



# Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets under the Balai Directive

## Import Information Note (IIN) BLLV/5b

March 2020

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## 1. Important Information

Import Information Notes are technical documents containing import requirements, and are for use by veterinary staff.

Please be aware that import conditions may be updated due to changes in policy or legislation. Please ensure that you check the current version of the Import Information Note online.

Please note that any links to legislation provided in this document are for information purposes only and may not be the most recent version. Please see the EU legislation paragraph below for further information regarding how to find consolidated versions of the legislation.

Importers should note that the information given relates only to animal health and public health conditions of import. It does not give guidance on other conditions that may need to be met.

## 2. Scope

The movement of cats, dogs and ferrets is governed by two regimes, the Balai Directive (92/65/EEC (as amended)) for what are termed 'commercial movements' and the Pet Travel Regulation (576/2013/EEC) for cats, dogs and ferrets that comply with pet requirements. It is important that cats, dogs and ferrets travel under the correct regime for the type of movement.

**This IIN covers the commercial movement for the trade in cats, dogs and ferrets as laid down in Directive 92/65/EEC (as amended).**

It also covers:

- The movements of groups of more than five cats, dogs or ferrets per person travelling;
- The movement of cats, dogs and ferrets involving a change of ownership and/or for rehoming, including rescue animals (see below);
- Pet animals that are not able to fulfil the requirement of the Pet Travel regulation for travelling within five days of their owner or owner's representative.

This IIN does not cover the movement of pet animals that comply with the Pet Travel regulation (Regulation (EU) No 576/2013) i.e. five or fewer cats, dogs or ferrets, being accompanied by their owner or owner's representative within five days of movement, and not intended to be sold or transferred to another owner or travelling for a competition or event. Information for these movements can be found at: [Pet Travel - Information for pet owners](#)

Rescue animals or animals being moved for rehoming are classed as commercial movements. This was re-confirmed at the Working Party of Chief Veterinary Officers on 13 November 2013. They must therefore travel under the Balai Directive (92/65/EEC, as amended)

### 3. Norway/Liechtenstein/Switzerland

The EU has International Agreements with Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, which means that they implement EU veterinary legislation in relation to the commercial movement of live animals. Therefore live animals from Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein must comply with the same requirements applying to live animals from Member States.

### 4. UK and Crown Dependencies

Trade movements between Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Channel Island and the Isle of Man are treated as national movements and as such, no animal health conditions are applicable.

### 5. Conditions for Trade from the EU

Cats, dogs and ferrets may be traded without undergoing quarantine providing that they meet the following conditions:

- they are from a premises registered with the EU Member State of origin;
- they have been identified by a microchip (or a clearly readable tattoo applied before 03 July 2011) prior to vaccination;
- after 12 weeks of age, have been vaccinated against rabies;
- after vaccination (or the last of the primary course of vaccinations) they must wait for a minimum of 21 days before travelling;
- in the case of dogs (other than those travelling directly from Ireland, Finland or Malta) be treated for *Echinococcus multilocularis* (tapeworm) with an approved

product not less than 24 hours and not more than 120 hours prior to arrival in the UK;

- they are accompanied by a passport (modelled on Annex I of Commission Decision 2003/803/EC or modelled on Annex III of EU No 577/2013 if the passport is issued on or after 29<sup>th</sup> Dec 2014) containing the rabies vaccination and Echinococcus treatment where required, as well as a completed Section X entry;
- they are accompanied by a health certificate in accordance with Part 1 of Annex E of Directive 92/65/EEC (as amended) issued by the veterinary authorities in the Member State of origin (also known as the Intra Trade Animal Health Certificate (ITAHC) or TRACES certificate). [Commission Implementing Decision 2019/1206](#) contains the version of the health certificate currently required; and
- in addition to the original health certificate that must accompany the consignment, Member States are required to notify the UK authorities via TRACES (Trade Control and Expert System).

Importers must notify the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) at least 24 hours before the arrival of the consignment. To do this, importers should complete the [Importer notification form](#) and return it to [GBImports@apha.gov.uk](mailto:GBImports@apha.gov.uk).

If these conditions can be met, no licence will be required under the Rabies (Importation of Dogs, Cats and Other Mammals) Order 1974. If these conditions cannot be met the animals will require a licence and must be quarantined. Contact the Imports team - Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) for further information.

## Additional Information for Hybrid Cats and Dogs

The Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) applies to the species in Annex I of Regulation 576/2013, which are Dogs (*Canis lupus familiaris*), Cats (*Felis silvestris catus*) and Ferrets (*Mustela putorius furo*).

Please be aware that an F1 hybrid cat or dog **cannot** enter Great Britain under the scope of Regulation 576/2013.

F1 hybrids and other non-domestic species should be imported in line with the requirements of the relevant Import Information Note for the [Import of Certain Rabies Susceptible Animals under the Balai Directive \(IIN BLLV/5a\)](#).

In addition, the import of some hybrid cats and dogs, up to and including F4 generation may require export and import certificates under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and/or under Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976.

Please refer to section 8 for CITES controlled species and permit requirements.

## 6. Imports from third countries

### a) Approved third countries

Article 1 of [Commission Implementing Decision 2019/294](#) states that the imports of dogs, cats or ferrets into the UK are authorised only from territories and third countries listed in one of the following:

- Annex I to [Regulation \(EU\) No 2018/659](#)
- in Part 1 of Annex II to [Regulation \(EU\) No 206/2010](#)
- or in Annex II to [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) No 577/2013](#).

Dogs, cats and ferrets from countries not listed in accordance with Decision 2019/294 are not allowed to be imported into the UK.

### b) General requirements for imports from third countries

Dogs, cats and ferrets which are not accompanied pets can be imported from an approved third country without a licence under the Rabies (Importation of Dogs, Cats and Other Mammals) Order 1974, provided that;

- the animals are accompanied by a health certificate in accordance with the model in the Annex to [Commission Implementing Decision 2019/294](#);
- they come from a premises registered by the competent authority of origin;
- they are clinically examined by an Official Veterinarian 48 hours before movement;
- the animals enter the EU via a Border Control Post (see Section 7.e below).

### c) Imports from approved countries listed in Regulation (EU) No 577/2013

In addition to the general requirements in Section 7.b cats, dogs and ferrets imported from third countries listed in Annex II to [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) No 577/2013](#) must meet the following health requirements:

- they have been identified by a microchip (or a clearly readable tattoo applied before 03 July 2011) prior to vaccination;
- after 12 weeks of age, have been vaccinated against rabies;

- after vaccination (or the last of the primary course of vaccinations) they must wait for a minimum of 21 days before travelling;
- in the case of dogs be treated for Echinococcus multilocularis (tapeworm) with an approved product not less than 24 hours and not more than 120 hours prior to arrival in the UK.

## d) Imports from approved countries that are not listed in Regulation (EU) No 577/2013

Dogs, cats and ferrets from countries not listed in Annex II to [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) No 577/2013](#) can still be imported to the UK provided they come from territories and third countries listed in:

- Annex I to [Regulation \(EU\) No 2018/659](#)
- **Or** in Part 1 of Annex II to [Regulation \(EU\) No 206/2010](#)

In addition to the general requirements in Section 7.b above, cats, dogs and ferrets imported from these approved countries must meet the following health requirements:

- they have been identified by a microchip (or a clearly readable tattoo applied before 03 July 2011) prior to vaccination;
- after 12 weeks of age, have been vaccinated against rabies;
- at least 30 days after vaccination (or the last of the primary course of vaccinations) blood sample must be drawn and sent to a European Union (EU) approved laboratory for testing;
- a satisfactory blood test result must show the rabies antibody titre was equal to or greater than 0.5 IU/ml;
- the animal must complete a waiting period of **3 calendar months** after the date that the sample was drawn;
- in the case of dogs be treated for Echinococcus multilocularis (tapeworm) with an approved product not less than 24 hours and not more than 120 hours prior to arrival in the UK.

## e) Veterinary Checks

Consignments may only be imported through an approved Border Control Post (BCP). Consignments must be pre-notified to the relevant BCP, by completion of Part I of the Common Health Entry Document (CHED). The requirements for minimum pre-notification time are set out in [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1013](#).

The person responsible for the consignment must give notice of the proposed entry of the consignment at least one working day before arrival (with a derogation to 4 hours before arrival if there are logistical constraints). The notification shall be made to the inspection staff at the BCP using the document drawn up in accordance with the model CHED set out in the Annex II Part 2 Section A to [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1715](#).

Any other electronic means agreed with the BCP to inform about the intended arrival of a consignment in advance are not to be considered as an official pre-notification.

Following satisfactory checks at the BCP (for which a charge is levied), consignments may then circulate freely within the EU. If the consignment does not meet the import requirements, the consignment may be rejected and either re-exported or destroyed.

- [Further guidance on veterinary checks on live animals](#)
- [Border Control Posts](#)
- [Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011](#)

## f) Rabies quarantine

If the above conditions can be met, no licence will be required under the Rabies (Importation of Dogs, Cats and Other Mammals) Order 1974. If these conditions cannot be met the animals will require a licence and must be quarantined. Contact the APHA Imports team for further information.

- [GOV.UK – quarantine pages](#)

## 7. Welfare of animals during transport

Importers are reminded that they must comply with rules on the welfare of animals during transport. For information on the rules see [GOV.UK](#).

## 8. Endangered species

The import of some species of animals may require export and import certificates under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). CITES permits must be issued in advance of import and they can take up to **15 working days** to process. Applicants should be aware of this when applying for their permits. Those species requiring CITES permits must be moved in compliance with CITES guidelines for the transport and preparation for shipment of live animals.

- [GOV.UK website – CITES pages](#)

For further information please contact the APHA – CITES team:

Centre for International Trade - Bristol  
Horizon House  
Deanery Road  
Bristol  
BS1 5AH

Tel: +44 (0) 3000 200 301  
Fax: +44 (0) 28 415 2510  
Email: [wildlife.licensing@apha.gov.uk](mailto:wildlife.licensing@apha.gov.uk)

## 9. Controls on non-native species

Some species of animals which are not native to the UK may have controls which prohibit their release and control how they may be kept or used within the UK. Further information is available here <https://www.gov.uk/nonnative-wildlife>

## 10. Death of animals in transit

If an imported animal dies in transit to, or at a port or airport in Great Britain, the person in charge of the animal must report the death to the local Regional Operations Director/Field Team Leader/Director of Operations (Scotland). The carcase of the animal can only be disposed of in accordance with any directions given by a veterinary inspector.

## 11. Safeguard measures

Emergency safeguard action can be taken at very short notice to prohibit or restrict the importation of certain products from certain countries following an outbreak of disease or a public health issue. Information on the latest updates concerning disease outbreaks which may affect imports into the UK can be found on our Topical Issues page on the website.

Further information on the International and UK monitoring of animal diseases may be found on the animal disease monitoring website.

Importers can get the latest news about exotic notifiable disease outbreaks from the APHA subscription service.

- [Topical issues](#)
- [Animal diseases: international and UK monitoring](#)
- [Exotic notifiable disease outbreak subscription service](#)



## 12. European Union legislation

Consolidated texts, which integrate the basic instruments of Union legislation with their amendments and corrections in a single, non-official document, are available. Each consolidated text contains a list of all legal documents taken into account for its construction.

You can search for consolidated texts by using the 'find results by document number' option on the [European Commission website](#). Once you have selected the relevant legislation, click 'document information', and then scroll down to 'all consolidated versions' and select the most recent version.

Please note that the consolidated text may not contain the latest amendment to the legislation, as it takes several weeks for this to be updated.

Texts provided in this section are intended for information only. Please note that these texts have no legal value. For legal purposes please refer to the texts published in the ['Official Journal of the European Union'](#).

## 13. Contact for further information

For further information regarding import requirements, contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) Imports team:

Centre for International Trade - Carlisle  
Eden Bridge House  
Lowther Street  
Carlisle  
CA3 8DX

Email: [Imports@apha.gov.uk](mailto:Imports@apha.gov.uk)

Telephone: 03000 200 301



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at:

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The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government and Welsh Government.