

EXPORT OF CATS FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM TO AUSTRALIA

NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF THE OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN AND EXPORTER

1. IMPORTANT

These notes provide guidance to Official Veterinarians (OV) and exporters. The NFG should have been issued to you together with export certificate 2432EHC (and a supplementary certificate 2432SUP, if necessary and indicated in the import permit, for cats which have been resident in an Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (hereby referred to as DAWR) 'non-approved' country). The NFG should not be read as a standalone document but in conjunction with certificate 2432EHC (and 2432SUP, where necessary). We strongly suggest that exporters obtain full details of the importing country's requirements from the veterinary authorities in the country concerned, or their representatives in the UK, in advance of each consignment.

The certifying OV MUST ensure that the correct procedures are followed during the preparation of the cat for export and that the certificate and associated documents are completed fully, completely and diligently.

The RCVS and Defra have agreed that the following non-Defra documents under these exceptional circumstances can be signed and stamped by an Official Government Veterinarian:

- RNATT
- RNATT lab report

The above documents must be attached to the export health certificate.

Additionally, DAWR have prepared notes giving guidance to Official Veterinarians on preparing cats to comply with their import procedures. These can be found as attached Annexes to these notes:

Annex A: Guidance for government approved veterinarians preparing dogs and cats for export to Australia

Annex B: Guidance for official government veterinarians certifying dogs and cats for export to Australia

2. IMPORT PERMIT / RNATT

Step-by-step guidance to the Australian import conditions is given on the website:

<http://www.agriculture.gov.au/cats-dogs/step-by-step-guides/category-3-step-by-step-guide-for-cats>

Part 5: The application requires the completion, stamping and signature of the Rabies Vaccination and Rabies Neutralising Antibody Titre Test (RNATT) declaration by an Official Government Veterinarian, which should be construed as an Official Veterinarian appointed by APHA. The RCVS and Defra have agreed that this specific form is one of the exceptional circumstances where an OV can sign a non-Defra document.

The RNATT form requires the Official (Government) Veterinarian to state which government department or agency the OVs are employed by. Until further notice, OVs should enter their practice name and address here but write in **"appointed as Official Veterinarian by Animal and Plant Health Agency"** after the practice details (OVs cannot state that they are employed by APHA).

The RNATT declaration can be downloaded from the website:

<http://www.agriculture.gov.au/cats-dogs/rabies-neutralising-antibody>

Part 6: Once the RNATT declaration is in place, and at least **42** days prior to export, an application must be made for an import permit, which is valid for 12 months from the date of issue. The application must be done online via the website:

<http://www.agriculture.gov.au/import/online-services/bicon>

Supporting documentation is required for assessing import permit applications. Originals of the documentation are not required. The import

permit application and all supporting documentation can be submitted by launching the BICON system via the above link and selecting the commodity 'Live domestic cats' as well as the country of origin, and then click 'Next'. At the bottom of the following page is an 'apply now' button.

DAWR aims to grant all import permit applications within 20 working days of completed applications being received and paid for in full, provided that all required information is received at the time of submission.

CATS RESIDENT IN A 'NON-APPROVED' COUNTRY BEFORE MOVING TO THE UNITED KINGDOM

A supplementary certificate (2432SUP) must be issued for such cats, but only if indicated in the import permit that this is required. For example, if a dog was imported into the UK from Turkey, and three years after it is to be exported to Australia, this certificate is not relevant. This certificate is to be issued only when an importer/exporter presents an approved import permit for an animal that originated in a non-approved country. When this is the case, 2432SUP meets the following requirements in the import permit:

- A rabies vaccine was administered in the non-approved country;
- At least 180 days have passed since the RNATT sample was taken in a non-approved country [this sample must be sent to the UK and tested at a UK approved/recognised laboratory - see paragraph 8 below];
- An additional RNATT sample was taken in the UK and tested at a UK approved/recognised laboratory - see paragraph 8 below; and
- A second rabies vaccine was administered in the UK, subsequent to the second RNATT sample being taken.

3. SCOPE OF THE EXPORT HEALTH CERTIFICATE

The completed export health certificate may be used for the export of cats from the United Kingdom to Australia. A separate EHC should be completed for each animal.

4. CERTIFICATION BY AN OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN (OV)

This certificate may be signed by an OV appointed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Scottish Government, Welsh Government or the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Northern Ireland, who is on the appropriate panel for export purposes or who holds the appropriate Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary) (OCQ(V)) authorisation.

OVs must sign and stamp the health certificate with the OV stamp in any ink colour **OTHER THAN BLACK**.

Certified Copy Requirements - England, Wales and Scotland

Guidance concerning return of certified copies of EHCs has changed and only specific certified copies are required to be returned to the APHA. Certifying OVs must return a certified copy of EHCs only for the following EHC types:

- if the exported commodity is cattle, pigs, sheep, goats or camelids;
- if the certificate was applied for manually and the application documents have been emailed to APHA and not applied for via the Exports Health Certificates Online (EHCO) system.

Certified copies should be emailed on the day of signature to the Centre for International Trade Carlisle (CITC) at the following address:
certifiedcopies@apha.gov.uk.

For certificates that have been issued to the Certifying OV via the EHCO system, the Certifying OV must complete the certifier portal with the status of the certificate and the date of signature.

A copy of all EHCs and supporting documentation certified must be retained for two years.

Certifying OVs are not required to return certified copies of other EHCs issued, however CITC may request certified copies of EHCs and supporting documentation in order to complete Quality Assurance checks or if an issue arises with the consignment after certification.

DAERA Export Health Certificates: Provision of certified copies

aPVPs certifying DECOL produced Export Health Certificates must return a legible, scanned copy of the final EHC to the relevant DAERA Processing

Office within 1 working day of signing.

Good quality photographic copies will be accepted by the department, where obtaining a scanned copy is not feasible - for example, where 'on site' certification is undertaken and scanning facilities are not available.

For record purposes, a copy of the final Export Health Certificate and associated Support documents should be retained by the aPVP for a period of 2 years from the date of certification.

The Department will carry out periodic audits of all aspects of export certification to ensure that a high standard of certification is being maintained.

5. **IDENTIFICATION**

The details of the cat's description and identification are to be inserted in Part I of the Export Health Certificate (2432EHC). The cat must be identified by a microchip that can be read by an Avid®, Trovan®, Destron®, or other ISO compatible reader. The microchip must be implanted before any testing takes place, and the number must be stated on every document as well the export health certificate. It must be checked by the attending veterinarian before every procedure (eg sampling, treatment, examination) is undertaken. DAWR has made it clear that it will not entertain any amendments to documents (eg the RNATT) if the microchip is incorrectly recorded in the first instance.

6. **OWNER'S DECLARATION**

There is no standard form provided by Defra for this document. It is the owner/exporter's responsibility to produce such a document.

Paragraph IV 4.(iv): Although Australia allows cats prepared or part prepared in another approved country - see <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/cats-dogs/frequently-asked-questions/glossary-for-cat-and-dog-import-permit-applications#approved-country> for a list of countries considered 'approved' by Australia - to move to the UK for final certification prior to export, extreme care must be exercised before cats are certified under this option. All procedures (microchip implantation, vaccination, sampling etc) must have been carried out in the approved country and samples tested at an official laboratory in the approved country. These facts must then be officially certified by an official veterinarian (government or government approved veterinarian) in the approved country. It may be difficult to ascertain this information, even by APHA/Defra, but if the certifying OV has any concerns the Centre for International Trade, Carlisle must be consulted in the first instance for advice.

7. **RABIES VACCINATION AND NEUTRALISING ANTIBODY TITRE TEST (RNATT)**

Paragraphs **IV. 5** and **6** refer (but see 'IMPORTANT' note below).

Vaccination

Every cat must be vaccinated against rabies with a government approved inactivated or recombinant rabies virus vaccine when at least 90 days old. The details of the test should be inserted in the table at IV(5).

In this context, "government approved vaccine" means a vaccine with a current marketing authorisation for use in cats. If the vaccination has been carried out in another country, and the animal was legally imported into the UK under PETS, then the vaccine can be considered to be government approved - see guidance at paragraph 7 above. Some approved countries (eg the US) authorise the use of a recombinant vaccine for cats, and this is acceptable.

If the animal has never been previously rabies vaccinated it is recommended that at least four (4) weeks elapse between the rabies vaccination and blood sampling. This will enable the animal to produce sufficient antibodies to record a positive test result.

RNATT

The date of blood sampling must be between **180 days and 24** months prior to export. The details of the test should be inserted in the table at IV(5).

The exporter must arrange for an Official Veterinarian to **scan the animal's microchip** and collect a blood sample for the RNATT. Ensure the animal's microchip number, as scanned, is written on the blood tube and on the laboratory submission form. The blood test, a neutralising antibody titration test, must be carried out by an officially authorised

laboratory. A list of approved rabies serology laboratories in the UK can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-blood-testing-laboratories-in-the-uk>

Rabies serology may also be carried out in non-UK laboratories provided the laboratory is officially approved by the country designated by Australia as an approved country - see guidance at paragraph 7 above.

A list of approved rabies serology laboratories in the EU MSs (all of which are approved countries for exports to Australia) can be found at the following link:-

http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/approved_establishments/other_laboratories_en.htm

The microchip number and blood sampling date must be consistent between the RNATT laboratory report and RNATT declaration before an import permit can be granted.

The laboratory report must include the animal's microchip number, the blood sampling date and a result of greater than or equal to 0.5 IU/ml. If a result of less than 0.5 IU/ml is obtained the cat must be re-vaccinated and the process repeated.

Copies of the RNATT laboratory report and rabies vaccination certificate must be shown to the Official Veterinarian in order for the Rabies Vaccination and Rabies Neutralising Antibody Test (RNATT) declaration to be completed. Although this is not a Defra document, the OV is authorised to sign it in his/her capacity as Official Veterinarian and to stamp it with the OV stamp. The OV must check that the cat's identification details in the application for the permit to import cats and dogs match the vaccination and RNATT documents presented.

DAWR has decreed that the RNATT reports are not amended without prior written consent from DAWR. The certifying OV should bear his in mind when completing the sample submission form and ensure the microchip number is correctly transposed on to it. The official laboratory to which the sample has been sent should not be asked to amend the RNATT report once it has been issued if the number is incorrectly transposed. The certifying OV or exporter must get written permission from DAWR before any changes can be made to a previously issued report, which also includes reports issued by official laboratories in other MSs to enable the animal to enter the UK under PETS; and they should copy CIT, Carlisle into their correspondence on this.

The Rabies Vaccination and Rabies Neutralising Antibody (RNATT) Declaration is included in the application form to import cats.

IMPORTANT: DAWR's policy used to dictate that the rabies vaccination must be valid (continually) for the 180 days prior to the date of export and that the dog maintains a current vaccination status against rabies virus for at least 180 days immediately before export. However, this was amended in 2015 to just require the vaccine to be valid at the time of export.

8. **EXTERNAL PARASITE / TICK TREATMENTS**

Paragraphs IV. 5 and 7 refer.

A long acting acaricide that is registered for control of ticks/fleas must be used for treatment which must be capable of killing ticks/fleas on contact. Treatments that rely on ticks biting the cat are not acceptable. Treatment must be repeated to prevent re-infection according to the manufacturer's instructions until export to ensure protection is continuous.

IMPORTANT: Particular attention must be paid to ensure that the treatment has been correctly applied and is effective. The cat must be examined thoroughly for the presence of ticks/fleas at every opportunity from the start of the treatment up until certification for export. If ticks/fleas are found at any stage, treatment and testing must be repeated (sub-paragraph ii (b) refers). Treatment must be continuously protective (i.e. repeated in accordance with manufacturer's directions, for example, a monthly product must be re-applied with no longer than 31 days between treatment) until the time of export.

Please also refer to **Annexes A and B** for further detail.

9. **OTHER DOCUMENTATION TO INCLUDE**

In addition to the valid import permit and completed Veterinary Export Health
2432NFG (23/01/2018) (Revised 26/10/2023) 4

Certificate (2432EHC), **Laboratory Reports for the Rabies Neutralising Antibody Titre (RNAT) test and declaration must accompany the cat to Australia.**

DAWR requires the original Laboratory Reports or copies, to be **signed** and **stamped** by the OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN, and be attached to the export health certificate.

10. **BOOKING QUARANTINE ACCOMMODATION**

On receipt of the DAWR import permit, the exporter will need to contact the relevant Animal Quarantine Station to make a booking for the cat.

The granting of an DAWR import permit does not guarantee a space at the preferred Animal Quarantine Station. Due to high demand, some stations may require bookings to be made in advance.

The exporter must confirm the booking by providing an air waybill number to the Animal Quarantine Station closer to the date of departure.

11. **CONFIRMING QUARANTINE ACCOMMODATION BOOKING**

Once travel arrangements have been made and prior to export of the cat, the exporter must contact the Animal Quarantine Station to confirm the animal's booking. He/she will need to provide:

- A valid DAWR Import Permit number
- Flight number and date of arrival in Australia
- Air waybill number
- Contact telephone number
- Details of any special needs your cat may have

12. **TRANSPORTATION**

DAWR does not place any restrictions on the airline chosen. The cat must travel as "Manifested Cargo" (not in the cabin) and he/she must be contained in an International Air Transport Association (IATA) approved crate for cats and dogs.

IATA guidelines can be viewed at:

www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/live_animals/pets.htm

Strict compliance with crate specifications is vital for the safe and secure transport of the animal. Problems will occur if the animal can escape from its crate or if any part of its body (nose, limbs, or tail) can protrude.

For the wellbeing of the cat, DAWR strongly advises booking direct flights to prevent mishaps occurring, e.g. animals missing connecting flights and remaining in airports for extended periods of time.

13. **WELFARE**

Exporters and transporters must comply with all the legislation for the welfare of live animals during transport. The welfare conditions required during transport, are set out in Council Regulation EC No 1/2005 (as retained), implemented in England by The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006, with parallel legislation in Scotland and Wales.

If transported by air, animals should also be transported in accordance with International Air Transport Association (IATA) standards.

Information about welfare during transport in Great Britain and the necessary requirements can be obtained from the Animal and Plant Health Agency: Welfare in Transport Team

Centre for International Trade

Eden Bridge House

Lowther Street, Carlisle

CA3 8DX

Phone: +44 (0) 3000 200 301

E-mail: WIT@apha.gov.uk

Or, in the case of Northern Ireland, DAERA at Dundonald House, Belfast.

14. **POST ARRIVAL QUARANTINE**

On arrival in Australia the cat will be transported direct to the approved quarantine station.

Each cat imported under these conditions will be required to serve a period of **at least 10 days** quarantine in an approved animal quarantine station after arrival.

15. **DISCLAIMER**

This certificate is provided on the basis of information available at the time, and may not necessarily comply fully with the requirements of the importing country. It is the exporter's responsibility to check the certificate against any relevant import permit or any advice provided by the competent authority in the importing country. If these do not match, the exporter should contact the APHA Centre for International Trade, Carlisle or DAERA, via the link or e-mail address below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-apha>

DAERA - Email: vs.implementation@daera-ni.gov.uk



Guidance for government approved veterinarians preparing dogs and cats for export to Australia

Australia's dog and cat import conditions are amongst the most stringent in the world, reflecting the absence of many dog and cat diseases from Australia. The Australian government **strictly** enforces import conditions.

Listed below are **ten**, simple but critical, things that government approved veterinarians can do, when preparing a dog or cat for export to Australia, that will help ensure the animal can be imported without having its quarantine period extended, or being re-exported or euthanased.

This list **must** be read in conjunction with the import permit and the relevant step-by-step guide available on the department's [website](#).

1. Scan and verify the animal's microchip **every** time it is tested, treated or examined prior to export.
2. **Accurately** record the animal's microchip number on **every** document associated with the animal including any:
 - a. treatment, vaccination and examination certificates
 - b. laboratory submission forms which accompany blood samples for testing
3. Only administer **compliant external parasite treatments** to animals being prepared for export and record the product name and active ingredient(s) on the health certificate.
 - a. A list (not exhaustive) of compliant external parasite treatments can be found on the department's [website](#).
 - b. External parasite treatments **must** be topical (not oral) and kill ticks and fleas on contact.
 - c. Bravecto® (fluralaner), NexGard® (afoxolaner), Advantage Multit® (moxidectin) and Revolution® (selamectin) are **not** compliant external parasite treatments.
4. Re-administer external parasite treatments in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements so that **coverage is continuous** until export - if the product needs to be applied monthly, it must be applied no later than the 31st day from last application.
5. Administer internal parasite treatments that are effective against both **nematodes** (roundworms) and **cestodes** (tapeworms).
6. Administer any vaccines required by the import conditions strictly in accordance with the **manufacturer's requirements**, including the primary course and any boosters. Record the vaccination date, product name and booster due date on the health certificate.
7. **Fully complete** any laboratory submission form including the animal's microchip number, date of blood sampling, date of signature and request the correct laboratory test type(s).
8. **Verify** that the animal's microchip number is correct on any laboratory report received and that all laboratory reports include the date of blood sampling, laboratory test type, test results, and interpretation of results.
9. Provide the **original** laboratory reports to the exporter.
10. Ensure that **only** animals that are fit to travel to Australia and fit to undergo 10 days post- entry quarantine are prepared for export to Australia.

Further questions?

Send an email to: imports@agriculture.gov.au or phone +61 3 8318 6700

Guidance for official government veterinarians certifying dogs and cats for export to Australia

Australia's dog and cat import conditions are amongst the most stringent in the world, reflecting the absence of many dog and cat diseases from Australia. The Australian Government **strictly** enforces import conditions.

Listed below are **ten**, simple but critical, things that official government veterinarians can do, when certifying a dog or cat for export to Australia, that will help ensure the animal can be imported without having its quarantine period extended, or being re-exported or euthanased. This list **must** be read in conjunction with the import permit and the relevant step-by-step guide available on the department's [website](#).

Things to check **prior** to signing and endorsing the official health certificate:

1. **All** required testing, treatments and examinations have been done within the required timeframes prior to export. For example, for dogs, the date of blood collection for Ehrlichia canis testing was at least **21 days** after a compliant external parasite treatment was administered.
2. Booster due dates for any required vaccine(s) are **included** on the official health certificate.
3. Any external parasite treatments are a compliant product and have been administered in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements so that **coverage is continuous** until export.
 - a. A list (not exhaustive) of compliant external parasite treatments can be found on the department's [website](#). If the product needs to be applied monthly, it must be applied no later than the 31st day from the last application.
 - b. External parasite treatments **must** be topical (not oral) and must kill ticks and fleas on contact.
 - c. Products that kill following a blood feed by the tick or flea and ingestion of the active ingredient such as Bravecto® (fluralaner), NexGard® (afoxolaner), Advantage Multi® (moxidectin) and Revolution® (selamectin) are **not** compliant external parasite treatments.
 - d. The active ingredient(s) and dose rates of the external (and internal) parasite treatments must be **included** on the official health certificate.
4. Internal parasite treatments must be effective against both nematodes **and** cestodes.
5. For dogs, the date of last mating has been entered on the official health certificate or has been struck through (i.e. ~~striketrough~~).
6. If the animal is being exported to Australia from a Group 2 (Rabies free) country, the official seal number(s) for the cage/crate are included on the official health certificate.
7. Include a legible **general or official email address** of the official government veterinarian.
8. Any required laboratory test report(s) **includes** the:
 - a. animal's microchip number – must be accurately recorded on all documents
 - b. date that the blood sample was collected
 - c. specific laboratory test type required by the import conditions
 - d. test results compliant with the import conditions

Things to check **after** signing and endorsing the official health certificate:

9. **Each** laboratory test report has been endorsed with an official government stamp.
10. The official health certificate has been **signed** and **dated**.

Further questions?

Send an email to: imports@agriculture.gov.au or phone +61 3 8318 6700