



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

INTERIM INSPECTOR GENERAL OF BIOSECURITY

Pre-export Procedures for Horses from Japan

INTERIM INSPECTOR GENERAL OF BIOSECURITY DESKTOP REVIEW REPORT

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Note:

For the public release of this report personal information will be removed in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1998*.

Summary

This desktop review involved an Interim Inspector General of Biosecurity (IIGB) review of reports and other records prepared by the Biosecurity Services Group (BSG) in relation to horse pre-export operations and procedures in Japan.

It also included review of the import certification documentation from an initial horse consignment after the resumption of horse imports from Japan following the Equine Influenza (EI) outbreak in Australia.

The review did not include a field audit or inspection of the actual horse pre-export operations and procedures in Japan.

The desktop review found that all pre-export conditions were met which included the following:

- Horse A¹ was quarantined for the required period in accordance with BSG's² approved Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Manual at an approved Pre Entry Quarantine (PEQ) premises.
- A valid permit to import Horse A was submitted and approved by BSG.
- A veterinary health certificate for Horse A was provided by the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) to attest that the horse met the requirements of the BSG permit for the PEQ period in Japan and the required ground and air transport procedures were undertaken at Narita Airport prior to export.
- A report by BSG noted that satisfactory procedures were undertaken to transport Horse A from the PEQ premises to Narita Airport and loading in to the air stalls in preparation for loading onto the aircraft.

Since the IIGB did not view pre-export operations firsthand or interview the PEQ or BSG personnel, it is not possible for the IIGB to directly assess if the SOP Manual was applied correctly to actual operations.

However, the report by BSG, dated 21 September 2010, gives a suitable level of assurance from an IIGB perspective, that operations were conducted in accordance with BSG's approved SOP Manual and that BSG staff oversaw operations adequately.

Based on this, the IIGB found BSG import requirements for horses to be adequate to manage the risks associated with pre-export procedures for horses moving from Japan to Australia.

¹ The full details of this horse were verified during this audit.

² Note that in July 2009, AQIS was integrated into the new Biosecurity Services Group (BSG) in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. AQIS branding is still used in association with import conditions and procedures for horses. Therefore, to save confusion the term 'AQIS' is not used in this document.

Introduction

As part of the Australian Government's response to the 2008 Report of the EI Inquiry, inspections of pre-export quarantine facilities in Ireland, Germany, the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America were undertaken by the Interim Inspector General of Horse Importation (IGHI) in 2009. This followed similar IGHl inspections of similar relevant facilities in United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Macau in 2008. The IGHl role has since been subsumed into that of the IIGB as part of the Australian Government's preliminary response to the Beale Review.

Under ongoing commitments to the Australian Government's response to the 2008 Report of the Equine Influenza Inquiry, the IIGB continues to undertake periodic audits of operations and procedures that are applied to the importation of horses to Australia. This audit was undertaken as part of the IIGB audit work program for 2010-11.

This audit was limited to a desktop review (not a full IIGB audit) of reports and other records prepared by BSG in relation to horse pre-export operations and procedures in Japan and import certification documentation from the initial consignment after the resumption of horse imports from Japan.

Objective

The desktop review examined the outcomes of reports and other records prepared by the BSG in relation to horse pre-export operations and procedures in Japan to provide feedback in relation to any issues. It also included a review of the relevant import certification from a consignment following the resumption of imports from Japan.

Scope

The desktop review was limited to a desktop review (not a full IIGB audit) of reports and other records prepared by BSG in relation to horse pre-export operations and procedures in Japan and import certification documentation from the initial consignment after the resumption of horse imports from Japan. The review did not include a field audit or inspection of the actual horse pre-export operations and procedures in Japan.

Background

Horse pre-export procedures (overseas)

The requirements that must be met to export horses from Japan to Australia are set by BSG and are described in the 'Horse (for racing) - Live - Japan' document.³

³ Available from ICON (Imports Conditions database) accessible from the department's website.

The import conditions outline the physical facilities and operational requirements (including health checks and disease testing) for premises when operating as a PEQ facility.

Any horse intended for export from Japan to Australia must undergo at least 14 days pre-export quarantine (PEQ) period in a premises approved by BSG and the official veterinarian authorised by the Veterinary Administration of the Government of Japan.

An import permit is required, which is issued by BSG, and must be valid at the time the horse is imported into Australia.

A separate health certificate for the horse must be provided by the official veterinarian of the Veterinary Administration of the Government of Japan.

The horse must be transported to Australia by a route approved by BSG.

Horse post-arrival quarantine (once in Australia)

On arrival to Australia, BSG officers undertake verification of the horse consignment.

The horse must then undergo post-arrival quarantine (PAQ) in a government animal quarantine station or other BSG-approved private quarantine station for 14-21 days.

Pre-export quarantine arrangements at the PEQ premises in Japan

The PEQ premises in Japan was given full BSG approval on 26 August 2010 for a period of two years. This approval was given based on BSG's inspection of the PEQ premises in July 2010 and BSG's approval of the SOP Manual submitted to BSG on 20 August 2010.

A BSG officer visited the PEQ premises in September 2010 to observe the operations of the PEQ to identify any biosecurity risks and, if required, consequently recommend changes to the import conditions. At that time Horse A was undergoing PEQ. As part of the field work the BSG officer:

- held discussions with MAFF's veterinary officials and the operators of the PEQ facility covering the individual aspects of the Australian import requirements for horses
- inspected the facility where the Horse A was held in PEQ, and
- inspected the ground transport and airport handling operations for the transportation of Horse A from the PEQ premises to Narita airport.

No issues were identified in BSG's report regarding Horse A's pre-export quarantine period or its transportation to the airport.

Permit to Import Horse A

An Import Permit (IPXXXXXX)⁴ valid from 17 September 2010 to 17 November 2010 was issued by BSG to import Horse A into Australia. No issues were identified by the IIGB on review of this import permit.

⁴ The full details of this import permit were verified during this audit.

Veterinary Health Certificate for Horse A

A Veterinary Health Certificate (No:HXEXXXXXXX)⁵ was issued by MAFF on 19 September 2010 for Horse A for export to Australia under BSG import permit number IP XXXXXXX⁶. The health certificate provided by the MAFF attests to the requirements of the BSG permit having been met for the PEQ period in Japan and the ground transport and airport operations at Narita Airport. No issues were identified by the IIGB on review of the health certificate.

Conclusion

The IIGB is satisfied that the relevant operations and procedures were conducted by BSG in relation to horse pre-export operations and procedures in Japan.

signed

Dr Kevin Dunn
Interim Inspector General of Biosecurity

⁵ The full details of this veterinary health certificate were verified during this audit.

⁶ The full details of this import permit were available and verified during this audit.

**Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Deputy Secretary Biosecurity Formal Response**

Dr Kevin Dunn
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Dear Dr Dunn

Thank you for your draft report on the desktop review into horse pre-export quarantine facilities, operations and procedures in Japan following the resumption of horse imports from Japan. I note with interest your conclusion that the procedures and practices associated with this activity are adequate to manage the biosecurity risks.

Yours sincerely

signed

Rona Mellor

27 May 2011