

Section 12

EQUIDAE

CHAPTER 12.6

INFECTION WITH EQUINE INFLUENZA VIRUS

Article.12.6.1

General provisions

For the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, equine influenza (EI) is defined as an *infection* of domestic and captive wild equids with equine influenza virus (EIV), i.e. subtypes H3N8 and H7N7 of influenza A viruses.

This chapter deals not only with the occurrence of clinical signs caused by *infection* with EIV, but also with the presence of *infection* with EIV in the absence of clinical signs.

The following defines the occurrence of *infection* with EIV:

1. EIV, excluding modified-live virus vaccine strains following recent *vaccination*, has been isolated and identified as such in a sample from a domestic or captive wild equid; or
2. antigen or nucleic acid specific to EIV has been detected in a sample from a domestic or captive wild equid showing clinical signs or pathological lesions consistent with equine influenza, or epidemiologically linked to a confirmed or suspected *case* of equine influenza; or
3. seroconversion due to recent exposure to EIV which is not the consequence of *vaccination*, has been detected in paired samples from a domestic or captive wild equid showing clinical signs or pathological lesions consistent with equine influenza, or epidemiologically linked to a confirmed or suspected *case* of *infection* with EIV.

For the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, the *infective period* for EI shall be 14 days.

For the purposes of this chapter, a temporary importation refers to the introduction of horses into a country or *zone*, for a defined period of time, not exceeding 90 days, during which the *risk* of transmission of the *infection* is mitigated through specific measures under the supervision of the *Veterinary Authority*. Temporarily imported horses are re-exported at the end of this period. The duration of the temporary importation period and the destination after this period, as well as the conditions required to leave the country or *zone*, should be defined in advance.

When authorising the importation or transit of the *commodities* listed in this chapter, with the exception of those listed in Article 12.6.2., *Veterinary Authorities* should require the conditions prescribed in this chapter relevant to the EI status of the equine *population* of the *exporting country, zone* or *compartment*.

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

Article.12.6.2

Safe commodities

When authorising the importation or transit of the following *commodities*, *Veterinary Authorities* should not require any EIV-related conditions, regardless of the *animal health status* of the *exporting country, zone* or *compartment*:

1. equine semen;
2. *in vivo* derived equine embryos collected, processed and stored in accordance with Chapters 4.8. and 4.10., as relevant;
3. *meat* and *meat products* from equids that have been slaughtered in a *slaughterhouse/abattoir* and have been subjected to ante- and post-mortem inspections with favourable results.

Article.12.6.3

Determination of the EI status of a country, a zone or a compartment

The EI status of a country, a *zone* or a *compartment* can be determined on the basis of the following criteria:

1. the outcome of a *risk assessment* identifying all *risk* factors and their historic relevance;
2. whether EI is notifiable in the whole country, an ongoing EI awareness programme is in place, and all notified suspect occurrences of EI are subjected to field and, where applicable, *laboratory* investigations;
3. appropriate *surveillance* is in place to demonstrate the presence of *infection* in the absence of clinical signs in domestic and captive wild equids.

Article.12.6.4

Country, zone or compartment free from EI

A country, *zone* or *compartment* may be considered free from EI provided that *infection* with EIV is notifiable in the whole country and it shows evidence, through an effective *surveillance* programme, planned and implemented in accordance with the general principles in Chapter 1.4., that no *case* of *infection* with EIV occurred in the past two years. The *surveillance* may need to be adapted to parts of the country, *zone* or *compartment* depending on historical or geographical factors, industry structure, *population* data, movements of equids within and into the country, *zone* or *compartment*, wild equine *populations* or proximity to recent *outbreaks*.

A country, *zone* or *compartment* seeking freedom from EI, in which *vaccination* is practised, should also demonstrate that EIV has not been circulating in the *population* of domestic, captive wild, feral, and wild equids during the past 12 months, through *surveillance*, in accordance with Chapter 1.4.

In a country in which *vaccination* is not practised, *surveillance* may be conducted using serological testing alone. In countries where *vaccination* is practised, the *surveillance* should include agent identification methods described in the *Terrestrial Manual* for evidence of *infection*.

A country, *zone* or *compartment* seeking freedom from EI should apply appropriate movement controls to minimise the *risk* of introduction of EIV in accordance with this chapter and should be in accordance with relevant requirements and principles described in Chapter 4.4. and Chapter 4.5.

Article.12.6.5

Recovery of free status

If a *case* of *infection* with EIV occurs in a previously free country, *zone* or *compartment*, free status can be regained 12 months after the last *case*, provided that *outbreaks* were managed in accordance with Chapter 4.19. and that *surveillance*, in accordance with Article

12.6.4., has been carried out during that 12-month period, with negative results.

Article.12.6.6

Recommendations for the importation of domestic and captive wild equids for immediate slaughter

Veterinary Authorities should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the domestic or captive wild equids showed no clinical sign of EI on the day of shipment.

Article.12.6.7

Recommendations for the importation of domestic and captive wild equids

Veterinary Authorities should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the domestic or captive wild equids:

1. came from an EI free country, *zone* or *compartment* in which they had been resident for at least 14 days; in the case of vaccinated equids, information on their *vaccination* status should be included in the veterinary certificate;

OR

2.
 - a. were subjected to pre-export isolation for 14 days and showed no clinical sign of EI during isolation nor on the day of shipment; and
 - b. were vaccinated in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturer with a vaccine complying with the standards described in the *Terrestrial Manual* and considered effective against the epidemiologically relevant virus strains, in accordance with one of the following procedures:
 - i. between 14 and 90 days before shipment with either a primary course or a booster; or
 - ii. between 14 and 180 days before shipment, if they are older than four years of age, having received up to the date of this pre-shipment *vaccination*, at least four doses of vaccine at intervals not greater than 180 days.

Information on the *vaccination* status should be included in the *international veterinary certificate* or the passport in accordance with Chapter 5.12. as relevant.

Countries that are free from EI or undertaking an *eradication* programme may also request that the equids were subjected to an agent identification test for EI described in the *Terrestrial Manual* with negative results, conducted on samples collected on two occasions, four to six days after commencement of pre-export isolation and within four days prior to shipment.

Article.12.6.8

Recommendations for the temporary importation of horses

If the importation of horses on a temporary basis does not comply with the recommendations in Article 12.6.7., *Veterinary Authorities* of *importing countries* should:

1. require:

- a. that the horses be accompanied by a passport in accordance with the model contained in Chapter 5.12. or be individually identified as belonging to a high health status *subpopulation* as defined in Chapter 4.17.;
- b. the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the horses:

- i. came from a country, *zone* or *compartment* free from EI, in which they had been resident for at least 14 days; in the case of vaccinated horses, information on their *vaccination* status should be included in the veterinary certificate;

OR

- ii. showed no clinical sign of EI in any premises in which the horses had been resident for the 14 days prior to shipment nor on the day of shipment; and
- iii. were vaccinated with a vaccine complying with the standards described in the *Terrestrial Manual*; information on their *vaccination* status should be included in the veterinary certificate or the passport in accordance with Chapter 5.12.;

2. ensure that during their stay in the country or *zone* horses are kept separated from domestic and captive wild equids of a different EI health status through appropriate *biosecurity*.

NB: FIRST ADOPTED IN 1986; MOST RECENT UPDATE ADOPTED IN 2023.