The draft *Import Health Standard for Cats and Dogs*, based on the 2009 MAF *Import Risk Analysis; cats, dogs and canine semen* has been written to replace all of the existing import health standards for cats and dogs (list below).

The accompanying draft *Guidance Document for Cats and Dogs* lists all approved countries and territories, divided into the following groups: Australia, countries recognised as free of rabies (including the Pacific Island countries and territories), and specified countries where rabies is absent or well-controlled. The specific requirements for each of these groups are listed in model veterinary certification in the guidance document, along with other important and practical information for importers.

The proposed risk management measures are based on the MAF *Import Risk Analysis; cats, dogs and canine semen*, issued in November 2009, as well as practical and operational considerations, and are summarised in the *Risk Management Proposal: Cats and Dogs*.

**Brief summary of proposed changes (see model veterinary certificates in the guidance document for complete requirements):**

- **Rabies:** The proposed measures for rabies follow the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) recommendations for rabies vaccination and titre testing within specified times before arrival. **Post-arrival quarantine based on rabies will not be required.** The OIE requirements include microchips, rabies vaccination at least 6 months before import, and a passing rabies titre on a sample collected between 3 and 24 months prior to import.

- **External parasites:** Measures for external parasites will be increased to include two pre-export treatments administered by a veterinarian along with an inspection and verification of freedom from ectoparasites. **Post-arrival quarantine of a minimum of 10 days will be required for cats and dogs from all countries except Australia.** This will facilitate ectoparasite inspection and detection as well as a thorough documentation check and verification of clinical health.

- **Biosecurity clearance:** Biosecurity clearance of animals in quarantine will continue to be given by an official veterinarian once the animal has fulfilled all of the requirements. **Veterinary inspection will also be required for animals arriving from Australia.** Compliant cats and dogs from Australia can be given biosecurity clearance at the border if advance notification of arrival is given and the animal arrives during the times specified for veterinary inspection. Cats and dogs arriving outside of the specified times, or without
advance notification of arrival, will be directed to a quarantine (transitional) facility and will be checked by a veterinarian within 72 hours.

- *Babesia gibsoni*: The blood smear will no longer be required, due to the low sensitivity of this test. PCR will be accepted as an alternative or adjunct to the IFAT, with two negative PCR tests on samples collected approximately 30 days apart required.

- Heartworm (*Dirofilaria immitis*): the microfilaria test is no longer required, due to the low sensitivity of this test. A negative heartworm antigen test and heartworm prevention treatment will still be required.

- Canine transmissible venereal tumour (CTVT): all entire male and female dogs must be inspected for visible signs of CTVT.

- *Ehrlichia canis*: measures will no longer be required, as the vector is not present in New Zealand.

- Internal parasites: Faecal tests are no longer required, while two treatments are still required.

- Final pre-export inspection: must be conducted within 24 hours of shipment.

- Review: the measures adapted following the review of submissions will be reviewed in two years. Based on the number and type of non-compliances, and practical considerations, border clearance procedures and quarantine requirements may be modified.

**Transition period**

The current import health standards will remain in effect until the public consultation period has ended, a review of submissions has been written, any resulting changes have been made to the draft import health standard, and the notification process has been completed. We will continue to issue permits under the current import health standards until the new import health standard is issued as final.

Once the new import health standard is issued, the current standards will be revoked (listed below).

**It is anticipated that the new requirements will take effect in mid-to-late April 2011.** Importers of cats and dogs certified by their government veterinary authority and shipped before the issue date must meet current requirements. Importers of cats and dogs certified and shipped on or after the issue date must comply with the new requirements.

Import permits issued before the issue date intended for import after that date can still be used between the date of entry and expiry date on the permit, but the new requirements will apply. Cats and dogs already in quarantine at the date of issue will be given biosecurity clearance once they have met the new requirements.
Every effort will be made to make the transition as smooth as possible, and facility operators, importers, government authorities, pet exporters, and airlines will be kept informed. We understand that individual importers need to make plans for importing their pets, and will adhere to the proposed timetable as closely as possible.

For cats and dogs from countries that do not require import permits or quarantine under the current standards, but will require these under the proposed measures in the draft import health standard, information on arranging quarantine bookings and applying for permits will be posted on the MAF website.

The final version of the draft Import Health Standard for Cats and Dogs will replace the following standards:

- Importing dogs and cats from Australia (domiic.aus) 11 September 2007
- Importing dogs and cats from Bahrain (domiic.bah) 8 December 2005
- Importing dogs and cats from Barbados (domiic.bar) 8 December 2005
- Importing dogs and cats from Fiji (domiic.fij) 8 December 2005
- Importing dogs and cats from Hawaii (domiic.haw) 11 September 2007
- Importing dogs and cats from Iceland (domiic.ice) 8 December 2005
- Importing dogs and cats from specified island countries (domiic.isl) 8 December 2005
- Importing dogs and cats from Japan (domiic.jpn) 8 December 2005
- Importing dogs and cats from Malaysia (domiic.mal) 23 May 2006
- Importing dogs and cats from New Caledonia (domiic.nca) 8 December 2005
- Importing dogs and cats from Norway (domiic.nor) 11 September 2007
- Importing dogs and cats from South Africa (domiic.saf) 23 May 2006
- Importing dogs and cats from Singapore (domiic.sin) 11 September 2007
- Importing dogs and cats from specified countries (domiic.spe) 23 May 2006
- Importing dogs and cats from Sweden (domiic.swe) 11 September 2007
- Importing dogs and cats from Taiwan (domiic.tai) 8 February 2007
- Importing dogs and cats from the United Kingdom & Republic of Ireland (domiic.uke) 16 November 2007
- Importing dogs and cats from Vanuatu (domiic.van) 8 December 2005
- Importing dogs and cats on yachts from Australia (see Appendix 2 in draft IHS) (domvacic.aus) 8 December 2005
- Importing dogs and cats on yachts from specified countries (see Appendix 2 in draft IHS) (domvacic.spe) 8 December 2005
- Importing assistance dogs from all Countries (see Appendix 1 in draft IHS) (dogbliic.all) 15 January 2007