



Australian Government
Biosecurity Australia

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BIOSECURITY AUSTRALIA ADVICE 2008/01

IMPORTATION OF PENGUINS FROM NEW ZEALAND: DRAFT POLICY REVIEW

This Biosecurity Australia Advice (BAA) provides stakeholders with a draft policy that proposes King and Gentoo penguins from New Zealand could be imported into a specially constructed, environmentally controlled facility at the Melbourne Aquarium subject to testing for avian influenza, Newcastle disease and infectious bursal disease. We would welcome stakeholder comments on the draft policy review by 6 March 2008.

Biosecurity Australia has received an import proposal requiring the development of quarantine measures for the import of King and Gentoo penguins from Auckland, New Zealand. The penguins are to be housed in a specially constructed, environmentally controlled facility at the Melbourne Aquarium for a public display focusing on Australia's Sub-Antarctic Territories. It is proposed that seventy seven penguins will be imported over four seasons: twenty four King and fifty three Gentoo penguins.

The policy review has been developed based on the latest available scientific information and existing quarantine policies, including pet birds from New Zealand and pigeons from approved countries. The review takes into account New Zealand's favourable avian health status, the health records of the source flock and the level of containment both in New Zealand and at the Melbourne Aquarium.

The source flock has been maintained as a distinct population for nearly 12 years and the health of the penguins has been closely monitored and recorded with no adverse disease findings. The imported penguins will be managed as a distinct population in a controlled environment within the Melbourne Aquarium and at no stage will any penguins be released into the Australian environment.

As part of this policy review, Biosecurity Australia has identified and categorised hazards potentially associated with the importation of penguins. Risk assessments of disease agents have been undertaken as required.

The policy review concludes that the quarantine risks associated with importation of penguins from Auckland into Melbourne Aquarium are negligible and thus meet Australia's appropriate level of protection (ALOP). The conclusion is based on the good health status of New Zealand; the closely controlled source flock in New Zealand; test results confirming freedom from avian influenza, Newcastle disease and infectious bursal disease; and the closely controlled conditions in Australia.

The draft policy review is available electronically on the Biosecurity Australia website: www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au. A hard copy of the document can be requested from the contact officer below.

Next steps

Biosecurity Australia would welcome your comments on the draft policy review for the importation of penguins from New Zealand by 6 March 2008. Biosecurity Australia will take into account stakeholder comments as the review is finalised.

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 BAAs will be publicly available and may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports on the subject matter of the Advice.

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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