



Import Health Standard
For
Cats & Dogs

CATDOG.GEN

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
P.O Box 2526
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New Zealand

Issuing Authority

This standard is issued under section 22 of the Biosecurity Act 1993 (the Act).

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(Issued under delegated authority)

Import Health Standard for Cats and Dogs

PART A: INTRODUCTION

Background

1. Under section 22 of the Biosecurity Act, this document is the Import Health Standard for Cats and Dogs.
2. A guidance document will be issued by MAF to accompany this import health standard. This document will provide guidance information relevant to how requirements may be met.
3. The cats and dogs must meet the general requirements contained in Part B of this standard and the specific requirements in Part C of this standard that are included in the veterinary certification for the country of export (see guidance document).

Scope

4. Eligibility is restricted to domestic cats (*Felis catus*) and domestic dogs (*Canis familiaris*).
 - a. Hybrids (offspring of dogs or cats crossed with another species) are not eligible for importation, with the exception of Bengal cats. Documentation of five generations of domestic ancestry must be provided for Bengal cats.
 - b. Dog breeds/types prohibited by New Zealand law, including dogs that wholly or predominantly belong to one or more of the prohibited breeds or type of dog, are not eligible for importation. Dogs previously registered in New Zealand may be imported if accompanied by evidence of New Zealand registration. See guidance document.
5. Animals must meet the minimum age specified on the veterinary certification and not be more than 42 days pregnant on the date of shipment.
6. Animals, except those from Australia, must reside in the country of export for at least the six months (or since birth) immediately preceding the date of shipment.
7. Animals imported directly from New Zealand into the country or territory of export may be given exemption for the residency requirement if they meet the following requirements:
 - a. The animal has resided continuously in the country or territory of export since being imported directly from New Zealand;
 - b. The animal was identified by a microchip prior to export from New Zealand;
 - c. A copy of the New Zealand export certificate is supplied; and
 - d. If resident in a country or territory with measures for rabies, the animal was vaccinated against rabies with an approved inactivated vaccine at least one month and not more than six months prior to leaving New Zealand when the animal was at least three months of age, and the animal was subjected to a serum rabies neutralising antibody titre test no greater than 18 months prior to leaving New Zealand, with a result of at least 0.5 IU/ml.

8. Dogs that have been diagnosed with *Babesia gibsoni* or *Brucella canis* are not eligible for import, regardless of treatment.

Outcomes

9. All imported cats and dogs must be subject to risk management measures for specified risk organisms appropriate to the status of the risk organism, its likelihood of entry and/or establishment in New Zealand and consequent impacts.
10. The risk organisms associated with cats and dogs that are subject to specific risk management requirements are:

Cats and dogs

- a. External parasites
- b. Internal parasites
- c. Rabies

Dogs only

- d. *Babesia canis*
 - e. *Babesia gibsoni*
 - f. *Brucella canis*
 - g. Canine transmissible venereal tumour
 - h. Filariasis (canine heartworm, *Dirofilaria immitis*)
 - i. Leptospirosis (*Leptospira interrogans* serovar *canicola*)
11. For each risk organism, risk management requirements are specified in Part C using the general format:
 - a. Country, zone or compartment freedom; OR
 - b. Specified measures to verify individual animal freedom.
 12. A veterinary (zoosanitary) certificate will specify the risk management measures required for approved countries and territories, taking into account:
 - a. the verifiable health status of the exporting country/zone/compartment; AND
 - b. the national systems and standards in the exporting country for regulatory oversight of domestic cats and dogs; AND
 - c. the capabilities and preferences of the exporting country's Veterinary Authority.
 13. Veterinary certificate templates will be included in the guidance document.

PART B. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Approved countries

14. Countries must be approved by MAF to export cats and dogs to New Zealand. A list of eligible countries is included in the guidance document for this standard.

Documentation

15. An approved microchip (see guidance document) must be implanted in the animal. This microchip must be scanned and the number recorded each time a rabies vaccination, test, treatment, examination or inspection is done. The microchip number must be recorded on all vaccination and treatment records, laboratory results, and certification.
16. The cat or dog must be accompanied by the following documentation and the conditions of that documentation must be met:
 - a. permit to import (electronic copy acceptable) issued by MAF, all countries except Australia;
 - b. original veterinary certificates (or original Veterinary Certificate B with a certified copy of Veterinary Certificate A) - model certificates in guidance document;
 - c. required test results (original or certified copies); and
 - d. importer dog breed declaration - see guidance document.
17. The documentation must be:
 - a. original, unless otherwise specified;
 - b. sent with the consignment, and if possible a copy of all documents should be attached securely to the shipping container;
 - c. in English or have an English translation;
 - d. clear and legible; and
 - e. identified with the animal's microchip number.
18. All required laboratory testing must be conducted at a laboratory approved to conduct export testing by the veterinary authority of the exporting country.

Inspection

19. The inspection requirements are:
 - a. pre-shipment veterinary inspection and compliance verification; and
 - b. post-arrival veterinary inspection and document verification.

Transport

20. Cats and dogs arriving by air must be transported as cargo unless they qualify as an assistance dog (see Appendix 1, Assistance Dogs).
21. The container must meet the International Air Transport Association (IATA) standards and be clean, dry, and free of pests.
22. The animals must not be carried on an aircraft or vessel with any animals other than those qualified for entry into Australia or New Zealand.
23. Straw or hay bedding is not permitted. Only inert bedding is permitted, and any material such as bedding, toys or clothing will be destroyed on arrival for ectoparasite control.
24. The animal must only transit in approved countries (see guidance document).
25. The container door of all animal crates, except those containing animals from Australia, must be sealed securely with a government-approved seal.

26. Cats and dogs arriving by sea must comply with the requirements in Appendix 2, Cats and dogs arriving on yachts.
27. Advance notification of arrival by air or sea must be sent to the port of arrival at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled time of arrival (see guidance document).

Post-arrival quarantine

28. Cats and dogs from all countries other than Australia will be directed to an approved cat and dog transitional facility for a minimum period of 10 days or until all biosecurity requirements have been fulfilled.
29. The animal will be transported directly to the approved transitional facility named on the permit by the approved operator or agent of that facility using a transport method approved by the supervisor of the facility.
30. All non-compliant animals from Australia, and those arriving outside the hours scheduled for veterinary inspection, will be sent to an approved transitional facility and remain there until all non-compliances are resolved and/or until biosecurity clearance is given.

Biosecurity clearance

31. A person authorised under the Biosecurity Act 1993 shall issue biosecurity clearance once the animal has met all of the conditions for import.

PART C. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

See Guidance Document for Model Veterinary Certification for specific requirements for country of export.

Rabies (cats and dogs)

32. The animal has been resident in a rabies-free country (as defined in the OIE *Code*) since birth or for the six months immediately prior to the date of shipment;

AND

The animal shows no clinical signs of rabies on the day of shipment.

OR

33. The animal has been vaccinated against rabies with a government approved inactivated virus vaccine or recombinant vaccine expressing the rabies virus glycoprotein;
- a. in the case of a primary vaccination, the vaccine was given not less than six months and not more than one year prior to the date of shipment, when the animal was at least three months old. A copy of the vaccine certificate is required;

OR

- b. if a booster vaccination, the vaccine was given not more than one year prior to the date of shipment. A copy of the most recent and previous vaccination certificate is required. (NOTE: rabies vaccination must be kept up-to-date from the date of sample collection for the rabies titre test to the date of shipment);

AND

The animal has been subjected to a rabies antibody test (as prescribed in the OIE *Terrestrial Manual*) on a sample collected not less than three months and not more than 24 months prior to the date of shipment, with a result of at least 0.5 IU/ml;

AND

The animal shows no clinical signs of rabies on the day of shipment.

External parasites (cats and dogs)

34. The cat or dog was treated by a veterinarian TWICE with a topical product registered for the control of ticks and fleas at the manufacturer's recommended dose and certified as free from external parasites at each treatment. The first treatment was given in the 30 days prior to the date of shipment and at least two weeks before the second treatment, and the second treatment was given in the two days prior to the date of shipment;

AND

35. The cat or dog was inspected and found to be free of external parasites post arrival.

Internal parasites (cats and dogs)

36. The animal has been treated TWICE with a product (or combination or products) registered for the control of nematodes and cestodes at the manufacturer's recommended dose. The first treatment was given in the 30 days prior to the date of shipment and at least two weeks before the second treatment, and the second treatment was given in the four days prior to the date of shipment.

***Babesia canis* (dogs that have ever resided in or travelled to SOUTH AFRICA)**

37. The dog has been inspected and found to be healthy and free of ticks prior to each of the two treatments required for external parasites;

AND EITHER

38. The dog has been given an approved treatment for *Babesia canis* in the 16 days prior to the date of shipment (see guidance document);

OR

39. The dog has been subjected to an IFA or ELISA test for *Babesia canis* in the 16 days prior to the date of shipment with a negative result;

OR

40. The dog has been subjected to PCR tests for *Babesia* spp. or *Babesia canis* with negative results on samples collected 30-37 days apart, with the second sample collected in the 16 days prior to the date of shipment.

***Babesia gibsoni* (dogs)**

41. The dog has been inspected and found to be free of ticks and healthy prior to each of the two treatments required for external parasites;

AND EITHER

42. The dog has been subjected to an IFA or ELISA test for *Babesia gibsoni* with a negative result in the 16 days prior to the date of shipment;

OR

43. The dog has been subjected to two PCR tests for *Babesia* spp. or *Babesia gibsoni* with negative results on samples collected 30-37 days apart, with the second sample collected in the 16 days prior to the date of shipment.

NOTE: Dogs diagnosed with *Babesia gibsoni* are not eligible for import, regardless of treatment.

***Brucella canis* (dogs)**

44. The dog has been subjected to a rapid slide agglutination test (RSAT) with a negative result in the 16 days prior to the date of shipment;

OR

45. The dog has been subjected to a tube agglutination test (TAT) with a negative result in the 16 days prior to the date of shipment;

OR

46. The dog has been subjected to a cytoplasmic agar gel immunodiffusion test (CPAg-AGID) with a negative result in the 16 days prior to the date of shipment;

OR

47. The dog had a positive or inconclusive RSAT or TAT result and has been subjected to a cytoplasmic agar gel immunodiffusion test (CPAg-AGID) for *Brucella canis* with a negative result in the 16 days prior to the date of shipment;

OR

48. The dog had a suspicious TAT result and the test was repeated at least 30 to 42 days after the first test with a negative result in the 16 days prior to the date of shipment;

AND

49. For entire dogs only, an owner declaration that the dog has not been mated in the 44 days prior to the date of shipment unless to a dog of equal *Brucella canis* health status. Any artificial insemination must be done with semen that meets the relevant New Zealand import health standard for semen.

NOTE: Dogs diagnosed with *Brucella canis* are not eligible for import, regardless of treatment.

Canine transmissible venereal tumour (dogs)

50. Entire male or female dogs have been subjected to examination of the external genitalia in the two days prior to the date of shipment and have no lesions suggestive of canine transmissible venereal tumour.

Heartworm (*Dirofilaria immitis*) (dogs)

51. If six months of age or older on the date of shipment, the dog has been subjected to a heartworm antigen ELISA test with a negative result in the 30 days prior to the date of shipment;

AND

52. ALL DOGS (regardless of age) have **either** been treated with a product registered for heartworm prevention (see guidance document) at the manufacturer's recommended dose in the four days prior to the date of shipment **or** are up-to-date with a sustained-release injection registered for heartworm prevention.

Leptospirosis (*Leptospira interrogans* serovar *canicola*) (dogs)

53. The dog has been treated with an approved course of treatment (see guidance document) in the 30 days prior to the date of shipment;

OR

54. The dog has been subjected to a microscopic agglutination test (MAT) for *L. canicola* with a negative result in the 30 days prior to the date of shipment;

OR

55. The dog had a positive MAT of 1:400 or less for *L. canicola* in the 30 days prior to the date of shipment and has been subjected to a second MAT for *L. canicola* at least 14 days after the first test and showed no increase above the titre of the first test.

PART D. EQUIVALENCE

56. The requirements for cats and dogs are met if, in the opinion of the Director-General, the measures taken for managing the risks associated with the importation of those goods, are equally effective at managing those risks as the requirements specified in Part C above. If an equivalence measure (s) is approved MAF will issue a Permit to Import (under Section 22 of the Biosecurity Act). This must be done prior to shipment. See guidance document for how to apply for equivalence.

PART E. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Assistance dogs

Appendix 2: Cats and dogs arriving on yachts

Appendix 3: Emergency Measures

APPENDIX 1

Assistance Dogs

This appendix must be used in conjunction with the Import Health Standard for Cats and Dogs. Assistance dogs must comply with all of the requirements listed in the veterinary certificate for the country they are exported from.

Dogs that meet the definition of an assistance dog may travel in the cabin with their assisted handler, if acceptable to the airline.

Additionally, if quarantine is required for dogs from the country of export, a **home quarantine agreement** will be arranged to allow the dog to complete the quarantine at home under the supervision of an official veterinarian, provided the dog is compliant with all of the tests and treatments required for the country of export. See guidance document for Assistance Dog Home Quarantine form.

Eligibility

Assistance dogs are defined as highly trained dogs for the purpose of assisting persons with a disability in the course of their daily lives. These dogs are trained and certified by a recognised and accredited national and/or international organisation. Only active (in use) assistance dogs that are accompanying their assisted handler are eligible under this import health standard.

For Guide Dogs: the importer must provide official documentation from a member school of the International Federation of Guide Dog Schools that states that the guide dog has been in the service of its handler at and/or under the supervision of the school for at least the six months prior to the date of importation.

For other assistance dogs: the importer must provide official documentation from a recognised and accredited assistance organisation that states that the assistance dog has been in the service of its assisted handler at and/or under the supervision of the organisation for at least the six months prior to the date of importation.

Permit to Import

All assistance dogs, except those from Australia, must have a permit to import issued prior to arrival. See guidance document.

Advance Notice of Arrival

Notification of arrival must be sent to the port of arrival and to the official veterinarian at least 72 hours prior to arrival to ensure that an official veterinarian is available to complete the post-arrival inspection and issue a home quarantine agreement or biosecurity clearance. See guidance document for contact details.

Biosecurity Clearance

Assistance dogs must pass post-arrival inspection and document verification before receiving biosecurity clearance or becoming eligible for a home quarantine agreement. If ticks or fleas are found, the dog will be sent to an approved transitional facility.

If applicable, the assisted handler must sign the declaration for home quarantine.
The period covered will be equal to the period of post-arrival quarantine specified in the veterinary certification of the country of export.

APPENDIX 2

Cats and Dogs Arriving on Yachts

This appendix must be used in conjunction with the Import Health Standard for Cats and Dogs. Cats and dogs arriving on yachts must fulfil specific biosecurity requirements, or remain offshore. Yachts arriving with cats and dogs must comply with one of the following options:

1. For importers planning to bring their pet onshore, the cat or dog must meet all of the eligibility requirements in the import health standard and comply with all of the requirements listed in the veterinary certificate for either specified countries where rabies is absent or well-controlled, or Australia. See guidance document for veterinary certificates.

NOTE: Cats and dogs that have travelled to or from approved countries other than Australia in the six months preceding arrival in New Zealand must comply with the rabies requirements, including microchip implantation, rabies vaccination (given at least six months before coming onshore), and rabies titre test (sample collected at least three months before coming onshore) before entering a quarantine facility. The remaining tests and treatments may be completed in the quarantine facility, and the animal may be given clearance once all tests and treatments are completed, with a minimum quarantine period of 10 days. Once biosecurity clearance is given the animal may travel freely throughout New Zealand on land or sea.

OR

2. For cats or dogs that do not meet the eligibility requirements, or have not completed the microchip and rabies vaccination and test requirements, the animal must remain secured onboard the yacht at anchor or pole mooring at an approved port. Movement to one other approved port may be approved if necessary, and the vessel must leave New Zealand within six months. Inspection and treatment for parasites will be required, along with scheduled compliance inspections. Failure to comply with the requirements will result in the animal being reshipped or destroyed.

Eligibility

For cats or dogs to be eligible for biosecurity clearance, the yacht must have only travelled to approved countries or territories listed in the guidance document in the six months immediately prior to arrival in New Zealand, and meet all of the other eligibility requirements listed in the import health standard.

Permit to import

To obtain biosecurity clearance, all cats and dogs on yachts, except those from Australia, must have a permit to import issued prior to arrival. See guidance document.

Advance notice of arrival

Notification must be sent to the port of arrival at least 72 hours prior to arrival for all vessels. See guidance document for contact details.

On arrival

All yachts arriving with animals on board must not berth in New Zealand, but must go directly to one of the ports approved as a place of first arrival. See guidance document.

Animals must be secured below deck on arrival at the port. The importer must immediately notify MAF of the presence of an animal on board and whether or not arrangements have been made for the animal to go to an approved quarantine (transitional) facility.

Biosecurity clearance

Cats and dogs arriving on yachts must remain secured on board at anchor or pole mooring at an approved port until they:

1. Are transferred under biosecurity control to a quarantine facility, where, after they have met all requirements in the veterinary certificate for cats and dogs from specified countries, they can be given biosecurity clearance;

OR

2. Meet all of the requirements for cats and dogs from Australia and are given biosecurity clearance;

OR

3. Leave New Zealand within six months of arrival.

NOTE: Cats and dogs arriving on commercial vessels and cruise ships are subject to biosecurity requirements, and arrangements must be made with a MAF Inspector to ensure animals are secured on board while the vessel is docked.

APPENDIX 3

Importing Working Dogs for a National Emergency

Scope

In the case of a national emergency declared by the Government of New Zealand, for example a natural disaster, working dogs from other countries may be required to provide search and rescue or other services. In such cases there may not be time or resources to issue permits to import and complete all pre-export requirements.

Eligibility

Dogs must come from an approved country included in the Import Health Standard for Cats and Dogs.

Dogs should be from countries free of rabies, or have completed the pre-export rabies requirements for specified countries where rabies is absent or well-controlled. If the need exceeds the number of dogs that meet these specifications, dogs must as a minimum have a current rabies vaccination and remain under the direct control of their handler for the entire duration of their stay in New Zealand.

Prior to export, or on arrival, the dogs should be treated with products registered for internal parasites, external parasites, and heartworm prevention.

While in New Zealand the dogs should be prevented from direct contact with all other animals, including New Zealand search and rescue dogs if possible. Waste material from the dogs should be collected and disposed of when possible, and the dogs should not be allowed to eliminate in or near any bodies of water.

Advance notification and permit to import

If possible, advance notification of the dog's arrival should be given to the port of arrival and a permit to import should be issued.

Biosecurity clearance

Working dogs allowed into New Zealand for emergency measures will not be given biosecurity clearance. They will be exported as soon as possible once their work is completed.

Return of New Zealand working dogs used for International Emergency

New Zealand working dogs used during an international emergency and held under restricted conditions whilst overseas may be returned from any country. These dogs will be subject to specified conditions prior to re-entry into New Zealand as noted in the Permit to Import.