



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency

## APHA Briefing Note 10/23

# Change of biosecurity requirements for the export of dogs and cats to Australia.

**Date issued: 24 February 2023**

### Purpose

To share the new import biosecurity requirements for dogs and cats exported to Australia from Great Britain.

The new biosecurity requirements will come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

### Background

Due to increases in international movements of dogs and cats to Australia and an increase in suspected fraudulent certification, the Australian Competent Authority completed a review of their rabies import regulations in 2023.

The Final Report recommends changes to the requirements for the import of cats and dogs from approved countries to effectively manage the biosecurity risks associated with the rabies virus. The changes include strengthening animal identification, residency and post-entry quarantine measures, and recognising the validity of a rabies neutralising titre test (RNATT) laboratory report for no longer than 12 months.

Import conditions based on the final policy review require:

1. All dogs and cats must be implanted with an International Organization for Standardisation (ISO) compatible microchip prior to commencing pre-export preparation.
2. Dog and cats must not have resided in unapproved countries during the 180 days prior to export to Australia.

3. For dogs and cats imported from Group 3 countries, such as United Kingdom, the additional requirements also apply:
  - I. Rabies vaccination must continue to be current at the time of export to Australia.
  - II. An adequate rabies neutralising titre test (RNATT) laboratory report will be valid for 12 months only.
  - III. Minimum 10 days post-entry quarantine in an Australian government facility for dogs and cats that have had an identity verification, including scanning of the microchip, performed directly by the competent authority as part of the import permit application process. The verification must occur before a blood sample is collected for RNAT testing, and at least 180 days before export to Australia. See note below.

OR
  - IV. Minimum 10 days post-entry quarantine in an Australian government facility for dogs and cats returning to Australia that have an identity verification before leaving Australia, through provision of formal evidence such as an Australian export permit as part of the import permit application process.

OR
  - V. Minimum 30 days post-entry quarantine in an Australian government facility for dogs and cats that have not had an identity verification before a blood sample was collected for RNAT testing, and at least 180 days before export to Australia. These dogs and cats must still have a valid RNATT on a blood sample received by the testing laboratory at least 180 days before export to Australia.

The Australian Competent Authority requires the identity verification for option III to be performed by a UK government official, not an Official Veterinarian (OV).

Currently APHA does not provide the service described in point III, therefore point V will apply to all exports from Great Britain (except for the animals compliant with point IV). Discussions between the Great Britain competent authority and the Australian competent authority about the possibility of OVs performing the identification checks are ongoing.

Pets that had their import permits issued by the Australian Competent Authorities before the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2023 do not need to comply with the changed import conditions and they will be eligible for 10 days (minimum) post-entry.

If an exporter has received a 'Notice of Intention to Vary Import Permit' from the Australian Authorities, they should contact the Australian Competent Authorities to check if their animal/s is/are still eligible to travel to Australia and under which conditions.

### **Further Information**

- [06-2023: Review of rabies virus risk in imported dogs, cats and canine semen from approved countries – final report released - DAFF \(agriculture.gov.au\)](#)
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