

EXPORT OF DOGS (INCLUDING ASSISTANCE DOGS) FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM TO AUSTRALIA

NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF THE OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN AND EXPORTER

1. **IMPORTANT**

These notes provide guidance to Official Veterinarians (OV) and exporters. The NFG should have been issued to you together with export certificate 2580EHC (and a supplementary certificate 2580SUP, if necessary and indicated in the import permit, for dogs which have been resident in an Australian Department of Agriculture 'non-approved' country). The NFG should not be read as a standalone document but in conjunction with certificate 2580EHC (and 2580SUP, where necessary). We strongly suggest that exporters obtain full details of the importing country's requirements from the veterinary authorities in the country concerned, or their representatives in the UK, in advance of each consignment.

The certifying OV MUST ensure that the correct procedures are followed during the preparation of the dog for export and that the certificate and associated documents are completed fully, completely and diligently. It must be remembered that a further check and counter-signature by another OV at the airport of embarkation is no longer required so any errors/mistakes will not be picked up until arrival in Australia and these many lead to delays in the dog's release from quarantine. Such problems must be avoided at all costs.

2. **IMPORT PERMIT / RNATT**

To obtain an import permit for dogs travelling to Australia, the application requires the completion, stamping and signature of the Rabies Vaccination and Rabies Neutralising Antibody Titre Test (RNATT) declaration by an Official Government Veterinarian, which should be construed as an Official Veterinarian appointed by APHA. The RCVS and Defra have agreed that this specific form is one of the exceptional circumstances where an OV can sign a non-Defra document.

The RNATT form requires the Official (Government) Veterinarian to state which government department or agency the OVs are employed by. Until further notice, OVs should enter their practice name and address here but write in **"appointed as Official Veterinarian by Animal and Plant Health Agency"** after the practice details (OVs cannot state that they are employed by APHA).

Once the RNATT declaration is in place, and at least **42** days prior to export, application must be made for an import permit, which is valid for 12 months from the date of issue. Application information and forms can be found at: <http://www.daff.gov.au/biosecurity/cat-dogs/step-by-step-guides/category-3-step-by-step-guide-for-dogs>

<http://www.daff.gov.au/biosecurity/cat-dogs/how-to-complete-the-import-application>

Supporting documentation is required for assessing import permit applications. Originals of the documentation are not required. The import permit application and all supporting documentation can be submitted in any of the following ways:-

- **Via eLodgement** at:
<http://apps.daff.gov.au/PermitApplication/Pages/ImporterExporterDetails.aspx>
You will need to scan and attach all supporting documentation.
- **Email** a signed and scanned copy of your application to
animalimports@daff.gov.au
- **Fax** to +61 2 6272 3110
- **Post** to Animal Import Operations Branch, DAFF, GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia

DAFF aims to grant all import permit applications within 10 working days, provided that all required information is received at the time of submission.

DOGS RESIDENT IN A 'NON-APPROVED' COUNTRY BEFORE MOVING TO THE UNITED KINGDOM

A supplementary certificate (2580SUP) must be issued for such dogs, but only if indicated in the import permit that this is required. For example, if a dog was imported into the UK from Turkey, and three years after it is to be exported to Australia, this certificate is not relevant. This certificate is to be issued only when an importer/exporter presents an approved import permit for an animal that originated in a non-approved country. When this is the case, 2580SUP meets the following requirements in the import permit:

- A rabies vaccine was administered in the non-approved country;
- At least 180 days have passed since the RNATT sample was taken in a non-approved country [this sample must be sent to the UK and tested at a UK approved/recognised laboratory - see paragraph 8 below];
- An additional RNATT sample was taken in the UK and tested at a UK approved/recognised laboratory - see paragraph 8 below; and
- A second rabies vaccine was administered in the UK, subsequent to the second RNATT sample being taken.

3. SCOPE OF THE EXPORT HEALTH CERTIFICATE

The completed export health certificate may be used for the export of dogs, including eligible assistance dogs, from the United Kingdom to Australia. A separate EHC should be completed for each animal.

In the case of assistance dogs, there are some important transport, arrival and post-arrival steps that differ from the standard (pet) dog import process. These are detailed at <http://www.daff.gov.au/biosecurity/cat-dogs/assistance-dogs> .

4. CERTIFICATION BY AN OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN (OV)

This certificate may be signed by an Official Veterinarian appointed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Scottish Government, Welsh Government, or an Authorised Veterinary Inspector (AVI) appointed by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland (DARDNI), who is an Official Veterinarian (OV) on the appropriate panel for export purposes. OVs/AVIs should sign and stamp the health certificate with the OV/AVI stamp in any colour OTHER THAN BLACK.

Any corrections made to the certificate must be struck through, remain legible and be signed and stamped by the Official Veterinarian (correction fluid must not be used).

A certified copy of the completed certificate must be sent to the APHA Centre for International Trade (CIT) in Carlisle, within seven days of signature.

The OV/AVI should keep a copy for his/her own records.

5. IDENTIFICATION

The details of the dog's description and identification are to be inserted in Part I of the Export Health Certificate (2580EHC). The dog must be identified by a microchip that can be read by an Avid®, Trovan®, Destron®, or other ISO compatible reader. The microchip must be implanted before any testing takes place, and the number must be stated on every document as well the export health certificate. It must be checked by the attending veterinarian before every procedure (eg sampling, treatment, examination) is undertaken. DAFF has made it clear that it will not entertain any amendments to documents (eg the RNATT) if the microchip is incorrectly recorded in the first instance.

6. OWNER'S DECLARATION

There is no standard form provided by Defra for this document. It is the owner/exporter's responsibility to produce such a document.

Paragraph IV 4.(v): Although Australia allows dogs prepared or part prepared in another approved country - see <http://www.daff.gov.au/biosecurity/cat-dogs/glossary-for-cat-and-dog-import-permit-applications#approved-country> for a list of countries considered 'approved' by Australia - to move to the UK for final certification prior to export, extreme care must be exercised before dogs are certified under this option. All procedures (microchip implantation, vaccination, sampling etc) must have been carried out in the

approved country and samples tested at an official laboratory in the approved country. These facts must then be officially certified by an official veterinarian (government or government approved veterinarian) in the approved country. It may be difficult to ascertain this information, even by APHA/Defra, but if the certifying OV has any concerns, the Centre for International Trade in Carlisle must be consulted in the first instance for advice.

7. **RABIES VACCINATION AND NEUTRALISING ANTIBODY TITRE TEST (RNATT)**

Paragraphs IV. 5 and 6. Refer (but see 'IMPORTANT' note below).

Vaccination

Every dog must be vaccinated against rabies with a government approved inactivated rabies virus vaccine when at least 90 days old. The details of the test should be inserted in the table at IV(5).

In this context, "government approved vaccine" means a vaccine with a current marketing authorisation for use in dogs. If the vaccination has been carried out in another country, and the animal was legally imported into the UK under PETS, then the vaccine can be considered to be government approved - see guidance at paragraph 7 above.

If the animal has never been previously rabies vaccinated it is recommended that at least four (4) weeks elapse between the rabies vaccination and blood sampling. This will enable the animal to produce sufficient antibodies to record a positive test result.

RNATT

The date of blood sampling must be between **180 days and 24** months prior to export. The details of the test should be inserted in the table at IV(5).

The exporter must arrange for an Official Veterinarian to **scan the animal's microchip** and collect a blood sample for the RNATT. Ensure the animal's microchip number, as scanned, is written on the blood tube and on the laboratory submission form. The blood test, a neutralising antibody titration test, must be carried out by either the APHA Laboratory, Weybridge (telephone 01932 357 840) or an officially authorised laboratory, e.g. Biobest in the UK.

Rabies serology may also be carried out in non-UK laboratories provided the laboratory is officially approved by the country designated by Australia as an approved country - see guidance at paragraph 7 above.

A list of approved rabies serology laboratories in the EU MSs (all of which are approved countries for exports to Australia) can be found at the following link:-

http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/approved_establishments/other_laboratories_en.htm

The microchip number and blood sampling date must be consistent between the RNATT laboratory report and RNATT declaration before an import permit can be granted.

The laboratory report must include the animal's microchip number, the blood sampling date and a result of greater than or equal to 0.5 IU/ml. If a result of less than 0.5 IU/ml is obtained the dog must be re-vaccinated and the process repeated.

Copies of the RNATT laboratory report and rabies vaccination certificate must be shown to the Official Veterinarian in order for the Rabies Vaccination and Rabies Neutralising Antibody Test (RNATT) declaration to be completed. Although this is not a Defra document, the OV is authorised to sign it in his/her capacity as Official Veterinarian and to stamp it with the OV stamp. The OV must check that the dog's identification details in the application for the permit to import cats and dogs match the vaccination and RNATT documents presented.

DAFF has decreed that the RNATT reports are not amended without prior written consent from DAFF. The certifying OV should bear this in mind when completing the sample submission form and ensure the microchip number is correctly transposed on to it. The official laboratory to which the sample has been

sent should not be asked to amend the RNATT report once it has been issued if the number is incorrectly transposed. The certifying OV or exporter must get written permission from DAFF before any changes can be made to a previously issued report, which also includes reports issued by official laboratories in other MSs to enable the animal to enter the UK under PETS; and they should copy CIT, Carlisle into their correspondence on this.

The Rabies Vaccination and Rabies Neutralising Antibody (RNATT) Declaration is included in the application form to import dogs.

IMPORTANT: DAFF's policy used to dictate that the rabies vaccination must be valid (continually) for the 180 days prior to the date of export and that the dog maintains a current vaccination status against rabies virus for at least 180 days immediately before export. However, this was amended in 2015 to just require the vaccine to be valid at the time of export.

8. **CANINE EHRlichIA TESTING AND TICK TREATMENTS**

Paragraphs IV. 5 and 7 refer. Dogs must be tested for canine Ehrlichiosis (canine tropical pancytopenia) at least 21 days after a compliant external parasite treatment and (as of 30 July 2014) within **45** days prior to export by the indirect fluorescent antibody test (IFAT). A negative test is required at a dilution of 1:40. Samples must be sent to APHA, Weybridge.

A long acting acaricide that is registered for control of ticks/fleas must be used for treatment which must be capable of killing ticks/fleas on contact. Treatments that rely on ticks biting the dog are not acceptable. DAFF have suggested Frontline (Fipronil) or Permethrin (Permethrin). Washes and rinses are generally acceptable. DAFF do not consider that medicated collars, oral products, or macrocyclic lactose products such as Ivermectin are effective. Treatment must be repeated to prevent re-infection according to the manufacturer's instructions until export to ensure protection is continuous.

IMPORTANT: Particular attention must be paid to ensure that the treatment has been correctly applied and is effective. The dog must be examined thoroughly for the presence of ticks/fleas at every opportunity from the start of the treatment up until certification for export. If ticks/fleas are found at any stage, treatment and testing must be repeated (sub-paragraph iii (b) refers). Treatment must be continuously protective (i.e. repeated in accordance with manufacturer's directions, for example, a monthly product must be re-applied with no longer than 31 days between treatment) until the time of export.

9. **LEISHMANIA TESTING**

Paragraphs IV. 5 and 8 refer.

IFAT TEST - This is the preferred test as it is accredited. The test sample for Leishmaniosis requires 2ml of blood or 1ml of serum in a plain tube (no anticoagulant), and must be sent to APHA, Weybridge. The test result will be reported as negative at a dilution of 1:50.

ELISA TEST - If required, the ELISA test is also available at APHA, Weybridge. The type of sample required is 2ml of whole blood.

10. **LEPTOSPIROSIS TESTING**

Paragraphs IV. 5 and 9 refer.

Samples for testing must be sent to APHA, Weybridge. A negative result means less than 50% agglutination at a serum dilution of 1:100.

'Fully vaccinated' means if previous vaccination has lapsed, a primary course needs to be re-started, and the second dose must have been given at least 14 days before the date of export. The vaccination must be 'in date' at the time of export.

11. **BRUCELLA TESTING / BREEDING RESTRICTIONS - not applicable for de-sexed dogs.**

Paragraphs IV. 4. 5 and 10 refer.

Evidence that the dog has been de-sexed: It may be difficult to ascertain whether a bitch has been de-sexed if it was spayed by another (not the

owner's regular) vet or it was bought already spayed. In these circumstances, the vet who carried out the spaying may be tracked down, and depending on how good the records are (linked to microchip etc), could provide a statement. Or the dog can be scanned by ultrasound or x-rayed. DAFF does not specify what constitutes acceptable evidence, but relies on the the judgement/opinion of the certifying OV. If in doubt, the dog should be subjected to a test for *Brucella canis*.

The RSAT (Rapid Slide Agglutination Test) is preferable and this is the test that must be requested. 2ml clotted blood or 1 ml serum is required. Samples must be sent to APHA, Weybridge. A negative test result means less than 50% agglutination at a serum dilution of 1:100.

From at least 14 days prior to the collection of sample and until export to Australia, the dog cannot be mated or inseminated.

12. **CANINE BABESIOSIS - only applicable if the dog had travelled to mainland Africa.**

Paragraphs IV. 4. 5 and 11 refer.

A dog which has spent part of its life in Africa must be treated for *Babesia canis* using imidocarb dipropionate prior to the date of export. There is no imidocarb based product licensed in the UK for the treatment of dogs. OVs may use another imidocarb product licensed for use in other species under the 'cascade principle'.

13. **OTHER DOCUMENTATION TO INCLUDE**

In addition to the valid import permit and completed Veterinary Export Health Certificate (2580 EHC), **Laboratory Reports for the following tests must must accompany the dog to Australia :**

- ***Brucella canis* (if not de-sexed)**
- ***Ehrlichia canis***
- ***Leishmania infantum***
- ***Leptospira canicola* (if not vaccinated)**
- **Rabies Neutralising Antibody Titre (RNAT) test and declaration.**

DAFF requires the original Laboratory Reports or copies, to be signed and stamped by the OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN, and be attached to the export health certificate.

14. **BOOKING QUARANTINE ACCOMMODATION**

On receipt of the DAFF import permit, the exporter will need to contact the relevant Animal Quarantine Station to make a booking for the dog.

The granting of an DAFF import permit does not guarantee a space at the preferred Animal Quarantine Station. Due to high demand, some stations may require bookings to be made in advance.

The exporter must confirm the booking by providing an air waybill number to the Animal Quarantine Station closer to the date of departure.

15. **CONFIRMING QUARANTINE ACCOMMODATION BOOKING**

Once travel arrangements have been made and prior to export of the dog, the exporter must contact the Animal Quarantine Station to confirm the animal's booking. He/she will need to provide:

- A valid DAFF Import Permit number
- Flight number and date of arrival in Australia
- Air waybill number
- Contact telephone number
- Details of any special needs your dog may have

16. **TRANSPORTATION**

DAFF does not place any restrictions on the airline chosen. However, the dog must travel as "Manifested Cargo" (not in the cabin) unless permission is given otherwise (mainly for assistance dogs where the dog and handler must travel to Australia on the same flight and the assistance dog may travel with

its handler in the cabin). If your dog is travelling as manifested cargo, he/she must be contained in an International Air Transport Association (IATA) approved crate for cats and dogs.

IATA guidelines can be viewed at:
www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/live_animals/pets.htm

Strict compliance with crate specifications is vital for the safe and secure transport of the animal. Problems will occur if the animal can escape from its crate or if any part of its body (nose, limbs, or tail) can protrude.

For the wellbeing of the dog, DAFF strongly advises booking direct flights to prevent mishaps occurring, e.g. animals missing connecting flights and remaining in airports for extended periods of time.

17. **WELFARE**

Welfare conditions during transport are laid down by Council Regulation (EC) 1/2005, implemented in England by The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006, and parallel legislation in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Exporters must comply with the UK welfare laws relating to the export of animals. If transported by air, animals should be transported in accordance with International Air Transport Association (IATA) standards.

Further information on OIE and IATA transport recommendations may be obtained from the following offices;

England, Scotland & Wales

Welfare in Transport Team at the APHA Centre for International Trade - Carlisle, via the link below:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/access-and-opening#centre-for-international-trade-carlisle>

Northern Ireland

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland, Dundonald House, Upper Newtownards Road, Ballymiscaw, Belfast, BT4 3SB.

DARD Helpline number 0300 200 7852.

DARD Helpline email dardhelpline@dardni.gov.uk

DARD Textphone 028 9052 4420

18. **POST ARRIVAL QUARANTINE**

On arrival in Australia the dog will be transported direct to the approved quarantine station.

Each dog imported under these conditions will be required to serve a period of **at least 10 days** quarantine in an approved animal quarantine station after arrival.

19. **DISCLAIMER**

This certificate is provided on the basis of information available at the time and may not necessarily comply fully with the requirements of the importing country. It is the exporter's responsibility to check the certificate against any relevant import permit or any advice provided by the competent authority in the importing country. If these do not match, the exporter should contact the Centre for International Trade - Carlisle, via the link below:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/access-and-opening#centre-for-international-trade-carlisle>