



26 October 1998

ANIMAL QUARANTINE POLICY MEMORANDUM 1998/77

Chief Veterinary Officers, all States and the NT
Animal Programs Section, AQIS Operations
Office of the Australian CVO
Animal Diseases/Incidents Section, LPD, DPIE
Animal and Plant Health Branch, BRS
Veterinary Counsellors, Washington, Brussels & Seoul
Agricultural Counsellor, Tokyo

National Farmers' Federation
Quarantine and Animal Health Task Force, NFF
EU Delegation, Canberra

CSIRO Division of Animal Health

Australian Animal Health Council
Australian Veterinary Association
Australian Livestock Exporters' Council
National Meat Association of Australia
Chief Veterinary Officer, MAF RA, NZ
Environment Australia
Dr David Pass, Australian and New Zealand Society
Laboratory Science Inc.
Genetic Manipulation Advisory Council

Commonwealth Department of Health and Family
Services

IMPORT RISK ANALYSIS: LABORATORY RATS AND MICE DECISION ON REVISED IMPORT CONDITIONS

This Animal Quarantine Policy Memorandum (AQPM) provides finalised quarantine requirements for the importation of laboratory rats and mice. Under the new import risk analysis (IRA) procedures the Executive Director of AQIS has considered and agreed to the requirements set out in the attached conditions.

Background

On 5 September 1997, AQIS circulated for comment draft requirements for the importation of laboratory rats and mice under Animal Quarantine Policy Memorandum (AQPM 1997/57). Generally, respondents supported the draft conditions; only minor changes were suggested.

Comments from respondents have been taken into account in the development of the revised conditions contained in the attached document, "Quarantine Conditions For The Importation Of Laboratory Rats And Mice."

Summary of Feedback and AQIS' Response

1. In the draft requirements, AQIS specified certification that the source colony was free of Sendai virus infection. One comment on the draft requirements was that such certification was not justifiable since Sendai virus is known to be present in Australia. Another response was that Sendai virus is not common in Australian colonies and efforts should be made to continue its exclusion.

AQIS has decided that the presence of the virus in mice in Australia makes it inappropriate to require freedom in imported mice and rats. This is consistent with our obligations under the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement). Consequently, the finalised conditions do not require Sendai virus certification. Importers may specify testing for it and other disease agents as part of a commercial contract.

2. One respondent highlighted the need to clarify whether more than one consignment can be kept in the quarantine room at one time, and whether microisolators provide “physical separation” from “all other animals.” The conditions have been revised to make it clear that the quarantine room may contain more than one imported consignment at a time.

3. Minor amendments to content and setting out were accepted. The conditions now correctly refer to “hantaviruses”, rather than “hantavirus”. Imported animals must be free of ectoparasites, rather than just ticks. A re-worded paragraph on the need to consult Environment Australia for the importation of certain genera other than *Rattus rattus*, *R. norvegicus* and *Mus musculus* has been inserted.

The Key Elements of the Finalised Conditions

1. An import permit must be obtained from AQIS.
2. An Animal Health Certificate must accompany the consignment. It must be signed by the veterinarian responsible for the source colony and by an Official Veterinarian.
3. The Official Veterinarian must certify that the consignment is healthy and that there has been no evidence of hantaviruses, lymphocytic choriomeningitis virus, ectromelia virus and rabies in the donor colony in the previous 12 months.
4. Post arrival quarantine in an AQIS approved quarantine facility is compulsory.
5. Release from quarantine is possible if a certificate is provided from the laboratory which demonstrates negative serology to viruses referred to in the Animal Health Certificate (except for rabies).

The finalised conditions do not provide for the importation of embryos. Draft requirements for the importation of embryos of laboratory rats and mice will be circulated shortly for consideration and comment.

Next Steps

This AQPM advises the final conditions endorsed by the Executive Director of AQIS. Stakeholders may appeal against the process followed for this IRA by writing to Mr Ken Matthews, Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine at the following address :
Department of Primary Industries and Energy
GPO Box 858
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Appeals should be received by close of business on 26 November 1998. If there are no appeals, the attached conditions will be adopted on 30 November 1998. AQIS will issue a further AQPM advising adoption or, alternatively, that an appeal has been received. All inquiries should be directed to the officer whose contact details appear below.

Confidentiality

Respondents are advised that, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1982*, all submissions received in response to Animal Quarantine Policy Memoranda will be publicly available and may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports prepared 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.

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

SARAH KAHN
Assistant Director
Animal Quarantine Policy Branch

Contact Officer:	Robyn Martin
Telephone no:	(02) 6272 3973
Facsimile no:	(02) 6272 3399
E-mail:	robyn.martin@dpi.gov.au

cc Dr Simon Bain, Australian National University
Dr Bob Stevenson, VETLAB, SA
Dr Julie Ferguson Garvan Inst Medical Research
Dr Ivor Harris, The University of Queensland, QLD
Dr Jenny Kingham CULAS SPF Facility, NSW
Dr Thomas Martin Animal Breeding Unit, Uni NSW
Dr Sue Maastricht, Monash University, VIC
Dr Grant Singleton, CSIRO, ACT
Dr Darren Thomas, Animal Resource Centre, WA
Dr Peter Bundensen Acacia Ridge QLD
Mrs Tracey Helman Ludwig Inst Cancer Research VIC
Dr Ian Taylor Qld Inst Medical Research, QLD
Dr Denise Noonan IMVS SA
Ms Karen Knight University of Sydney, NSW
Mr Davis Jacobs University of Tasmania, TAS
Dr Robert Ratcliffe University of Sydney, NSW
Mr Terry Yorke Royal Perth Hospital, WA
BIOCLONE Australia NSW
Catheryn O'Brien The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute VIC
The Austin Research Institute, VIC
Ray Yates The Flinders University, SA
Dr Ferrara Childrens Medical Research Institute, NSW
Professor Ian Frazer Princess Alexandra Hospital QLD
Dr Brian Burke University of Adelaide, SA
Mr Steven Marshall QEII Medical Centre, WA
Dr Robyn Gentle University of Newcastle, NSW
Ms Megan Bathurst Griffith University, QLD
Dr Charles Gentry CULAS SPF Facility NSW
Dr David Hume University of Queensland
Dr Homes Griffith University QLD
Frank Doughty AQIL Consultancy, NSW
Ms Elaine Major QEII Medical Centre, WA