



DAERA authorised Private Veterinary Practitioner

Information Bulletin: aPVP 12/22

Issued: 05 December 2022

Audience: DAERA authorised Private Veterinary Practitioners

Subject: Export of Dogs/Cats to Australia – Supplementary Guidance - NI Application Process, Certification and Countersign Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to clarify arrangements for the certification of dogs and cats to Australia and to notify you that DAERA aPVPs will now complete the **Rabies Neutralising Antibody Titre Test (RNATT)** as per the NFG.

There is also, an additional requirement for all final export documents for dogs and cats to be reviewed and countersigned by a DAERA Certifying Officer.

Background

Export Health Certification (EHC) procedures are outlined in the Notes for Guidance (NFG) contained for certificates 2580 and 2432, which can be viewed together with the EHC on Formfinder at the following links:

[Export dogs to Australia: certificate 2580 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Export cats to Australia: certificate 2432 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Requirements are complex and feedback from the Australian authorities (DAWE) indicate that a high standard is required to meet expectations. This is in keeping with known Australian import policy and standards of biosecurity.

Action required by Exporters and certifying aPVPs

Animals and documentation should be prepared fully in accordance with the processes and guidance as detailed in the published NFGs.

In relation to the Rabies vaccination, Australian authorities require additional guarantees. This is provided by the **RNATT**, which establishes that a suitable level of immunity has been produced in response to the rabies vaccination.

The rabies blood sample must have been tested at an approved laboratory (see below).

It is a requirement of the Australian authorities that the results of this blood test are verified and certified. A RNATT Declaration is filled in by the aPVP for this purpose.

RNATT Declaration (Important Change - aPVPs now to complete this step)

The RNATT declaration can be downloaded from the DAWE Australian Government website: [Rabies Neutralising Antibody Titre Test \(RNATT\) Declaration - DAFF \(agriculture.gov.au\)](http://agriculture.gov.au)

This declaration must be completed in advance of application for the import permit. The Certifying Officer (aPVP) should be aware that Pre-export Checks, which include detailed review of the RNATT declaration, will be made by DAERA to provide assurance to the Third Country. Australian authorities have requested that counter fraud checks are completed by DAERA.

The sample must have been tested at an approved laboratory. A list of approved rabies serology laboratories in the UK can be found at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-blood-testing-laboratories-in-the-uk>

A list of approved rabies serology laboratories in the EU MSs (all of which are approved countries for exports to Australia) can be found at this link: http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/pet-movement/approved-labs_en

The CO should have full (Certified) details of the animal's vaccination history, blood sampling date and age before they complete, sign, and stamp the RNATT declaration.

The CO should ensure:

- The authenticity of the RNATT laboratory report, i.e., an approved Laboratory was used.
- The rabies vaccination was valid (i.e., the animal was more than 12 weeks old or if this was a booster vaccination that it was within the validity period for that vaccine).
- The blood sample was taken 3-4 weeks after the Rabies vaccination. (if the dog has a history of rabies vaccinations it may be possible to collect the blood sooner)
- The microchip number, test result and blood sampling date are consistent between the RNATT laboratory report and RNATT declaration.
- The results must be > or equal to 0.5 IU/ml
- **The date of blood sampling must be between 180 days and 24 months prior to export.**

The official wording of the RNATT results CANNOT be manually amended e.g. DO NOT change the microchip number if incorrect as manual corrections will not be accepted.

The aPVP should write the phrase “appointed as Official Veterinarian by DAERA” after their details.

The address to be entered on the RNATT declaration is the full aPVP Practice address.

Once the RNATT declaration is signed by the aPVP the exporter can apply for the import permit. This application must take place at least 42 days prior to export. Import Permit is valid for 12 months from date of issue.

Final certification by aPVP

As per existing process aPVP undertakes final pre-export examination of the animal(s) for export and finalises all export documentation in accordance with the NFG.

- The aPVP will complete, sign, and stamp all pages of the veterinary health certificate, i.e., EHC
- The aPVP veterinarian must also sign and stamp every page of the:
 - *Ehrlichia canis* laboratory report.
 - *Leishmania infantum* laboratory report.
 - *Brucella canis* laboratory report (if not desexed).
 - *Leptospira interrogans* serovar Canicola laboratory report (if not vaccinated).
 - RNATT declaration
 - RNATT laboratory report.

A copy of the laboratory reports may be signed rather than the original if necessary. This copy, with the original signature is what will accompany the animal i.e., only pages with an **original** signature are valid for export, a copy of a signature is **not** considered to be valid. Every page must be stamped and signed. The aPVP is required to ensure an accessible true copy is maintained after completing the paperwork bundle.

The true copy of the original Health Certificate together with supporting documentation is retained by the aPVP and can be requested by DAERA if required.

DAERA Review & Countersignature of Export Certification Documents

Based on feedback from the Australian authorities, DAERA advises exporters, that to facilitate import to Australia it is highly recommended that the final EHC, after completion of all checks and certification by the aPVP is reviewed and countersigned by a DAERA CO.

Original certification (wet signed certificate) should be taken with all the accompanying paperwork (all lab reports, import permit, and RNATT declaration) by the exporter to their local DAERA Veterinary Office (DVO) to countersign.

The exporter **MUST** contact their local DVO at least 7 days in advance to advise they need the documents countersigned and to make an appointment.



Further Information

If you have any queries regarding the information in this Bulletin, please contact DAERATradeExports@daera-ni.gov.uk

Trade Programme

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