WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment which specifically binds to a conformational epitope of H5 hemagglutinin, wherein the conformational epitope is ~~selected from the group consisting of~~:

(a) a conformational epitope comprised of amino acid 152Lys, 184Ala and 190Pro of the mature HA protein~~;~~

~~(b) a conformational epitope comprised of amino acid 152Lys and 221Gly of the mature HA protein; and~~

~~(c) a conformational epitope comprised of amino acid 141Pro and 152Lys of the mature HA protein;~~.

2. The monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment of claim 1, wherein the conformational epitope of H5 hemagglutinin is ~~selected from the group consisting of~~:

(i) the conformational epitope of part (a) to which murine monoclonal antibody C specifically binds~~;~~

~~(ii) the conformational epitope of part (b) to which murine monoclonal antibody F specifically binds; and~~

~~(iii) the conformational epitope of part (c) to which murine monoclonal antibody H specifically binds~~.

~~3. The monoclonal antibody or fragment of claim 1, wherein the monoclonal antibody is selected from the group consisting of:~~

~~(1) murine monoclonal antibody C;~~

~~(2) murine monoclonal antibody F; and~~

~~(3) murine monoclonal antibody H.~~

43. ~~A monoclonal antibody selected from the group consisting of:~~

~~(a) monoclonal~~ Monoclonal antibody C as produced by hybridoma C which is deposited with the CellBank Australia with Accession Number CBA20110011~~;~~

~~(b) monoclonal antibody F as produced by hybridoma F which is deposited with the CellBank Australia with Accession Number CBA20110012;~~

~~(e) monoclonal antibody H as produced by hybridoma H which is deposited with the CellBank Australia with Accession Number CBA20110013;~~.

~~5~~4. A method for detecting an influenza A virus in a biological specimen which comprises contacting the specimen with a first antibody, wherein the first antibody is the monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment of any one of claims 1 to ~~4~~3.

~~6~~5. The method of claim ~~5~~4 which further comprises contacting the specimen with a second antibody that specifically binds to an epitope of H5 hemagglutinin of an influenza A virus, wherein said second antibody contains or is conjugated to a detectable element.

~~7~~6. The method of claim ~~6~~5 wherein the first antibody is immobilized onto a solid surface.

~~8~~7. The method of claim ~~6~~5 or 6 wherein the second antibody contains a radioactive atom, is conjugated to a fluorescent molecule, or is conjugated to an enzyme.

~~9~~8. The method of any one of claims 4 to 7 ~~5 to 8~~, wherein the influenza A virus is an influenza H5N1 virus.

~~10~~9. The method of claim ~~9~~8, wherein the influenza H5N1 virus is an influenza H5N1 virus of the clade 2 family.

~~11~~10. The method of claim ~~10~~9, wherein the influenza H5N1 virus is an influenza H5N1 virus of clade 2.3.

~~12~~11. The method of any one of claims 4 to 10 ~~5 to 11~~, wherein a complementary monoclonal antibody is used in combination with the first antibody.

~~13~~12. The method of claim ~~12~~11, wherein the complementary monoclonal antibody is monoclonal antibody 2D9.

~~14~~13. A kit for detecting an influenza A virus in a biological specimen which comprises a first and a second antibody, wherein the first antibody is the monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment of any one of claims 1 to ~~4~~3 together with instructions for performing an assay to detect the influenza A virus, wherein the second antibody specifically binds to an epitope of H5 hemagglutinin of an influenza A virus, and wherein said second antibody contains or is conjugated to a detectable element.

~~15. The kit of claim 14 which further comprises a second antibody that specifically binds to an epitope of H5 hemagglutinin of an influenza A virus, wherein said second antibody contains or is conjugated to a detectable element.~~

~~16~~14. The kit of claim 13 ~~14 or 15~~, wherein the influenza A virus is ~~wherein the influenza A virus is~~ an influenza H5N1 virus.

~~17~~15. The kit of claim ~~16~~14, wherein the influenza H5N1 virus is an influenza H5N1 virus of the clade 2 family.

~~18~~16. The kit of claim ~~17~~15, wherein the influenza H5N1 virus is an influenza H5N1 virus of clade 2.3.

~~19~~17. The kit of any one of claims ~~14 to 18~~ 13 to 16, wherein a complementary monoclonal antibody is used in combination with the first antibody.

~~20~~18. The kit of claim ~~19~~17, wherein the complementary monoclonal antibody is monoclonal antibody 2D9.

~~21~~19. A composition comprising an agent and a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier, wherein the agent is the monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment of any one of claims 1 to ~~4~~3.

~~22~~20. A composition comprising an agent and a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier, wherein the agent is a combination of the monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment of

any one of claims 1 to ~~4~~3 and at least one complementary monoclonal antibody or fragment thereof.

~~23~~21. The composition of claim ~~22~~20, wherein the complementary monoclonal antibody is murine monoclonal antibody 2D9.

~~24~~22. Use of a monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment of any one of claims 1 to 3 in the manufacture of a medicament for ~~A method of~~ reducing influenza H5N1 virus infection in a subject, or lowering the risk of influenza H5N1 virus infection in a subject, or inhibiting infection of a subject by one or more influenza H5N1 virus strains or isolates, or prophylaxis of influenza infection or disease by one or more influenza H5N1 virus strains or isolates ~~which comprises administering to a subject in need thereof, a therapeutically effective amount of an agent, wherein the agent is the monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment of any one of claims 1 to 4~~.

~~25~~23. The ~~method~~ use of claim ~~24~~22, wherein the subject is immunocompromised, an infant, a young child or elderly.

~~26~~24. The ~~method~~ use of claim ~~24~~ 22 or 23, wherein the ~~administration~~ use provides a therapeutic benefit.

~~27~~25. The ~~method~~ use of claim ~~26~~24, wherein the therapeutic benefit comprises (a) inhibiting increases in influenza virus titer, (b) decreasing influenza virus titer, (c) inhibiting increases in influenza virus replication, (d) decreasing influenza virus replication, (e) inhibiting increases in influenza virus proliferation or decreasing influenza virus proliferation, (f) decreasing progression, severity, frequency, duration or probability one or more symptoms or complications associated with influenza virus infection in a subject or (g) hastening a subject's recovery from influenza virus infection.

~~28~~26. The ~~method~~ use of claim ~~27~~25, wherein a symptom or complication is selected from chills, fever, cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, sinus congestion, nasal infection, sinus

infection, body ache, head ache, fatigue, pneumonia, bronchitis, ear infection, ear ache and death.

~~29~~27. The ~~method~~ use of any one of claims 22 to 26 ~~24 to 27~~, wherein the influenza A virus is an H5N1 subtype of clade 2.3.

~~30~~28. Use of a combination of the monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment of any one of claims 1 to 3 and at least one complementary monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment for the manufacture of a medicament for ~~A method of~~ reducing influenza H5N1 virus infection in a subject, or lowering the risk of influenza H5N1 virus infection in a subject, or inhibiting infection of a subject by one or more influenza H5N1 virus strains or isolates, or prophylaxis of influenza infection or disease by one or more influenza H5N1 virus strains or isolates ~~which comprises administering to a subject in need thereof, a therapeutically effective amount of an agent, wherein the agent is a combination of the monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment of any one of claims 1 to 4 and at least one complementary monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment~~.

~~31~~29. The ~~method~~ use of claim ~~30~~28, wherein the complementary monoclonal antibody is murine monoclonal antibody 2D9.

~~32~~30. The ~~method~~ use of claim ~~30 or 31~~ 28 or 29, wherein the subject is immunocompromised, an infant, a young child or elderly.

~~33~~31. The ~~method~~ use of any one of claims ~~30 or 31~~ 28 to 30, wherein the ~~administration~~ use provides a therapeutic benefit.

~~34~~32. The ~~method~~ use of claim ~~33~~31, wherein the therapeutic benefit comprises (a) inhibiting increases in influenza virus titer, (b) decreasing influenza virus titer, (c) inhibiting increases in influenza virus replication, (d) decreasing influenza virus replication, (e) inhibiting increases in influenza virus proliferation or decreasing influenza virus proliferation, (f) decreasing progression, severity, frequency, duration or probability one

or more symptoms or complications associated with influenza virus infection in a subject or (g) hastening a subject's recovery from influenza virus infection.

~~35~~33. The ~~method~~ use of claim ~~34~~32, wherein a symptom or complication is selected from chills, fever, cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, sinus congestion, nasal infection, sinus infection, body ache, head ache, fatigue, pneumonia, bronchitis, ear infection, ear ache and death.

~~36~~34. A method for characterizing and/or quantifying H5 expression in a sample, the method comprises contacting the sample with a first antibody, wherein the first antibody is the monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment of any one of claims 1 to ~~4~~3.

~~37~~35. The method of claim ~~36~~34 which further comprises contacting the sample with a second antibody that specifically binds to an epitope of H5 hemagglutinin of an influenza A virus, wherein said second antibody contains or is conjugated to a detectable element.

~~38~~36. The method of claim ~~37~~35 wherein the first antibody is immobilized onto a solid surface.

~~39~~37. The method of claim ~~37~~ 35 or 36 wherein the second antibody contains a radioactive atom, is conjugated to a fluorescent molecule, or is conjugated to an enzyme.

~~40~~38. A kit for characterizing and/or quantifying H5 expression in a sample, which kit comprises a first and a second antibody, wherein the first antibody is the monoclonal antibody or antibody fragment of any one of claims 1 to ~~3~~4 together with instructions for performing an assay to characterize and/or quantify H5 expression in the sample, and wherein the second antibody specifically binds to an epitope of H5 hemagglutinin of an influenza A virus, and wherein said second antibody contains or is conjugated to a detectable element.

~~41. The kit of claim 40 which further comprises a second antibody that specifically binds to an epitope of H5 hemagglutinin of an influenza A virus, wherein said second antibody contains or is conjugated to a detectable element.~~