



Australian Government
Biosecurity Australia

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BIOSECURITY AUSTRALIA POLICY MEMORANDUM 2006/28
IMPORTATION OF HORSES FROM THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

This Biosecurity Australia Policy Memorandum (BAPM) provides stakeholders with proposed quarantine requirements for the permanent importation of horses from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). We would welcome stakeholder comments by 26 October 2006.

Conditions for the temporary importation of horses from the UAE for racing and other competition purposes and amended conditions for the return of Australian horses after international competition in the UAE were finalised on 13 July 2006 (BAPM 2006/20). The conditions were finalised following consideration of stakeholder comments on proposed conditions (BAPM 2005/16 of 11 November 2005).

BAPM 2005/16 also foreshadowed that a review of the suspended conditions for the permanent importation of horses from the UAE would follow after consideration of responses to the proposed conditions for temporary importation. Biosecurity Australia has, accordingly, now drawn up proposed quarantine requirements for the 'permanent', ie long term, importation of horses from the UAE and these are attached to this memorandum for your consideration and comment.

The proposed conditions are similar to the conditions for temporary importation. In acknowledging that the imported horses will become part of the Australian horse population and Australian horses will have greater exposure to them, the proposed conditions contain additional requirements to provide appropriate quarantine security. The key features of the conditions are:

- pre-export quarantine (PEQ) must be at least 21 days and post arrival quarantine for 14 days
- the horses are not permitted to leave the PEQ premises during PEQ unless specifically authorised by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) (horses for temporary importation may leave for training under specified conditions)
- samples for testing for piroplasmiasis, equine infectious anaemia and surra must be collected at least 10 days after commencement of PEQ
- horses sero-positive for piroplasmiasis are not permitted importation
- specific certification on exposure to contagious equine metritis (CEM) and testing of horses other than geldings and unweaned foals for *Taylorella equigenitalis* are required
- testing, or certification of vaccination after testing, of colts and stallions for equine viral arteritis is required

- horses will normally be released unconditionally from quarantine on satisfactory completion of post-arrival quarantine (AQIS may require a period of quarantine surveillance if this is deemed necessary).

Following representation from UAE authorities, the PEQ premises requirements have been varied to require that 'other equines are not stabled or worked within 50 metres of horses on the premises'. The requirement is primarily to reduce the risk of transmission of equine influenza. The UAE has not had equine influenza since 1996 and has stringent vaccination requirements for horses being imported to prevent its introduction. A minimum of 21 days PEQ rather than 14 days for temporary imports further reduces the likelihood of loading an infected horse for export to Australia.

The proposed veterinary certification requirements are also similar to those for 'permanent' importation of horses from other countries. There are some minor differences:

- measures to prevent exposure to surra during PEQ and transport are required (as for temporary imports) as is antibody testing for surra
- testing requirements for CEM (*T. equigenitalis*) have been modified in line with the recommendations of the current Code of Practice issued by Britain's Horserace Betting Levy Board and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines; both now recommend testing on two occasions rather than three.

The proposed conditions are at Attachment A.

Next steps

Biosecurity Australia would welcome your comments on the attached amended conditions by 26 October 2006. We will take into account stakeholder comments as we finalise the conditions.

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 Internet at <http://www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au>.

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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