

Melbourne Bird Vet Clinic – Dr. Colin Walker
Update Friday 6th Jan

I spoke to Dr Christina McCowan at AgriBio today. She believes they are still on track to have the gene sequencing completed by the end of next week. This is great work. As explained earlier this will give a good indication as to whether the Reo chicken vaccines are likely to also be protective for pigeons. The sequencing work will also give an indication whether the pigeon Reo virus is likely to, in fact, infect chickens. It may also allude to the origins of the virus.

Professor Amir Noormohammadi at the University of Melbourne has produced a chicken Reo virus PCR test. PCR tests are very specific and check for matching sequences of DNA in a sample. The chicken Reo PCR test was today run on 4 pigeon livers from confirmed Reo cases.. All 4 tests were positive. The chicken Reo PCR registered a positive result even though only pigeon Reo was present. This may indicate that there are significant similarities between the 2 viruses. This test will also be useful in diagnosing Reo virus in suspect pigeons. Amir's gene sequencing is also proceeding well. Fanciers should be aware that there are many very capable vets and pathologists giving their skills and time to give us the answers on Reo virus.

Previous veterinary work has indicated that only a full genotyping of the Sigma C gene on the Reo genome will give an indication of antigenic relatedness.

Because it is a significant indicator of likely cross immunity both AgriBio and the University of Melbourne are focusing on this particularly important sequence area

Today we have had cases confirmed through our clinic at Eltham, Lysterfield and Whittlesea. Another loft is under suspicion in the Dandenong ranges