



Australian Government
Biosecurity Australia

9 August 2007

BIOSECURITY AUSTRALIA POLICY MEMORANDUM 2007/19

**IMPORTATION OF HORSES FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM –
REVISED QUARANTINE MEASURES**

This Biosecurity Australia Policy Memorandum notifies stakeholders of revised quarantine measures for the temporary and permanent importation of horses from the United Kingdom (UK).

These measures are being introduced on an interim basis in response to the current outbreak of foot and mouth disease (FMD) in the UK.

Biosecurity Australia has been informed of an outbreak of FMD in Surrey, England. The UK Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) has notified the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) that the start date for the outbreak was 29 July 2007.

Cloven-hoofed animals (ungulates) are the natural domestic and wild hosts of FMD virus. They include cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, water buffalo, camel, bison, African buffalo, deer, antelope, reindeer, moose, llama, alpaca, vicuna, chamois, giraffe, wild boar, bush pig and warthog. Horses are not affected by the virus though, like humans, could act as mechanical carriers if contaminated by virus.

Biosecurity Australia has provided advice to the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) of the import requirements for a range of susceptible animals and animal products. Importation of these animals is suspended until further notice. Animal products are similarly suspended unless they undergo processing that inactivates FMD and are evaluated and approved on a case-by-case basis.

The initial response to the 2001 outbreak of FMD in the UK was to suspend the conditions for the importation of horses from the UK. Following a re-assessment of the risk, the suspension was lifted and interim conditions adopted.

The attached interim measures are similar to those that applied following the UK's 2001 FMD outbreak.

Consultation

Please pass this notice to other interested parties. If those parties wish to be included in future communications on this matter they should get in touch with the contact officer listed below. Alternatively, if you wish to be removed from the distribution list, please advise the contact officer.

Information on import risk analyses and policy reviews being conducted by Biosecurity Australia is available on the Biosecurity Australia website.

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Confidentiality

Stakeholders are advised that, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1988*, all submissions received in response to policy memoranda will be publicly available and may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports on the subject matter of the memoranda.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reveal the identity of a respondent unless a request for anonymity accompanies the submission. Where a request for anonymity does not accompany the submission the respondent will be taken to have consented to the disclosure of his or her identity for the purposes of Information Privacy Principle 11 of the *Privacy Act 1988*.

The contents of the submission will not be treated as confidential unless the submission is marked 'confidential' and they are capable of being classified as such in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

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ATTACHMENT

Interim measures for the temporary and permanent importation of horses from the United Kingdom (UK)

All aspects of these measures are under regular review and will be modified as circumstances require it.

1. Current import protocols will continue to apply for the import of horses. (Refer to Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) import protocols including *Quarantine Requirements for the Temporary Importation of Horses from Member States of the European Union for Racing and Other Competition* and *Quarantine Requirements for the Importation of Horses from Member States of the European Union*).
2. Pre export quarantine (PEQ) facilities must meet requirements set out at (i) – (ix) below.

Additional risk reduction measures:

Pre-export quarantine

- (i) In the 21 days prior to entering PEQ the horse for export has not resided on any property subject to the UK Department of Environment, Food and Regional Affairs (DEFRA) restrictions.
- (ii) No cloven hoofed animals are to be permitted in the PEQ premises for 28 days prior to commencement of PEQ and during the PEQ itself. Any cloven hoofed animals that have been on the PEQ premises must be free from FMD. Any potential risk material, eg manure, must be removed from the PEQ before entry of the horses.
- (iii) The PEQ facility must be an approved property that is at least 10 kms from any FMD infected premises. (NB While 10 kms is the minimum distance, it is an indicative distance only).
- (iv) The horses are to be transported to the PEQ facility in dedicated horse transport vehicles that are cleaned and disinfected to the satisfaction of the inspecting official veterinarian.
- (v) Horses are to be cleaned on arrival into PEQ and, again, within 24 hours prior to embarkation. An approved disinfectant is to be applied to the horse's coats, and hooves are to be soaked in an approved disinfectant in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Horse shoes must be removed for cleaning either during the initial cleaning process on arrival in PEQ or during the cleaning and disinfection prior to embarkation. Cleaning and disinfection is to be supervised by the inspecting official veterinarian.
- (vi) Straw is not to be used as stable bedding during PEQ.
- (vii) No vehicles are permitted inside the PEQ facility fences except for delivery and pick up of horses for shipment.
- (viii) Horses are to be transported from the PEQ facility to the port of export in dedicated horse transport vehicles that are cleaned and disinfected to the satisfaction of the inspecting official veterinarian.

- (ix) The movement of people into the PEQ must be restricted to essential staff. Work clothes and boots must be clean on arrival into the PEQ facility and must remain on-site for the duration of PEQ. Street clothes and shoes must be worn when leaving the facility during PEQ. Any persons handling the horses in PEQ must shower on entry into the PEQ.

Post-arrival quarantine (PAQ)

- (x) Horses are to be cleaned and an approved disinfectant is to be applied to the coats and hooves after arrival at the PAQ facility.
- (xi) No cloven hoofed animals are to be in the PAQ facility while horses are undergoing PAQ isolation.
- (xii) No cloven hoofed animals or other horses are to be within 100 metres of the imported animals during PAQ.
- (xiii) Grooms and other personnel who live on-site during PAQ must not wear work clothes or work shoes when leaving the station. These items must remain on-site for the duration of PAQ and be cleaned at the end of PAQ.
- (xiv) After completion of PAQ, each racehorse imported under these conditions will be held under quarantine surveillance at premises approved by AQIS until exported. Export shall be within 2 months following import. The imported horse must be denied any opportunity to mate while in quarantine or under quarantine surveillance.

Detailed conditions of quarantine surveillance are available from AQIS.

Personnel and equipment

- (xv) Only the minimum necessary equipment may accompany the horse to Australia.
- (xvi) All used saddles and leather tack is to be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected with an approved disinfectant prior to departure. This process must be supervised by the inspecting official veterinarian and all equipment sealed after cleaning. The equipment will be inspected on arrival in Australia and may be irradiated if there are concerns with the padding material in the saddles or insect infestation.
- (xvii) All non leather equipment is to be thoroughly cleaned prior to departure and disinfected with an approved disinfectant according to the manufacturer's directions, eg sprayed with virkon.
- (xviii) Persons accompanying the horses must bring clean laundered clothing only. Footwear will be inspected, cleaned and disinfected on arrival in Australia, consistent with measures for the clearance of other airline passengers.