



Import Health Standard for Horses

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Short Name: horaniic.gen

MAF Biosecurity New Zealand
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
P.O Box 2526
Wellington 6011
New Zealand

Import Health Standard for Horses

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PART A. INTRODUCTION

Background

1. This document is the *Import Health Standard for Horses* issued under section 22 of the Biosecurity Act.
2. A guidance document will be issued by MAF to accompany this import health standard. The document will provide guidance information relevant to how requirements may be met.
3. A biosecurity clearance, under section 26 of the Biosecurity Act 1993, may be issued when the horses meet all the requirements of this import health standard.

Scope

4. This standard specifies the requirements that must be met to import horses into New Zealand.
5. For the purposes of this standard, 'horses' means any domesticated animal which is a member of the species *Equus caballus* (horses and ponies) or *Equus asinus* (donkeys), or any cross of these two species (mules and asses).
6. The consignment must meet both the general requirements and documentation requirements contained in Part B of this standard and to the extent that Part C of this standard applies, the specific requirements contained in Part C of this standard.

Outcome

7. Imported horses must be subjected to risk management measures for specified risk organisms appropriate to the status of the risk organism, their likelihood of entry and/or establishment in New Zealand and consequent impacts.
8. The risk organisms requiring specific risk management are:
 - African horse sickness
 - Anthrax
 - Borna disease
 - Contagious equine metritis
 - Dourine
 - Eastern and Western equine encephalomyelitis
 - Equine encephalosis

- Equine herpesvirus type 1 (Equine rhinopneumonitis)
- Equine infectious anaemia
- Equine influenza
- Equine piroplasmiasis
- Equine salmonellosis (*Salmonella abortus equi*)
- Equine viral arteritis
- Glanders
- Hendra and Nipah viruses
- Horse pox
- Epizootic lymphangitis
- Internal and external parasites (endoparasites and ectoparasites)
- Japanese encephalitis
- New World and Old World screwworm
- Rabies
- Surra
- Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis
- Vesicular stomatitis
- Warble fly
- West Nile fever

Definitions

9. The definitions below relate to the requirements for importing horses:

Premises

Area surrounding and including the facility.

Facility

Stables and associated yard.

Disinfectant

A chemical with a virucidal and bactericidal nature that is approved for use by the Veterinary Authority in the country of export.

Vector

An insect or any living carrier that transports an infectious agent from an infected individual to a susceptible individual or its food or immediate surroundings. The organism may or may not pass through a development cycle within the vector.

PART B. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Approved countries

10. Horses may only be imported into New Zealand from countries approved by MAF. A list of approved countries is included in the guidance document for this standard.

Documentation

11. The horses must be accompanied by the following documentation:

- a. Copy of the permit to import issued by MAF; and
- b. Veterinary certificate / Negotiated export certificate (this must include associated identification documents such as equine passports); and
- c. Laboratory reports (copies are acceptable when endorsed by the Official Veterinarian).

12. The documentation must:
 - a. be original, unless otherwise stated; and
 - b. accompany the consignment and must be provided to the Official Veterinarian at the port of entry; and
 - c. be in English or have an English translation that is clear and legible; and
 - d. be endorsed by the Official Veterinarian with their original stamp, signature and date on every page (except the permit to import).
 - e. be supplied to the New Zealand Official Veterinarian at the port of entry at least one working day before arrival, if requested by the Official Veterinarian.

Laboratory

13. Diagnostic test(s) must be those prescribed for international trade and meet the standards of the World Organisation for Animal Health Terrestrial Animal Health Code (OIE Code) and Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals (Terrestrial Manual). Any alternative test must be approved by MAF.
14. Diagnostic testing must be conducted at a laboratory approved by the Veterinary Authority to conduct the required export testing.
15. Laboratory samples must be collected, processed, and stored as recommended in the OIE Code and Terrestrial Manual.

Inspection (on arrival)

16. Any documentation accompanying the horses must be inspected by the Official Veterinarian on arrival. The Official Veterinarian may also inspect the consignment, or a sample of the consignment.
17. Horses from countries considered infested with screwworm fly must be thoroughly inspected by the Official Veterinarian for wounds and possible New World or Old World screwworm infestation at the port of first arrival.

Pre-export isolation

18. The horses, when pre-export isolation is required, must be held in a pre-export isolation (PEI) premises approved and supervised by the Veterinary Authority and compliant with the New Zealand [MAF Standard for the approval of pre-export isolation premises for horses](#) in Appendix 1.

Post-arrival quarantine

19. The post-arrival quarantine (PAQ) premises and consignment must comply with post-arrival quarantine requirements in Appendix 2.

Treatment

20. The treatment requirements of the consignment include:
 - a. Vaccinations required for export must be administered not less than 35 days before export, except where Venezuelan equine encephalitis (VEE) and African horse sickness (AHS) vaccines are required, they must be administered as described in the OIE Code. Vaccines for risk organisms met all other recommendations as described in the Terrestrial Manual.

- b. All product(s) and vaccination(s) required for export must be administered according to the manufacturer's instruction and the generic product name(s), active ingredient, dose rate and date of treatment must be recorded on the veterinary certificate.
- c. Equine Influenza (EI) vaccinations must contain equivalent strains of EI virus as recommended by the OIE expert surveillance panel for EI vaccinations.
- d. Vaccinations when administered must be either:
 - i. The final dose of a primary course; or
 - ii. The recommended booster to complement the primary course.

Transport

21. The transport requirements of the consignment include:
- a. Notification of the date, expected time of arrival and the flight number or ship's name must be provided to the New Zealand Official Veterinarian at the port of entry at least 72 hours in advance of importation.
 - b. The transport containers must meet the design and species specifications published in the IATA Live Animal Regulations, unless otherwise agreed by MAF.
 - c. Containers made of timber must comply with the *Import Health Standard for Importing Wood Packaging Material from All Countries*.
 - d. The vehicle in which the horses are transported to the port of departure must be cleaned, disinfected and treated with an effective residual insecticide. The date of treatment, the chemical(s) used, and the active ingredient(s) must be recorded on the veterinary certificate.
 - e. The horses must be loaded into containers that are new or cleaned, disinfected and treated with an effective residual insecticide. The date of treatment, the chemical(s) used, and the active ingredient(s) must be recorded on the veterinary certificate.
 - f. Only sterile peat, soft board, treated wood shavings, shredded paper or other inert approved products may be loaded for use as bedding during transportation.
 - g. No other animals are to be transported on the aircraft or ship without prior approval from MAF. Approval must be noted on the permit to import.
 - h. All horses transiting a third country must receive MAF approval prior to export. Approval must be noted on the permit to import.
 - i. For horses being transported by air, the cargo space of the aircraft in which the horses are to be transported must be sprayed with an effective residual insecticidal spray.
 - j. Horses transported by sea or air to New Zealand must be exported in compliance with the animal welfare specifications published in the IATA Live Animal Regulations including:
 - i. No mare being more than 300 days pregnant.
 - ii. No horse being less than 1 month of age.

Additional

22. All equipment entering New Zealand with the horses must comply with the *Import Health Standard for the Importation into New Zealand of equipment associated with animals or water*.
23. The horses must be inspected by the Official Veterinarian within 24 hours of export and certified free of clinical signs of any contagious or infectious diseases, including ectoparasites and fit to travel.
24. All feed loaded for use during transport to the port of departure and during transit to New Zealand must be free from evidence of contamination with ticks and seeds.

PART C. SPECIFIED REQUIREMENTS FOR IDENTIFIED RISK ORGANISMS

The Veterinary Authority of the exporting country is required to issue a signed, stamped and dated veterinary certificate declaring:

25. For **African horse sickness** (AHS) the horses being exported are from:
 - a. an AHS free country or MAF approved zone or MAF approved seasonally free zone and have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code; OR
 - b. an AHS infected country/zone, an at-risk country/zone, or have transited through an infected country/zone, and have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code.
26. For the following diseases:
 - **Anthrax**
 - **Eastern and Western equine encephalomyelitis** (EEE and WEE)
 - **Equine infectious anaemia** (EIA)
 - **Equine piroplasmiasis**
 - **Equine herpesvirus 1** (EHV-1)
 - **Japanese encephalitis** (JE)

the horses have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code; except that required vaccination was administered at least 35 days prior to export; and samples for testing must be collected within pre-export isolation or within 21 days of export if PEI is not required.
27. For the following diseases:
 - **Borna disease**
 - **Epizootic lymphangitis**
 - **Horse pox**
 - a. the horses were kept since birth or for at least the past 90 days in a free country; OR
 - b. the horses were kept since birth or for at least the past 90 days on premises in which no case of has been reported during the past 12 months.
28. For **contagious equine metritis** (CEM) the stallions and mares (excluding geldings; and unweaned foals less than six months of age if accompanied by documentation regarding equivalent CEM testing of their dam)

EITHER

- a. were from a CEM-free country, approved by MAF; OR
- b. were considered free from CEM; an official control programme for CEM is established in the country of export; and the horses have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code and Terrestrial Manual; OR
- c. have been known to be infected with CEM and were subject to an effective method of treatment and testing approved by MAF.

29. For the following diseases:

- **Dourine**
- **Glanders**
- **Rabies**
- **Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis (VEE)**
 - a. the horses were from a free country and have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code for the importation of domestic equines; OR
 - b. the horses were from a country considered infected and have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code for the importation of domestic equines.

30. For **ectoparasites** the horses were treated twice: first within 48 hours prior to entering PEI; and second within 48 hours of export. The product(s) used were effective against flies, ticks, lice and mites and were applied as described in the manufacturer's instructions; AND EITHER

- a. The horses were thoroughly examined within 24 hours of export by a registered veterinarian and there was no evidence of tick infection; OR
- b. The horses were thoroughly examined within 24 hours of export by a registered veterinarian and ticks were found. MAF was notified and the horses were treated, and then re-inspected, and ticks were not found.

31. For **endoparasites** the horses were treated twice: first within 48 hours prior to entering PEI; and second within 48 hours of export. The product used is an effective broad spectrum endoparasiticide and was applied as described in the manufacturer's instructions.

32. For **equine encephalosis (EE)** the horses were:

- a. kept since birth or for at least the past 40 days in a country where no case of EE has been reported in the past 12 months; OR
- b. kept since birth or for at least the past 40 days on premises where no case of EE has been reported during that time; AND
 - i. were subjected to a MAF approved test(s) for EE within 40 days of export;
 - ii. were kept for a minimum 40 days prior to export in a vector protected PEI premises and were protected from insect vector attack at all times prior to departure.

33. For **equine influenza (EI)** the horses were:
- from an EI free country, have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code standard, and EI vaccination is not practised in the exporting country; OR
 - from a country considered infected with EI have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code (including additional security recommendations), except nasal swab PCR testing in PEI was carried out no less than 5 days after entry into PEI and was repeated not more than 5 days later.
34. For **equine Salmonellosis** (*Salmonella abortus equi*) the horses being exported were kept since birth or for at least the past 90 days on premises where no case of equine salmonellosis has been reported during that time.
35. For **equine viral arteritis (EVA)**:
- The stallions being exported have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code for the importation of uncastrated male horses;
 - The colts, fillies and mares being exported have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code for the importation of equines other than uncastrated males.
36. For **Hendra and Nipah viruses** the horses were:
- kept since birth or for at least the past 90 days in a country approved by MAF as free of Hendra and Nipah; OR
 - kept since birth or for at least the past 90 days in premises where no case of infection in animals or humans has been reported during that time and Hendra and Nipah are notifiable in the country of export; and the horses were showing no clinical signs of infection with Hendra and Nipah virus on the day of export.
37. For **New World and Old World screwworm** the horses were:
- from a country approved by MAF as free of screwworm fly; OR
 - from a country considered infested with screwworm fly and have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code for importation, quarantine and transportation of horses for New World and Old World screwworm.
38. For **surra** the horses were:
- kept since birth or for at least the past 60 days in a country where no case of surra has been reported during the past 2 years; OR
 - kept since birth or for at least the past 60 days on premises where no case of surra has been reported during that time; AND
 - Were kept for a minimum 30 days prior to export in a vector protected PEI premises and were protected from insect vector attack at all times prior to departure; AND
 - Were subjected to diagnostic test(s) as recommended by the OIE Code for surra, with negative results, samples were collected within 10 days after entry into PEI.
39. For **vesicular stomatitis (VS)** the horses were:
- resident for at least the past 21 days, in a country or zone that is free of VS and met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code; OR

- b. from a country considered infected with VS or a VS-free country that shares a border with a country considered infected, and have met the recommendations as described in the OIE Code, except the results of testing indicate the horses have negative, stable or declining titres.
40. For **warble fly** the horses were:
- a. kept since birth or for at least the past 90 days in a country/zone where no case of warble fly has been reported during the past 12 months; OR
 - b. showing no clinical sign of warble fly disease on the day of export and were treated with an ectoparasiticide approved by the Veterinary Authority as capable of killing warble fly larvae, applied as described in the manufacturer's instructions during the 48 hours prior to export.
41. For **West Nile Fever (WNF)** the horses were:
- a. kept for at least the past 30 days in a country free of WNF as described in the OIE Code where no case of WNF has been reported during the past 2 years and the horses showed no clinical sign of WNF on the day of export; OR
 - b. kept in a country considered infected with WNF, showed no clinical sign of WNF on the day of export, and were kept for at least the past 30 days on premises where WNF has not been reported during that time; AND
 - i. were vaccinated against WNF with a MAF approved inactivated vaccine as described in the manufacturer's instructions not less than 35 days prior to export and not more than 6 months prior to export.

PART D. EQUIVALENCE

42. The requirements for importation of horses are met if, in the opinion of the Director General, the measures taken for managing the risks associated with the importation of those consignments are equally effective at managing those risks as the requirements specified in (1) to (41) above. If an equivalence measure(s) is approved, MAF will issue a permit to import (under section 22 of the Biosecurity Act).

NOTE: The accompanying guidance document provides explanatory information to assist importers in meeting the requirements of this import health standard.

PART E. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: NEW ZEALAND MAF STANDARD FOR THE PRE-EXPORT ISOLATION (PEI) OF HORSES

Approval and audit

1. The premises and facility must be approved by an Official Veterinarian of the Veterinary Authority of the exporting country as meeting the requirements of this Standard.
2. The premises and facility must be audited annually by an Official Veterinarian and records of inspections and management must be retained for audit purposes for at least 2 years.
3. MAF reserves the right to audit facilities, in countries approved to export horses to New Zealand, and standard operating procedures from such facilities.

Location

4. The premises must be within 240 km of the port of embarkation and must be conveniently located for supervision by an Official Veterinarian.

Premises

5. The premises must be surrounded by two stock-proof perimeter fences at least 2 metres apart, except where the wall of a building forms part of the perimeter.
6. The premises must be lockable to ensure that there is no contact with other livestock and no entry of unauthorised personnel.
7. The premises must have:
 - a. An area for the cleaning and disinfection of vehicles separated from the stables, holding pens and the loading area.
 - b. An area for the safe unloading and loading of horses.

Facility

8. The facility must be located at least 100 metres from other horses that are not in the same consignment being quarantined for export to New Zealand.
9. The facility must be located at least 100 metres from any domestic animal, including measures to prevent access to the facility by wild animals.
10. Stables must be constructed so that they can be effectively cleaned and disinfected.
11. Stables, yards, fences, feeding and watering arrangements must be constructed so that the horses are protected from injury and other welfare needs are met.
12. The facility must have an adequate drainage system and ensure hygienic management of waste.
13. The stable must have facilities for veterinary examination and collection of samples.
14. Adequate showering facilities must be present e.g. piped hot water, change area, lockers/hangers.

15. External yards or paddocks within the facility may be used for exercise. The perimeter must be stock-proof.

Management

16. The operator of the premises must have no financial interest in the horses undergoing isolation.
17. The veterinary clinician employed by the premises must have no financial interest in the horses undergoing isolation.
18. During PEI the horses must remain isolated from all other livestock not of an equivalent isolation and tested health status; and whilst in isolation must be free from clinical signs of infectious or contagious disease.
19. The PEI premises must have a designated manager who takes responsibility for the day to day running of the premises, and who must report any problems promptly to the Official Veterinarian of the Veterinary Authority.
20. Access to the PEI premises should be limited to staff essential to the running of the quarantine premises and animal health. Other personnel (for example farriers) may be granted access provided approval is given by the Official Veterinarian. The necessity for access must be justified as required for the health and welfare of the horse. A register of visitors must be maintained.
21. All staff working at the premises, or necessary visitors, must shower in and have a thorough knowledge of the isolation requirements and the sanitation procedures.

(It is assumed that any persons, grooms or vets travelling with the horses to the port of export will have assisted in the truck loading process at the facility and therefore have showered-in before contact with the consignment).
22. During PEI, transportation, and before departure at the port of export the horses must be protected from insect vectors, where required by Part C of the *MAF Import Health Standard for Horses* and must not be naturally or artificially inseminated.

Supervision

23. The Official Veterinarian must ensure that the horses for export have met the relevant requirements of the *MAF Import Health Standard for Horses* before the horses enter PEI.
24. The Official Veterinarian must visit the premises at least weekly during the isolation period to ensure that the requirements of this standard and the *MAF Import Health Standard for Horses* are being met. During the visit, the veterinarian must inspect the horses, observe the operation, review the records and record the visit and activities undertaken.
25. The veterinary clinician employed by the premises must record in a register all visits and activities undertaken while on the PEI premises and amend the health records of any horse treated during PEI.
26. If any horse in the consignment tests positive to any pre-export test, is removed from the consignment for any reason, or isolation has been breached, MAF must be notified and give clearance for the importation to proceed.
27. The Official Veterinarian must examine the animals within 24 hours of export. The horses must be found to be free of evidence of infectious or contagious disease, ectoparasites and seeds, and be certified fit to travel.

Operation

28. The premises must be emptied and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before the commencement of each PEI.
29. The PEI period will start when the last horse has joined the consignment in the premises.
30. During the PEI, the premises must be occupied only by horses of the same export consignment.
31. All equipment used in the feeding, handling and treatment of the horses in PEI must be new or cleaned and disinfected before the commencement of the PEI.
32. All equipment used for horses in the consignment must be specific to one horse or treated with an effective virucidal disinfectant before use on another horse in the consignment.
33. Personnel attending the horses must wear outer clothing and footwear used exclusively in the premises.
34. A detailed health record, including twice daily temperature check, must be kept for each horse on the premises during the PEI period and it must be available to the supervising Official Veterinarian. Any temperature elevation during PEI must be reported to MAF.
35. Bedding used must be visually clean and free of evidence of contamination with ticks and seeds e.g. sterilised peat, soft board, shredded paper or other inert material. Straw and hay must not be used.

Duration

36. When horses are to be imported into New Zealand from countries where the diseases listed below are considered present and pre-export isolation is the agreed risk mitigation measure in the approved veterinary certificate, the duration and type of PEI is stated in brackets:
 - a. Equine influenza (minimum 21 day PEI)
 - b. Vesicular stomatitis (minimum 30 day PEI protected from insect vectors)
 - c. Equine encephalosis (minimum 40 day PEI protected from insect vectors)
 - d. Surra (minimum 21 day PEI protected from insect vectors)
 - e. Japanese encephalitis (minimum 21 day PEI protected from insect vectors)
 - f. VEE, EEE and WEE (minimum 21 day PEI protected from insect vectors)
 - g. African Horse Sickness (minimum 40 day PEI at a MAF approved and audited vector-proof premises)
 - h. Cattle tick infected country/zone (minimum 3 day PEI)

Transport

37. Vehicles for transport of horses from the premises to the port of embarkation must be cleaned and disinfected to the satisfaction of the Official Veterinarian before loading.

Vector protection and vector-proof facilities

38. Where vector protection or vector-proofing in PEI is a requirement of the IHS, MAF must evaluate the exporting country's standards, and an official MAF audit of the PEI facility and premises may be required at the exporting country's expense. Repeat audits at a negotiated time-frame may also be required. MAF may conduct an evaluation of veterinary services when adding countries to the approved country list, particularly for countries with which there is no existing trade.

APPENDIX 2: POST-ARRIVAL QUARANTINE OF HORSES

39. The PAQ premises must be currently approved by MAF and under the supervision of an Authorised Supervisor.
40. The PAQ premises must meet the standards contained in the [MAF Transitional Facility Standard 154.02.13 Standard for Low Security Farm Animal Transitional Facilities](#).
41. Written approval/advice from the Authorised Supervisor must be provided with the permit to import application.

Inspection and treatment

42. PAQ stay, testing, treatment(s) and procedure(s) must be undertaken as required by MAF.
43. Within 24 hours of arrival into New Zealand, those horses directed to PAQ must receive:
 - a. A thorough inspection by the attending veterinarian and the horses were confirmed visibly free of any external parasites and free of any contagious or infectious disease.
 - b. A single treatment for ectoparasites with product(s), having efficacy against flies, ticks, lice and mites, applied according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
 - c. A single treatment for endoparasites with an efficacious broad spectrum product(s), applied according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
44. Temperature readings must be taken from all horses in the PAQ premises twice daily and records must be available for inspection.
45. Any horse which shows a significant rise in temperature during PAQ shall be subjected to such tests and treatments as determined by the attending veterinarian.
 - a. The attending veterinarian must record differential diagnosis and inform the Authorised Supervisor within 24 hours of commencement of treatment and testing.
 - b. Further investigation, testing, treatment and/or an extension of the consignment isolation period may be required as determined in consultation with the Authorised Supervisor, MAF and the attending veterinarian if atypical clinical signs present or non-responsive cases.

Post-arrival quarantine duration

46. When horses are to be imported into New Zealand from countries where the diseases listed below are considered present the duration and type of PAQ is stated in brackets:

- a. Equine infectious anaemia (EIA) if considered by MAF as highly prevalent in the country of export (minimum 7 day PAQ)
- b. Equine Influenza (minimum 14 day PAQ)
- c. Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis (minimum 7 day PAQ)
- d. Surra (minimum 30 day PAQ protected from insect vectors)

Diagnostic tests required

47. Horses imported from countries where equine influenza is considered present must be subject to an agent identification test (with negative results) on nasopharyngeal swabs collected at least 5 days after entering PAQ.
48. Horses imported from countries where equine infectious anaemia is considered by MAF as highly prevalent must be subject to an OIE prescribed test for international trade (with negative results) during PAQ.
49. Horses imported from countries where Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis (VEE) is considered present must be subject to virus isolation (with negative results) on blood samples collected from any horse showing a significant rise in temperature during PAQ.

Contagious equine metritis quarantine requirement

50. Following 14 days standard PAQ, pregnant mares that have not had cervical and endometrial swabs taken for contagious equine metritis (CEM) before mating in the exporting country will be directed to a CEM transitional facility until cervical and endometrial swabs can be taken post-birth.
51. The CEM transitional facility must be approved and supervised by an Official Veterinarian as compliant with the [MAF Transitional Facility Standard 154.02.19 for CEM Testing of Mares](#). Written approval/advice from the Authorised Supervisor must be provided to MAF with the permit to import application.
52. Any mare that tests positive to CEM in quarantine in New Zealand may be granted clearance subject to an effective method of treatment and testing approved by MAF, or the mare and any foal born to her may be required to be re-shipped or destroyed.