

CHAPTER 8.13.

INFECTION WITH RABIES VIRUS

Article 8.13.1.

General provisions

For the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*:

- 1) rabies is a *disease* caused by one member of the *Lyssavirus* genus: the *Rabies virus* (formerly referred to as classical rabies virus, genotype-1); all mammals are susceptible to *infection*;
- 2) a *case* is any *animal* infected with the *Rabies virus* species;
- 3) the *incubation period* for rabies is variable, and considered to be six months; the *infective period* for dogs, cats and ferrets is considered to start ten days before the onset of the first apparent clinical signs.

Globally, the most common source of exposure of humans to rabies virus is the dog. Other mammals, particularly members of the Orders Carnivora and Chiroptera, also present a risk.

The aim of this chapter is to mitigate the risk of rabies to human and animal health and to prevent the international spread of the *disease*.

For the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, a country that does not fulfil the requirements in Article 8.13.3. is considered to be infected with *Rabies virus*.

Standards for diagnostic tests and vaccines are described in the *Terrestrial Manual*.

Article 8.13.2.

Control of rabies in dogs

In order to minimise public health risks due to rabies, and eventually eradicate rabies in dogs, *Veterinary Authorities* should implement the following:

- 1) rabies should be notifiable in the whole country and any change in the epidemiological situation or relevant events should be reported in accordance with Chapter 1.1.;
- 2) an effective system of *disease surveillance* in accordance with Chapter 1.4. should be in operation, with a minimum requirement being an ongoing early detection programme to ensure investigation and reporting of suspected cases of rabies in *animals*;
- 3) specific regulatory measures for the prevention and control of rabies should be implemented consistent with the recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code*, including *vaccination*, identification and effective procedures for the importation of dogs, cats and ferrets;
- 4) a programme for the management of *stray dog* populations consistent with Chapter 7.7. should be implemented and maintained.

Article 8.13.3.

Rabies free country

A country may be considered free from rabies when:

- 1) the *disease* is notifiable and any change in the epidemiological situation or relevant events are reported in accordance with Chapter 1.1.;
- 2) an ongoing system of *disease surveillance* in accordance with Chapter 1.4. has been in operation for the past two years, with a minimum requirement being an ongoing early detection programme to ensure investigation and reporting of rabies suspect *animals*;

- 3) regulatory measures for the prevention of rabies are implemented consistent with the recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code*, including for the importation of *animals*;
- 4) no case of indigenously acquired rabies virus *infection* has been confirmed during the past two years;
- 5) no imported case in the Orders Carnivora or Chiroptera has been confirmed outside a *quarantine station* for the past six months.

An imported human case of rabies does not affect the rabies free status.

Article 8.13.4.

Recommendations for importation from rabies free countries

For domestic mammals, and captive wild mammals

Veterinary Authorities should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the *animals*:

- 1) showed no clinical sign of rabies the day prior to or on the day of shipment;
- 2) and either:
 - a) were kept since birth or at least six months prior to shipment in a free country; or
 - b) were imported in accordance with the regulations stipulated in Articles 8.13.6., 8.13.7., 8.13.8. or 8.13.9.

Article 8.13.5.

Recommendations for importation from rabies free countries

For wild mammals

Veterinary Authorities should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the *animals*:

- 1) showed no clinical sign of rabies the day prior to or on the day of shipment;
- 2) and either:
 - a) have been captured at a distance that precludes any contact with *animals* in an infected country. The distance should be defined in accordance with the biology of the species exported, including home range and long distance movements; or
 - b) have been kept in captivity for the six months prior to shipment in a rabies free country.

Article 8.13.6.

Recommendations for importation of dogs, cats and ferrets from countries considered infected with rabies

Veterinary Authorities should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* complying with the model of Chapter 5.11. attesting that the *animals*:

- 1) showed no clinical sign of rabies the day prior to or on the day of shipment;
- 2) were permanently identified and their identification number stated in the *certificate*;

AND EITHER:

- 3) were vaccinated or revaccinated, in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturer. The vaccine should have been produced and used in accordance with the *Terrestrial Manual*; and
- 4) were subjected not less than 3 months and not more than 12 months prior to shipment to an antibody titration test as prescribed in the *Terrestrial Manual* with a positive result of at least 0.5IU/ml;

OR

- 5) were kept in a *quarantine station* for six months prior to export.

Article 8.13.7.

Recommendations for importation of domestic ruminants, equids, camelids and suids from countries considered infected with rabies

Veterinary Authorities should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the *animals*:

- 1) showed no clinical sign of rabies the day prior to or on the day of shipment;
- 2) were permanently identified and the identification number stated in the *certificate*;
- 3) EITHER
 - a) were kept for the 6 months prior to shipment in an *establishment* where there has been no *case* of rabies for at least 12 months prior to shipment;OR
 - b) were vaccinated or revaccinated in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturer. The vaccine was produced and used in accordance with the *Terrestrial Manual*.

Article 8.13.8.

Recommendations for importation from countries considered infected with rabies

For rodents and lagomorphs born and reared in a biosecure facility

Veterinary Authorities should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the *animals*:

- 1) showed no clinical sign of rabies on the day of shipment;
- 2) were kept since birth in a biosecure facility where there has been no *case* of rabies for at least 12 months prior to shipment.

Article 8.13.9.

Recommendations for importation of wildlife from countries considered infected with rabies

Veterinary Authorities should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the *animals*:

- 1) showed no clinical sign of rabies the day prior to or on the day of shipment;
 - 2) were kept for the six months prior to shipment in an *establishment* where separation from susceptible *animals* was maintained and where there has been no *case* of rabies for at least 12 months prior to shipment.
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