



Australian Government
Biosecurity Australia

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BIOSECURITY AUSTRALIA ADVICE 2008/31
AMENDED INTERIM QUARANTINE CONDITIONS
FOR THE IMPORTATION OF HORSES

Following the Australian Government's response to the Commission of Inquiry into the equine influenza outbreak in Australia, Biosecurity Australia has provided advice to the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) on amended interim quarantine conditions for the importation of horses from a range of eligible countries. This follows earlier, similar advice on conditions for horses from the United States and European Union. Details are on Biosecurity Australia's website.

On 12 June 2008, the Australian Government announced that it had accepted all 38 recommendations from the Inquiry. Biosecurity Australia is responding to recommendations for which it has particular responsibility. This includes preparations for a formal horse import risk analysis (this will be the subject of a separate notice to stakeholders shortly), visits to inspect and review activities and events at pre-export quarantine (PEQ) premises located in exporting countries and also at post-arrival quarantine (PAQ) premises in Australia.

Biosecurity Australia announced on 14 July 2008 updated interim conditions for importation of horses from the United States and European Union (Biosecurity Australia Advice 2008/22). Biosecurity Australia has now provided further advice to AQIS to amend interim quarantine conditions for imported horses from other eligible countries as well as updating some clauses in conditions for all eligible countries except New Zealand.

Amendments include specifying equine influenza strains in vaccines, collection of blood samples during PEQ, additional equine influenza testing requirements and changes to the operational arrangements during PEQ and PAQ.

Interim conditions for the permanent and temporary importation of horses from Canada, the European Union, Macau, Switzerland and the United States have been amended to include the updated strain-specific equine influenza vaccine requirement as specified by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Expert Surveillance Panel. Biosecurity Australia is continuing to review equine influenza vaccines for those countries which do not have registered vaccines containing updated strains. Further advice will be provided to AQIS as these vaccines become available. In the interim, vaccines containing A/eq/Newmarket/2/93 – European lineage and A/eq/Newmarket/1/93 – American lineage or equivalent strains should be used.

Biosecurity Australia is continuing to review the time of testing for equine influenza in PEQ to ensure this is as close as practicable to the end of the PEQ period. To date, exporting countries have indicated that collection of samples within four days of export is the minimum time required to allow for testing and receipt of results.

Interim conditions for the permanent importation of horses from all countries have also been updated, as appropriate, clarifying the contagious equine metritis testing requirements for mares and that equine viral arteritis seropositive stallions can have semen collected and tested within 60 days of export.

In addition all quarantine conditions for permanent and temporary importation and returning Australian horses have been amended with removal of the requirement that personnel shower into PAQ. This clause was inserted when equine influenza was present in Australia to minimise the risk of introducing equine influenza into the quarantine stations. As Australia is now free from equine influenza and the clause has been removed.

The interim quarantine conditions for the importation of horses from the following eligible countries have been updated:

- . Canada – permanent and temporary imports
- . European Union – permanent and temporary imports (please note these only apply to the following 15 member states of the European Union: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom)
- . Hong Kong – permanent and temporary imports and return of Australian horses (return of horses after competition in the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic events were updated prior to these horses returning to Australia)
- . Macau – permanent and temporary imports and return of Australian horses
- . Singapore – permanent and temporary imports and return of Australian horses
- . Switzerland – permanent and temporary imports
- . United Arab Emirates – permanent and temporary imports and return of Australian horses
- . United States – permanent and temporary imports.

Amended interim quarantine conditions for horses from the above countries are available on Biosecurity Australia's website (www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au).

Biosecurity Australia has not updated the conditions for the importation of horses from Fiji, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island and Norway. Existing conditions for these countries have not been used for some considerable time. Any applications to import horses from these countries will be assessed on a case-by-case basis taking into account the amended interim quarantine conditions for other countries.

Information on AQIS import permits can be obtained from AQIS through its website, www.aqis.gov.au, or by facsimile (02) 6272 3110. Biosecurity Australia will continue to assist AQIS with the implementation of these amended interim conditions.

Information on import risk analyses and policy reviews being conducted by Biosecurity Australia is available at www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au. 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 (details below).

ROBYN MARTIN
General Manager
Animal Biosecurity

Contact: Jill Millan
Telephone: 02 6272 4723 Facsimile: 02 6272 3399
E-mail: jill.millan@biosecurity.gov.au