>TOTALS (By State)</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>195</b>

### LOCATION OF ABLV



<sup>^</sup>Note that ACT, SA and TAS have not recorded any cases of ABLV that satisfy this case definition.

<sup>#</sup> ABLV was first recognised in 1996. A bat from Townsville, QLD that died in 1995 was subsequently diagnosed with ABLV.

<sup>\*</sup>Source: CSIRO AAHL; Queensland Health 'Bat Stats' Database; National Animal Health Information System; Janine Barrett PhD thesis 2004 (with permission)

<sup>\*\*</sup>Note: Higher numbers of positive results were associated with peak years of testing in 1997 - 1998.

<sup>§</sup> Note: Results were reported as 'equivocal' for FAT and 'negative' for PCR in two cases. It is not possible to exclude the possibility of ABLV in cases with these results and are included in the dataset.

# ABLV BAT FACTS

1. ABLV is a virus that infects Australian Flying-foxes and insectivorous bats.
2. ABLV is closely related to, but distinct from Rabies virus.
3. ABLV causes a fatal disease in people and to date has been responsible for the deaths of two people in Australia.
4. People should not handle bats unless they are appropriately vaccinated.
5. Bats that are suspected to be infected with ABLV should be reported to the local Public Health Unit or veterinary authority for possible ABLV testing.
6. ABLV is transmitted to humans through biting, and potentially also through contact with saliva. In the event of a bat bite or other significant contact, seek medical attention URGENTLY.
7. Penetrating bite or scratch wounds should immediately be washed thoroughly with soap and water for 15 minutes\* and a viricidal disinfectant applied. Bat saliva in the eyes or mouth should be rinsed out immediately and thoroughly with water.
8. For more information contact your local Public Health Unit for advice.

\* As per current World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines

## AN ABLV INFECTED BAT MAY DISPLAY ANY OF THESE CLINICAL SIGNS:

- Abnormal behaviour such as excitation/agitation/aggression
- Paralysis or paresis
- Unprovoked attacks
- Unusual vocalisation
- Inability to fly
- Convulsions/ seizures/ tremors

**DO NOT ATTEMPT TO HANDLE AN INJURED, UNWELL OR AGGRESSIVE BAT— REPORT IT TO YOUR LOCAL WILDLIFE SERVICE, VET OR BAT CARER GROUP.**

## USEFUL LINKS

For current policy on surveillance and management consult AUSHVETPLAN:

([http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/fms/Animal%20Health%20Australia/AUSHVETPLAN/ABL-07EDIT\(20Jan10\).pdf](http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/fms/Animal%20Health%20Australia/AUSHVETPLAN/ABL-07EDIT(20Jan10).pdf)).

For current Department of Health and Aging information regarding ABLV see:

([http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cda-pubs-other-bat\\_lyssa.htm](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cda-pubs-other-bat_lyssa.htm))

For vaccination information contact your local or regional Public Health Unit, or see the immunisation handbook online at:

(<http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Handbook-home>)

## WILDLIFE COORDINATORS

If you would like information on ABLV testing or wish to report a suspected ABLV positive bat please contact your State Department of Primary Industries or Local Wildlife Coordinator (below).

STATE	CONTACT	CONTACT DETAILS
<b>ACT</b>	Will Andrew	W: 02 6207 2357 F: 02 6207 2093 <a href="mailto:will.andrew@act.gov.au">will.andrew@act.gov.au</a>
<b>NSW</b>	Greg Curran	W: 08 8088-9336 F: 08 8087-3488 <a href="mailto:greg.curran@industry.nsw.gov.au">greg.curran@industry.nsw.gov.au</a>
<b>NT</b>	Cathy Shilton	W: 08 8999 2122 <a href="mailto:cathy.shilton@nt.gov.au">cathy.shilton@nt.gov.au</a>
<b>QLD</b>	Anita Gordon	W: 07 3276 6056 F: 07 3376 6620 <a href="mailto:anita.gordon@deedi.qld.gov.au">anita.gordon@deedi.qld.gov.au</a>
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<b>VIC</b>	Mark Hawes	W: 03 9217 4386 F: 03 9217 4399 <a href="mailto:mark.hawes@dpi.vic.gov.au">mark.hawes@dpi.vic.gov.au</a>
<b>WA</b>	Tom Hollingsworth	W: 08 9780 6280 F: 08 9780 6136 <a href="mailto:tom.hollingsworth@agric.wa.gov.au">tom.hollingsworth@agric.wa.gov.au</a>

### About the ABLV Focus Group

This document has been approved by the ABLV Focus Group. The ABLV focus group was formed to act as a catalyst to improve communication and coordination on issues relating to Australian Bat Lyssavirus in Australia.

Members come from organisations including the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), Australian Government Department of Health and Aging (DoHA), Communicable Diseases Network of Australia (CDNA), QLD Health, Public Health and CSIRO Australian Animal Health Laboratory (CSIRO-AAHL). The group has a major focus on human and animal health issues associated with ABLV in Australia and the region; is based on scientific endeavour and scientific objectivity; encourages multi-organisational collaboration amongst federal, state, local government and non-government agencies; is based on complementarity with current organisations, researchers, conservationists and; is non-regulatory.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR TO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS PUBLICATION PLEASE CONTACT THE AWHN on [awhn@zoo.nsw.gov.au](mailto:awhn@zoo.nsw.gov.au) or (02) 9932 4368

