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QUARANTINE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPORTATION OF PINNIPEDS

Scope

These requirements apply to the importation of members of the Order Pinnipedia held in captivity. Importation of wild-caught pinnipeds into scientific institutions may be considered on a case-by-case basis. For these purposes, Pinnipedia is regarded as an Order rather than a sub-Order of the Order Carnivora. The latter classification is sometimes used elsewhere. Biosecurity Australia plans to undertake an import risk analysis (IRA) for members of the Order Cetacea in due course.

Documentation

- 1) A copy of a valid Permit to Import issued by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) must accompany each consignment. Further information may be obtained from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website www.affa.gov.au under Quarantine and Export Services – Animals, or by Email to animalimp@aqis.gov.au. A fee will be charged for the Permit.
- 2) The animal/s must be accompanied by a copy of an Environment Australia (EA) permit and appropriate CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) documentation from the exporting country. Details are available from the Director, Sustainable Wildlife Industries Section, EA - Email wildlifetrade@ea.gov.au or the EA website: <http://www.ea.gov.au/biodiversity/trade-use>.
- 3) The animal/s must be accompanied by an *international veterinary certificate*. The certificate should be in the format of an OIE (Office International des Epizooties) Model International Veterinary Certificate for live animals and must give details of:
 - the identification of each animal including microchip number and site of implantation (rather than ear mark), species, sex and age;
 - name and address of exporter and zoo or wildlife park of origin;
 - name and address of consignee;
 - nature and identification of means of transport.

The *veterinary certificate* must be in English and be signed by an *Official Veterinarian** of the country of export who must certify that:

- a) the premises of origin is a government registered or licensed zoo, aquarium or other institution (the premises of origin) approved for the holding of marine mammals;
- b) each animal for export has been continuously resident in the premises of origin for the past 12 months or since birth;

c) no pinnipeds have been brought into the premises of origin from the wild during the past two years;

d) the premises of origin is under permanent veterinary supervision, and a suitable health monitoring programme, including microbiological and parasitological tests and necropsies, is implemented;

e) the premises of origin has remained free from evidence of:

(i) tuberculosis in pinnipeds for 5 years,

(ii) San Miguel sea lion virus for 2 years,

(iii) phocine distemper, phocine distemper and seal pox for 12 months, and

(iv) influenza A in pinnipeds for 3 months

and, as far as can be determined, the animals for export have not been closely handled by a person infected with tuberculosis;

f) the animal/s was/were held in isolation from other animals not of the same health and residency status for 120 days prior to the scheduled date of export, in a facility that met AQIS standards (Appendix 1) and was approved by the *Veterinary Administration* of the exporting country, and remained free from clinical signs of infectious or contagious disease during that period;

g) each animal has been individually identified with an ISO-compliant FDX-B microchip (transponder), and the site of implantation and the identification number of each animal is recorded on the *veterinary certificate*;

h) during the period of pre-export isolation, each animal was tested twice by serum neutralisation test for phocine distemper at an interval of at least 14 days, the second test being within 21 days of the scheduled date of export, with a negative result in the second test or not more than a two-fold increase in titre between the first and second tests;

i) at the commencement of the period of pre-export isolation and again within 21 days of the scheduled date of export, each animal was tested by serum neutralisation test for phocine herpesvirus with negative results;

j) each animal was treated for internal parasites (including nematodes and cestodes) and external parasites (including ticks and mites) with effective broad spectrum parasiticides during the 30 days prior to export and the dates of treatment, active ingredients and dose rates used for each animal are recorded in the individual health records attached to the *veterinary certificate*;

k) he/ she or another *Official Veterinarian* has inspected each animal within 72 hours prior to export and found it to be healthy, free from external parasites and fit to travel;

l) after due enquiry he /she is satisfied that each animal will be shipped in a container that meets the appropriate container requirements specified in the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Live Animals Regulations.

Note*: An *Official Veterinarian* is a veterinarian authorised by the *Veterinary Administration* of the exporting country to perform animal health and/or public health inspections of commodities and, when appropriate, perform certification in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 1.2. of the OIE International Animal Health Code.

4) Individual health records including details of vaccinations, tests and treatments during the last two years or since the birth of each animal are to be attached to the *veterinary certificate*.

Transport

The animal/s must be consigned directly to Australia. During transport to the port of export, during shipment, and during transport from the port of importation to the post-arrival quarantine facility, the animal/s must have no contact with animals not of the same consignment.

Quarantine

In this section, quarantine means the holding of animals in a place and under conditions specified by AQIS pursuant to the *Quarantine Act 1908*.

Each animal must undergo at least 30 days post-arrival quarantine (PAQ) in a quarantine approved premises (QAP) and be inspected by an AQIS Veterinarian and found free from signs of infectious disease before release from quarantine. The QAP must meet the standards shown in Appendix 2. During PAQ the animal/s are to be monitored daily for signs of illness and, if necessary, be subjected to a clinical examination. All animals dying are to be subjected to a post-mortem examination to determine the cause of death and AQIS is to be advised.

At the completion of PAQ, the animal/s will be released from quarantine, or released under quarantine surveillance if there is any suspicion any may be infected with a quarantinable disease, into premises approved by the appropriate State or Territory Government for holding the imported species, subject to meeting EA and CITES requirements.

While in PAQ or under quarantine surveillance the animal/s may be subjected to such tests and/or treatments as are specified by AQIS at the importer's expense. If any animal fails any test or shows evidence of an exotic disease, it may be detained in quarantine, exported at the importer's expense or destroyed. If there is no reason to suspect any of the animals is suffering from a quarantinable disease they will be released from quarantine unconditionally.

Other requirements

Permission to introduce and keep exotic pinnipeds will also be required from the Agency responsible for the regulation of the introduction and keeping of exotic animals in the State or Territory in which the importing institution or premises is located.

Review

These conditions may be reviewed at any time at the discretion of the Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine (Australia).

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Appendix 1

STANDARD OF PRE-EXPORT ISOLATION FACILITY FOR PINNIPEDS FOR EXPORT TO AUSTRALIA

Premises to be used for pre-export isolation of pinnipeds being exported to Australia must comply with the following operational and structural standards.

1. The PEQ facility is serviced by a water supply that is not in direct communication with any other animal facility. The water is clean and not pumped directly from a natural watercourse that is frequented by wild pinnipeds.
2. Entry into the facility must be prohibited to unauthorised persons, and visitor entries recorded.
3. The facility is under a different roof from facilities used by other pinnipeds.
4. While in use, the PAQ facility must be either serviced by personnel who do not handle other pinnipeds or Suidae, or serviced only by staff who follow strict rules of disinfection prior to leaving the pinniped pen. These include a change of exterior clothing and boots and thorough washing of hands on entry to and exit from the facility.
5. All feeding and other utensils for animals in the PEQ facility must be for their use alone, and not used for other animals.

Appendix 2

STANDARD OF POST-ARRIVAL QUARANTINE FACILITY FOR IMPORTED PINNIPEDS

Quarantine approved premises (QAP) to be used for post-arrival quarantine (PAQ) of pinnipeds imported into Australia must comply with the following operational and structural standards.

1. The QAP must be sufficiently far removed from facilities holding other pinnipeds to prevent transfer of infectious agents in expired air, i.e. a distance that would prevent droplet infection. For practical purposes this means under a different roof from facilities used by other pinnipeds.
2. Entry into the QAP must be prohibited to all unauthorised persons, and visitor entries recorded.
3. The QAP must be serviced by a water supply that is not in direct communication with any other animal facility. The water used by the quarantined pinniped must not be pumped directly to a natural watercourse without prior sterilisation. Full records must be kept of maintenance of sterilising equipment and must be available to AQIS staff on request. Alternatively the water may go directly into a municipal sewerage system.
4. While in use, the QAP must be either serviced by personnel who do not handle other pinnipeds or Suidae, or serviced only by staff who follow strict rules of disinfection prior to leaving the pinniped pen. These include a change of exterior clothing and boots and thorough washing of hands on entry to and exit from the facility.
5. Records of the health of all pinnipeds in the facility must be kept, including all treatments and tests, and must be available to AQIS staff on request. Any pinniped that dies must be autopsied as soon as possible and the autopsy report and laboratory reports made available to AQIS. The death of any pinniped must be notified to AQIS as soon as possible.
6. All feeding and other utensils for animals in the QAP must be for their use alone, and not used for other animals.
7. Pinnipeds sharing the same facility will all perform quarantine until the most recently arrived animal is eligible for release.