

**STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS ON BAPM 2006/04 AND BIOSECURITY  
AUSTRALIA'S RESPONSE**

Comments were received from:

Dr Peter J. Irwin, Associate Professor, Small Animal Medicine, Murdoch University, Western Australia (WA)  
Dr Peter Daniels, Assistant Director, Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL)  
Dr Robin Vandegraaf, Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), South Australia (SA)  
Dr Brian Radunz, CVO, Northern Territory (NT)  
Dr Peter Buckman, CVO, WA  
Ms Wendy Newsham, Technical Adviser, Exports-animals, Biosecurity New Zealand

Biosecurity Australia liaised closely with the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) to ensure the operational elements of the conditions are workable.

Biosecurity Australia acknowledges the invaluable assistance of Dr Peter Irwin, Dr John Jardine (VETPATH Laboratory Services, WA) and of AQIS, in the development of the final conditions.

Dr Peter J. Irwin, Murdoch University

Comments: Welcomed the introduction of pre-import testing of dogs for leishmaniasis.

Dr Irwin emphasised the importance of detecting asymptomatic dogs and the lack of sensitivity of the Giemsa stained blood smear in asymptomatic dogs. He recommended a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test if a second test, in addition to serology, was considered necessary.

Biosecurity Australia's response: In light of the poor sensitivity of the Giemsa stained blood smear this requirement has been removed from the final requirements. An additional PCR test is not considered warranted. All imported dogs will need to be tested by serology using either an ELISA or IFAT. In addition, all dogs must be resident in an 'approved country' for 6 months prior to export and undergo post-arrival quarantine (with the exception of dogs from New Zealand).

Comment: Dr Irwin considered that there is a need for policy for the management of dogs diagnosed with leishmaniasis following import.

Biosecurity Australia's response: Once animals have been released from post-arrival quarantine they are no longer under AQIS supervision. Leishmaniasis in dogs is considered exotic to Australia, and cases of disease are reported to the relevant State/Territory CVO. A Division of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is developing policy to address the management of cases of leishmaniasis diagnosed in imported dogs.

Dr Peter Daniels (AAHL) / Dr Robin Vandegraaf (CVO SA) / Dr Brian Radunz (CVO NT)

Comment: Generally supported the proposed conditions.

Dr Peter Buckman, CVO WA

Comment: Dr Buckman emphasised the importance of detecting asymptomatic dogs and the lack of sensitivity of the proposed tests in asymptomatic dogs. He considered that the most

sensitive test was an ELISA using promastigote/amastigote antigen in combination with conjugates specific for anti - dog IgG (H+L) or IgG2.

Biosecurity Australia's response: Serological tests have been recommended as those listed by OIE for *Leishmania* species. The antigen used for the IFAT and ELISA tests will be determined by the approved laboratory conducting the test and the testing must be in accordance with the OIE Manual for Diagnostic Tests. Biosecurity Australia will continue to monitor Australian and overseas research and literature on leishmaniasis, and review the conditions for import testing for *Leishmania* species in dogs as appropriate. Tests which provide greater sensitivity for the detection of asymptomatic infected dogs will be considered in light of new information.

Ms Wendy Newsham, Biosecurity New Zealand

Comment: Ms Newsham stated that additional testing for leishmaniasis will increase costs to owners (blood samples would need to be sent overseas) until diagnostic tests are available in New Zealand.

Biosecurity Australia's response: The additional cost to owners is acknowledged; however, this is not a consideration in determining appropriate measures to address quarantine risk.

Comment: Ms Newsham commented on the low sensitivity of blood smears in asymptomatic dogs and queried the necessity for this test in addition to a serological test.

Biosecurity Australia's response: The requirement for testing by a Giemsa stained blood smear has been removed from the conditions.

Comment: Ms Newsham questioned whether official control measures are in place for leishmaniasis, as per the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code 2005, Chapter 1.2.1, article 1.2.1.2, point 2. The proposal to include testing for *Leishmania* species prior to importation appears to contravene the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code 2005, Chapter 1.2.1, article 1.2.1.2, point 2.

Biosecurity Australia's response: The *Leishmania* species isolated in Australia from several kangaroos has not been typed but may be a novel species. *Leishmania* species have not been diagnosed in dogs in Australia other than in a small number of imported dogs. Leishmaniasis in Australian dogs is considered exotic. Incursions should be notified to the relevant State/Territory CVO. Therefore, Biosecurity Australia maintains that risk management measures for known exotic *Leishmania* species are justified.

Comment: Ms Newsham sought clarification as to whether dogs requiring testing for leishmaniasis would be the same animals as are currently tested for *Ehrlichia canis* for export from New Zealand to Australia.

Biosecurity Australia's response: Testing is a requirement for all dogs imported from New Zealand that have not been continuously resident in New Zealand since birth, or continuously resident in New Zealand since importation from Australia. This is the same requirement as for canine ehrlichiosis.