

Pre-export preparations for dogs and cats potentially returning to Australia

Dogs and cats potentially returning to Australia and travelling to countries other than those listed below must meet all import requirements for the relevant country. Please refer to the [information sheets](#) on the AQIS website (www.aqis.gov.au).

For dogs and cats travelling to the following category 4 countries:

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Cayman Islands, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Greenland, Hong Kong, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Macau, Monaco, Montenegro and Serbia, Peninsular Malaysia, Netherlands, Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Qatar, Reunion, Sabah, Sarawak, Seychelles, Slovenia Republic, South Korea, Spain, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent Grenadin, Saipan, Switzerland (including Liechtenstein), Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, US Virgin Islands, Uruguay.

AQIS import requirements for cats/dogs from category 4 countries include the following (for dog, read dog/cat):

- 4.1 The dog must have been continuously resident in the country or territory of export for at least six (6) months prior to export, and must not have been in quarantine or under quarantine restriction during the thirty (30) days immediately preceding export.....

AND

- 9.1 Rabies Vaccination regime. The dog must have been vaccinated against rabies with an approved inactivated vaccine when at least three (3) months of age according to one of the following regimes:

in the case of a primovaccination, not less than 90 days and not more than twelve (12) months prior to import into Australia;

OR

if the primovaccination was given more than twelve (12) months prior to return to Australia the dog must have been given a booster vaccination within the twelve (12) months prior to return to Australia;....

- 9.2 Rabies neutralising antibody titre testing

- a) To ensure that the rabies vaccination/s is effective the dog must undergo a rabies neutralising antibody titre test with a satisfactory result (satisfactory is at least 0.5 IU/ml.). The animal's identifying microchip number must be used to identify the test sample and must appear on the laboratory report.
- b) The rabies test must be performed not less than 60 days and not more than twelve (12) months prior to the date of export.....

9.3 Identification for vaccination/sampling: The dog must be identifiable by a microchip implanted at or before the time of sampling for the rabies neutralising antibody titre test performed to ensure the dog is eligible for importation. In the case of a dog being returned to Australia with less than six months residency in the country of export, the microchip must have been implanted prior to, or at the time of, rabies vaccination in Australia.

(see section 8 for cats, conditions are the same as section 9 for dogs)

To facilitate the re-importation of dogs/cats back to Australia AQIS advises that a dispensation will be considered for the residency requirement (4.1) if the following procedures have been done **before leaving Australia**:

- The dog/cat is microchipped with an ISO standard or other approved microchip
- The dog/cat is vaccinated against rabies by an AQIS accredited Veterinarian
- The dog/cat has blood drawn by an AQIS accredited Veterinarian for a rabies neutralising antibody titre test with a result of at least 0.5 IU/ml.

The rabies vaccination and acceptable titre test must be done within 12 months prior to the dog/cat being exported back to Australia.

If the dog/cat remains in a country for a longer time, the owner should be aware of this condition and ensure that their animals rabies vaccination and titre tests are consistent with AQIS import requirements. In this case, subsequent rabies titre tests should be conducted within 12 months of each other starting from the sample date for rabies testing performed prior to leaving Australia. The owner can then apply for dispensation to obtain the minimum quarantine period of 30 nights in Australia, using a series of rabies blood tests, all drawn within 12 months of each other.

Additional dispensation fees will also apply at the time of application for an import permit. Vaccination against rabies should also be conducted every 12 months and preferably one month prior to each rabies antibody titre test, for return to Australia.

***Please note:** Dogs/cats returning to Australia must meet all import requirements, not just those for rabies. Animals are still required to serve a minimum period of 30 nights in post arrival quarantine at a Government Quarantine Station.