

9 December 2011

CATTLE AND COUGARS, SHEEP AND SHARKS: Animal Health Australia cements partnership with Zoo and Aquarium Association

With a focus on biosecurity and emergency animal disease response preparedness, Animal Health Australia (AHA) is forging strong partnerships that might be considered outside the traditional 'livestock' focus.

At the company's recent AGM, Animal Health Australia welcomed the Zoo and Aquarium Association as its newest member.

Executive Director of the Zoo and Aquarium Association, Martin Phillips, said strengthening the partnership made sense.

"Although in many ways, we operate in a quite different sphere from the livestock industries, there are so many mutual areas of concern. We feel we can only benefit from joining AHA," said Mr Phillips.

"Likewise, we are confident that the zoo industry can bring a unique perspective to the endeavours of AHA and its members," he said.

Chief Executive of Animal Health Australia, Dr Mike Bond, said the Zoo and Aquarium Association already worked regularly with many AHA members.

"They face many of the same issues that traditional livestock industries face - health and welfare issues, disease surveillance, biosecurity and emergency animal disease preparedness," he said.

"Zoo and aquarium animals are no less susceptible to disease, and in an emergency response they would be subject to the same movement restrictions and quarantine protocols.

"Working more closely with these groups benefits and strengthens our national biosecurity system."

*The **Zoo and Aquarium Association** links over 90 institutions in Australia and New Zealand, all working together to protect and conserve the world's wildlife. Through its specialist advisory groups, the Association manages networks for over 500 zoo and aquarium specialists in fields such as wildlife research, veterinary science, environmental education and horticulture. <http://www.zooaquarium.org.au/>*

***Animal Health Australia** is a not-for-profit public company established by the Australian Government, state and territory governments and major national livestock industry organisations. It works with its 32 member organisations to ensure that Australia's national animal health system delivers competitive advantage and market access for Australia's livestock industries, and minimises risks to human health associated with livestock and their products. www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au*

For interviews with Dr Mike Bond and for further information:

Thea McNaught-Reynolds, Manager Communication, Animal Health Australia, Mobile: 0411 504 727

For interviews with Mr Martin Phillips: 0430 238 139