

CLEARANCE OF CATS AND DOGS

This fact sheet sets out the Customs requirements for importing cats and dogs into New Zealand.

ARE THERE ANY RESTRICTIONS TO IMPORTING CATS AND DOGS INTO NEW ZEALAND?

Yes, both the New Zealand Customs Service and Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) have a shared border responsibility to ensure that legislative requirements are met for all animal importations arriving in New Zealand.

Animal importations are subject to strict biosecurity standards administered by MPI. Before shipping a cat or dog to New Zealand, your first action should be to visit the MPI website at www.biosecurity.govt.nz or contact MPI directly to enquire about what standards are required for the cat or dog you want to import. A biosecurity clearance is required for all animals entering New Zealand.

Before imported cats and dogs are released to their owners, Customs will require the owner or importer to formally clear the animal and pay any goods and services tax (GST) charges that may be applicable upon importation. Customs will also ask to see the biosecurity clearance issued to the owner or importer by MPI before releasing the animal to you.

CERTAIN DOG BREEDS PROHIBITED

The import of certain breeds of dog into New Zealand is prohibited. The prohibited breeds are listed in Schedule 4 of the Dog Control Act 1996. The prohibition covers:

- » American Pit Bull Terrier
- » Brazilian Fila
- » Dogo Argentino
- » Japanese Tosa
- » Perro de Presa Canario

The import prohibition on listed dogs does not apply to:

- (a) guide and hearing dogs;
- (b) a companion dog accompanying a blind or partially sighted person, a deaf or hearing impaired person, a person with any other disability, or a person genuinely engaged in training the guide dog, hearing ear dog, or companion dog;
- (c) dogs that are being used for the purpose of carrying out a function, duty or purpose by one of these specified agencies:
 - » the Aviation Security Service established under section 72B(2)(ca) of the Civil Aviation Act 1990
 - » the Department of Conservation
 - » the Department of Corrections
 - » the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
 - » the Ministry of Defence
 - » the Ministry of Fisheries
 - » the New Zealand Customs Service
 - » the New Zealand Defence Force
 - » the New Zealand Police; and
 - » includes the Director of Civil Defence and Emergency Management

WHAT DOCUMENTS ARE REQUIRED TO CLEAR A CAT OR DOG?

When clearing your cat or dog for Customs purposes, Customs will ask you for the following documentation:

- (a) an invoice or receipt from the supplier showing the price paid for the animal. If the animal was a gift or acquired free of charge, then some form of evidence as to the actual value of the animal is required.
- (b) an air waybill or Bill of lading documentation that shows the method and cost of transporting the animal to New Zealand.
- (c) a biosecurity clearance permit issued by MPI allowing the animal's importation.
- (d) supplementary documentation such as vaccination certificates and evidence of ownership.
- (e) personal identification of the importer such as passport or driver's licence.
- (f) a completed *NZCS 231 Imported Animal Clearance form*.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO CLEAR A DOG

The importation of a dog into New Zealand is prohibited unless that dog is accompanied by:

- (a) evidence of the dog's registration in New Zealand; or
- (b) a statutory declaration made on Customs Form 15 that the dog is not a prohibited species as specified in the Dog Control Act 1996.



A copy of the declaration is included at the end of this fact sheet.

For every dog importation there must also be an accompanying certificate from a registered veterinarian in the country of export stating that after due enquiry and/or physical examination of the dog, he/she has no reason to doubt the owner's/importer's advice that the dog, embryo, ova, or semen is not one of the prohibited dog breeds outlined on the previous page.

This certificate is included in the biosecurity Import Health Standard form for animals that must be completed in the country of export before the animal is shipped to New Zealand. To assist importers of the same dog being transported regularly between Australia and New Zealand, it has been agreed that this certificate need only be completed the first time the dog is exported to New Zealand. The original copy of the certificate should be attached to any subsequent Import Health Standard form.

CATS OR DOGS IMPORTED ON VISITING YACHTS

Persons considering importing cats or dogs into New Zealand that are aboard their yachts must seek permission from MPI before doing so. Animals must meet particular biosecurity import health standards or have a Permit to Import issued by MPI prior to their importation. Animals imported on yachts must remain secured aboard the craft.

HOW DO I KNOW IF THERE WILL BE ANY CUSTOMS CHARGES ON MY IMPORTED CAT OR DOG?

Animals are free of import duty but subject to GST on importation. Animals that have a combined value of NZ\$400 or more, which includes the Customs value of the animal plus the freight and insurance charges to transport the animal to New Zealand, will be subject to GST charges levied at 15 percent of that value. An import transaction fee may apply to animals being imported.

TEMPORARY IMPORTATION OF CATS AND DOGS

Cats and dogs that are being imported temporarily for a period of 12 months or less may be entered on a Customs temporary import entry. GST charges are not levied on goods imported temporarily on the basis that those goods will be re-exported within 12 months of their importation. However, Customs may require a refundable cash deposit as a security over the GST payable pending the export of the animal.

WHAT IS THE CUSTOMS VALUE?

The Customs value is the value applied to imported goods for the purposes of levying duty and GST. For imported goods, the valuation of the goods is in accordance with schedule 2 of the Customs and Excise Act 1996. This generally means the price paid or payable for the goods when sold for export to New Zealand.

For Customs purposes, all goods (including animals) have a value, even if supplied free of charge or gifted. Where cats or dogs have been acquired other than by sale, an alternative valuation method must be applied. When determining a value for an animal that has been acquired at no cost to the importer, Customs will generally use values that have been applied to identical or similar cats or dogs to determine the Customs value.

ARE THERE ANY DUTY OR VALUATION CONCESSIONS APPLICABLE TO CATS AND DOGS?

Yes. Presents or gifts (which may include pets) sent from persons abroad to persons resident in New Zealand may be granted a full or part concession depending on the Customs value of those goods.

- » Gifts with a value of NZ\$110 or less may be admitted free of duty and GST.
- » Gifts exceeding NZ\$110 in total value may attract Customs charges on the value in excess of NZ\$110.

For returning New Zealand residents and new immigrants to New Zealand, a duty/GST concession may be applied in respect of an animal where a person who –

- (a) has arrived in New Zealand and on the date the animal is imported hold a document authorising residence in New Zealand; and
- (b) for the whole of the period of 21 months preceding his or her arrival, has resided outside New Zealand or has been domiciled outside New Zealand; and
- (c) has personally owned and cared for their imported animal outside New Zealand before the date of his or her departure for New Zealand.

Persons importing animals and meeting conditions (a)-(c) may have their animal admitted free of Customs charges.

WHERE DO I GO TO GET A CUSTOMS CLEARANCE?

Customs clearances for animals that are being imported for breeding, showing, racing or any other commercial purpose will need to arrange clearance of the animal through a Customs broker.

Customs clearances for animals for private purposes, e.g. family pets, may be obtained at any Customs office around New Zealand. However, international airlines are currently only transporting animals from overseas to the main centre airports at Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. The Customs offices servicing the main centres are as follows:

Auckland

Customhouse
50 Anzac Avenue
Auckland
Phone: 09 927 8465
Fax: 09 359 6731
or

c/o Auckland Biosecurity
Inspection Centre
Tom Pearce Drive
Auckland Airport
Phone: 09 927 8216
Fax: 09 256 4010

Wellington

The Customhouse
1 Hinemoa Street
Wellington
Phone: 04 901 4500
Fax: 04 901 4753

Christchurch

The Customhouse
6 Orchard Road
Christchurch Airport
Phone: 03 940 4507
Fax: 03 940 4587

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact your nearest office of the
New Zealand Customs Service, visit the
Customs website www.customs.govt.nz
or call Customs on 0800 428 786
(0800 4 CUSTOMS).