



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE WATER AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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The Director
Veterinary Services
Private Bag 12022
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10 July 2003

Enquiry: Dr T v/d Merwe
Ref. No: V13/1/P

Circular no: V17/2003

TO: All State Veterinarians
All Control AHIs

ANIMAL DISEASE CONTROL AT ENTRY POINTS AND AIRSTRIPS.

1. Attached is a self-explanatory letter to the Director of Customs and Excise for your perusal. Apart from the procedures and activities concerning arrival of passengers / visitors contained in this letter, it is also of great importance to ensure that seized items and international garbage/swill of potentially infectious nature be disposed off in a safe and predetermined way and under the responsibility of an identified official. If it is done by the municipality or other private contractor, a written agreement detailing aspects such as effective control methods, identified sites, disinfection, incineration etc must exist and evaluated by the responsible official by means of ad hoc site visits etc. The State veterinarian in who's district and responsibility such an entry point is situated must also be involved in this agreement and exercise an additional supervisory function.
2. Another aspect of concern which require the responsible State Veterinarian's attention is departure airstrips from NCA's (lodges etc) to ensure that people departing from such airstrips are acquainted with the danger and restrictions of potentially infectious animals / -products to our FMD-free zone. DVS HQ will compile a durable notice to this effect which should be displayed at prominent places such as reception / departure foyers at lodges and other places of departure.
3. Please ensure that this instruction forms part and parcel of your annual workplan and "export orientated evaluation of areas"(import control 1.) and thereby aim to prevent disease disasters such as those which recently occurred elsewhere.

DIRECTOR of VETERINARY SERVICES

(The previous circular no. V16/2003 dealt with annual meeting of State Veterinarians 2003 and was sent to all State Veterinarians and State Veterinary offices).



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The Director
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Windhoek

26 June 2003

Ref No: V13/1/3/1
Enquire: Dr T v/d Merwe

The Director: Customs and Excise
Private Bag 13295
Windhoek

ANIMAL AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS: DISEASE CONTROL AT INTERNATIONAL ENTRY POINTS

1. I am referring to our letter V13/1/3/1 dated 14 March 2003 regarding a declaration form for arriving passengers for animals and animal products which is also standard practise in some other countries such as the USA. We are still awaiting your reply (see attached copy of our previous letter).

2. Recently Namibia was subjected to an USA team of inspectors to evaluate our animal health status and control measures with the prospect of exporting our meat and meat products to the USA (Also to benefit from the USA African Growth and Opportunity Act). Much emphasis has been placed on control measures at international entry points to prevent the introduction of major animal diseases.

At Buitepos and Walvis Bay harbour the team was satisfied in general with the knowledge and control measures of customs officials. The same could however not be said of the performance of customs officials at Hosea Kutako International Airport on Saturday 14 June 2003 (13h00). A senior customs official was, to put it mildly, totally ignorant of what to do with such products when found and a severe embarrassment to us and the USA inspection team. Remarks such as "using my own discretion" w.r.t. fresh meat products which may cause disastrous damage to Namibia's economy if it results in an outbreak of one of the major animal diseases was identified as a weak point by the USDA team and proper training was subsequently recommended.

Dr Bamhare of our Divisional headquarters (tel 2087505) already contact one of your officials (Mr. Titus) and initial discussions were conducted to ensure additional training on this aspect.

3. The Directorate also appointed an official (Mr Neumann – tel 2087541) with the specific task to visit the various entry points, evaluate control measures and discuss relevant issues with all authorities involved to ensure compliance with Namibia's veterinary import requirements. In addition State Veterinary staff will also visit entry points in their designated districts for the same purpose.

4. We are also in the process of negotiation to display boards at points of entry to acquaint arriving passengers with items (animal products etc) to be declared to customs officials. People often do not know what should be declared.

5. We are aware that customs officials at entry points are dealing with many issues and our intention is not to interfere with their duties, but to ensure as "a team" that our favourable animal disease status is maintained and export of Namibia's animal and animal products are not compromised.

6. In addition to our previous request we hereby seek your support for the above-mentioned activities.

Yours sincerely,

DIRECTOR OF VETERINARY SERVICES

cc. Permanent Secretary: MAWRD