



Version 16.06.2008

# Professional import of dogs, cats and ferrets from third countries

This document is part of the information that has to be borne in mind for the professional import of dogs, cats and ferrets. Full information can be found on the FVO website ([www.bvet.admin.ch](http://www.bvet.admin.ch) > Topics > Import > Live animals > Live animals from third countries > Dogs, cats and ferrets (professional import)).

## 1 Import regulations

### 1.1 General information

- An import is deemed professional when dogs, cats and ferrets are not travelling as pets (see [www.bvet.admin.ch](http://www.bvet.admin.ch) > Topics > Travelling with pets) or when a person is travelling with 6 or more dogs, cats or ferrets from third countries. In most cases, professional imports are associated with the purchase / sale of animals. A specific veterinary certificate is needed in the case of imports destined for registered facilities, centres or institutes that are regularly monitored by official veterinarians. In Switzerland only a few zoos have this status to date.
- These import regulations also apply to temporary imports and re-imports of Swiss animals.
- An animal health permit is required for importing dogs, cats and ferrets from third countries if they are entering Switzerland via a Swiss airport from a “rabies risk country” (see 1.3.2).
- This requirement for a permit does not apply to animals entering Switzerland in transit through the EU by road or rail. The animals are controlled when they enter the EU according to EU regulations. At the Swiss border customs authorities make spot-check controls occasionally.
- With a few exceptions, it is forbidden to import and re-import dogs with docked ears and/or a cropped tail (see document “Fragen und Antworten zu kupierten Hunden” – in German only).

### 1.2 Identification

Dogs, cats and ferrets must be correctly identified with a microchip. The microchip must be readable by standard reading devices, i.e. they must conform to ISO 11784 or Annex A of ISO 11785 – otherwise the animals must be accompanied by a suitable reading device. Many “incompatible” microchips are still being manufactured, especially in the USA. Therefore, make sure your animal is fitted with a so-called “Euro-chip”, which only contains digits as identification code and no asterisks (\*).

Clearly legible tattoos will still be accepted at the border crossing during a transitional phase until 30 June 2011.

If a dog is definitively imported into Switzerland, it must be taken to a veterinarian within the first 10 days of entering the country: All dogs that are kept in Switzerland must be registered in a database by a veterinarian.

### **1.3 Approved countries of origin and rabies risks**

Dogs, cats and ferrets may only be imported professionally and for trade purposes from third countries that have a functioning official veterinary system in place – see Council Decision 79/542/EEC.

The document “List of countries ‘rabies’ – dogs, cats and ferrets” (at [www.bvet.admin.ch](http://www.bvet.admin.ch) > Topics > Import >> Live animals from third countries > Dogs, cats and ferrets (professional import) groups all countries into one of three categories with differing rabies risks:

- EU and other countries with compulsory pet passport (including Switzerland)
- Countries at low risk for rabies
- Rabies risk countries

Requirements for rabies vaccinations, laboratory tests and waiting periods vary depending on the risk of dogs, cats or ferrets becoming infected with urban rabies in the country of origin. These requirements are described in the following sections. They must be confirmed in the relevant certificate by the official veterinarian responsible.

#### **1.3.1 Importing from countries at low risk for rabies**

These countries are listed in the document “List of countries ‘rabies’” under the heading “Countries with low risks of rabies”. The regulations apply to all dogs, cats and ferrets that were kept exclusively in countries at low risk for rabies, Switzerland or the EU for at least 6 months before entering the country – or since birth in the case of young animals.

Dogs, cats and ferrets from these countries must have been vaccinated against rabies with an inactivated vaccine (having an efficacy that corresponds at least to one international antigen unit according to WHO standards) as recommended by the manufacturer and at least 21 days before being imported. For animals given regular booster vaccinations within the period recommended by the manufacturer, the waiting period of 21 days does not apply.

Young animals less than three months old from countries regarded to be at low risk for rabies may only be brought into Switzerland if they are accompanied by and still dependent on their mothers or if a veterinary certificate can be provided showing that they have been kept at the place where they were born since birth and have never come into contact with wild animals which could have been exposed to an infection with rabies. Please note: In any case, dogs younger than 56 days can only be brought to Switzerland if they are accompanied by their mothers.

#### **1.3.2 Import from rabies risk countries**

These countries are listed in the document “List of countries ‘rabies’” under the heading “Rabies risk countries”. Dogs, cats and ferrets that enter Switzerland from one of these countries must meet the following requirements:

- They must have been vaccinated against rabies with an inactivated vaccine (having an efficacy that corresponds at least to one international antigen unit according to WHO standards) as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Not earlier than 30 days after this (and not after the validity period recommended by the vaccine manufacturer has elapsed) blood must be taken from the animal and tested for antibodies against rabies. This test must be carried out in a laboratory accredited by the EU (see list at [www.bvet.admin.ch](http://www.bvet.admin.ch) > Topics > Import > Live animals from third countries > Dogs, cats, ferrets from third countries (professional import). Adequate protection is considered to be conferred by a concentration of neutralizing rabies antibodies (a “titre”) of at least 0.5 International Units

per millilitre of serum (IU/mL).

- The 30-day waiting period until blood sampling is followed by a further waiting period of 3 months from when the blood sample is taken until entry is possible. This means that at least 4 months must elapse between the last rabies vaccination before antibody testing and entry into the country.

Initial vaccinations often fail to confer adequate protection – especially in pups aged less than 3 months, because any antibodies still present at this time from the mother can compromise the development of immunity. It is therefore recommended that blood samples for antibody testing are not taken until 30 days after a second basic immunization (at least 10 days after the first rabies vaccination). It is therefore scarcely possible to import young animals from “rabies risk countries” before the age of 7 months.

The waiting period of 4 months may be waived in the following cases:

- If dogs, cats or ferrets have previously met all the above import regulations in full (incl. antibody testing and waiting period) and thereafter always received booster vaccinations against rabies within the validity period of the vaccine as recommended by the manufacturer.
- If dogs, cats or ferrets (originally) come from Switzerland, the EU or a country at low risk for rabies and the antibody test was carried out before leaving Switzerland for the rabies risk country.

## 2 Import documents

### 2.1 *Veterinary certificate, confirmation, pet ID*

A veterinary certificate is needed to import dogs, cats and ferrets from third countries. This must be issued by the official veterinarian responsible in the country of origin. The certificate for commercial purposes must be used for professional imports. In the case of imports destined for registered facilities, institutes or centres (e.g. certain zoos) there is a further model. Samples can be found at [www.bvet.admin.ch](http://www.bvet.admin.ch) > Topics > Import >> Live animals from third countries > Dogs, cats ferrets from third countries (professional import).

Young animals aged less than 3 months not accompanied by their mothers from countries at low risk for rabies must in addition be accompanied by a veterinary confirmation; see 1.3.1. No pups aged less than 3 months may be imported from rabies risk countries. There is also no exemption permit as there is with imports from the EU.

For the re-importing of Swiss animals, the Swiss pet passport is sufficient if all import regulations are met and entered in this passport.

### 2.2 *Import via Swiss airports*

Professional imports from third countries via Swiss airports may only be conducted by importers who are registered in the TRACES system - see [www.bvet.admin.ch](http://www.bvet.admin.ch) > Themen > Einfuhr > TRACES (in German only). If private individuals want to bring in 6 or more dogs, cats and ferrets from third countries, this no longer falls under “Travelling with pets”, but is regarded as a professional import, which has to be processed by appropriately authorized persons / companies.

Applications for the animal health permit needed to import dogs, cats and ferrets from rabies risk countries (see 1.3.2) via a Swiss airport must be submitted to the FVO at least 3 weeks before the import. For application form, see [www.bvet.admin.ch](http://www.bvet.admin.ch) > Topics > Import > Live animals > Live animals

from third countries > Dogs, cats, ferrets from third countries (professional import).

For animals with a “Swiss pet passport”, the FVO enters the permit in this document on request. It may then be renewed by any registered, practising veterinarian, as long as the booster vaccinations are always carried out within the vaccine validity period indicated by the manufacturer.

### 3 Regulations of other authorities

- Dogs, cats and ferrets that are definitively imported into Switzerland are subject to value-added tax. The importer must be proactive in this regard and notify the customs authorities about the importing of any animal liable for customs duty or value-added tax.
- Dogs must be registered with the local authority (*Gemeinde / Commune*) of the owner's place of residence, so that it can collect the dog tax.
- A licence from the cantonal veterinary office is necessary for the keeping of wild animals (e.g. ferrets), as it is for trading in or advertising with animals, for animal shows, small animal markets, zoos, circuses and animal experiments. Please contact the cantonal veterinary office concerned for further information.
- For the importing and transit of all animal species listed in Annexes I-III of the Washington Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and all non-domesticated species of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians (e.g. Bengal cats), a licence in accordance with species conservation law is necessary, see [www.bvet.admin.ch](http://www.bvet.admin.ch) > Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora / CITES.

**Application for a permit to import or re-import one single dog, cat or ferret**

(Please print and fill in completely one form per animal)

**Note** that the permit is **only required** for entering the country at **Swiss airports** (with presence of a border veterinary service) **when coming from "rabies risk countries"**, see at the site [www.bvet.admin.ch](http://www.bvet.admin.ch)

<b>Applicant</b> (Under this address the applicant must be reachable before the departure, if any open questions remain. Therefore please fill out completely.): name: ..... address: ..... e-mail: ..... phone number / facsimile : .....		
<b>Reason of importation:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Re-importation</u> after a stay in a foreign country; the original of the <u>Swiss model of the pet passport</u> should be enclosed to enter the <u>permit</u> in the document. For dogs with docked tail /cropped ears a re-import permit is only released if a cantonal attestation has been provided at page 25 of the passport. <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Import of the animal:</u> <input type="radio"/> definitive <input type="radio"/> short stay <input type="radio"/> relocation		<b>Country</b> (from where the animal is imported / re-imported):
<b>Date of importation:</b>	<b>Entry to Switzerland at the airport of</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Zurich / <input type="checkbox"/> Geneva // <input type="checkbox"/> .....	
<b>Earlier import permits (individual number of permit):</b>		
<b>Address in Switzerland</b> (only if not identical with address above): name: ..... address: ..... e-mail: ..... phone number / facsimile: .....		
<b>Data of the animal</b>		
Species:	Sex:	Date of birth:
Breed:	Color:	Country of birth:
Microchip-No./Tattoo:		
<b>For dogs: Is the animal docked?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes ( <input type="checkbox"/> tail / <input type="checkbox"/> ears)
<b>Important:</b> The import of dogs with docked ears and/or tails is prohibited, except for vacation or other short stays in Switzerland in company with the dog owner (with residence abroad) or if the owners relocate to Switzerland. Please inquire at the customs services to find out if your dog satisfies the criteria set for those exceptions. For further details see import conditions, especially the document „Fragen und Antworten zu kupierten Hunden“ (also available in French / Italian) at the site <a href="http://www.bvet.admin.ch">www.bvet.admin.ch</a> .		
<b>Rabies vaccination status of the animal</b>		
Date of last vaccination against rabies: (enclose a <b>copy of the vaccination certificate</b> )	valid until: (according to the manufacturer)	
Earlier vaccinations against rabies: (enclose a <b>copy of the vaccination certificate!</b> )		
Date of blood sampling for rabies antibody testing: (the test has to be carried out in an approved laboratory, enclose a <b>copy of the report with the result</b> )		
Date / Place:	Signature:	

**Please send to** the Federal Veterinary Office, Schwarzenburgstr.155, **CH - 3003 Berne**

**Fax:** +41(0)31 323 85 22 **E-mail:** [import.export@bvet.admin.ch](mailto:import.export@bvet.admin.ch)



## List of countries „rabies“ – dogs, cats, ferrets

This list of countries applies with reservation as to temporary sanitary restrictions. See [www.bvet.admin.ch](http://www.bvet.admin.ch) > Topics > Import > Import bans / Temporary restrictions / Special conditions (details are only available on the German or French pages).

### **Member States of the European Union and other European countries (including Switzerland) that use mandatory pet passports**

These countries are free of urban rabies.

Date 20.11.2008

AD Andorra	IE Ireland
AT Austria	IM Isle of Man
BE Belgium	IS Iceland
BG Bulgaria	IT Italy
CY Cyprus	LT Lithuania
CZ Czech Republic	LU Luxembourg
DE Germany	LV Latvia
DK Denmark	MC Monaco
EE Estonia	MQ Martinique
EI Canary Islands (Spain)	MT Malta
ES Spain	NL Netherlands
FI Finland	NO Norway
FO Faeroe Islands	PL Poland
FR France	PT Portugal
GB United Kingdom	RE Reunion
GF French Guiana	RO Romania
GI Gibraltar	SE Sweden
GL Greenland	SI Slovenia
GP Guadeloupe	SK Slovakia
GR Greece	SM San Marino
HR Croatia	SW Slovenia
HU Hungary	VA Vatican State

## Countries with low risks of rabies

In the countries with a favourable disease profile for rabies the risk is very low that dogs, cats or ferrets might be infected with urban rabies.

Date 20.11.2008

AE United Arab Emirates	MJ Mayotte
AG Antigua and Barbuda	MS Monserrat
AN Netherlands Antilles	MU Mauritius
AR Argentina	MX Mexico
AU Australia	MY Malaysia
AW Aruba	NC New Caledonia
BA Bosnia-Herzegovina	NZ New Zealand
BB Barbados	PF French Polynesia
BH Bahrain	PM St.Pierre and Miquelon
BM Bermuda	RU Russia
BY Belarus	SG Singapore
CA Canada	SH St. Helena
CL Chile	TT Trinidad and Tobago
FJ Fiji	TW Taiwan
FK Falkland Islands	UM USA (Minor outlying Islands)
GU Guam	US United States including Hawaii
HK Hong-Kong	VC St. Vincent and Grenadines
JM Jamaica	VG Virgin Islands (GB)
JP Japan	VU Vanuatu
KN St.Kitts-and-Nevis	WF Wallis and Futuna Islands
KY Cayman Islands	WR Belarus

## Rabies risk countries

In these countries the presence of urban rabies cannot be excluded. There is a serious risk that dogs, cats or ferrets get infected with urban rabies.

Date 20.11.2008

AF Afghanistan	EG Egypt
AI Anguilla	EH Western Sahara
AL Albania	ER Eritrea
AM Armenia	ET Ethiopia
AO Angola	FM Micronesia
AQ Antarctica	GA Gabon
AS American Samoa	GD Grenada
AZ Azerbaijan	GE Georgia
BD Bangladesh	GH Ghana
BF Burkina Faso	GM Gambia
BI Burundi	GN Guinea
BJ Benin	GQ Equatorial Guinea
BN Brunei Darussalam	GT Guatemala
BO Bolivia	GW Guinea-Bissau
BR Brazil	GY Guyana
BS Bahamas	HM Heard and MC Donald Islands
BT Bhutan	HN Honduras
BU Burma	HT Haiti
BV Bouvet Island	ID Indonesia
BW Botswana	IL Israel
BZ Belize	IN India
CC Cocos Islands	IO Brit.Indian Ocean Territ.
CD Democr. Rep. of Congo	IQ Iraq
CF Central African Republic	IR Iran, Islamic Republic of
CG Congo	JO Jordan
CI Ivory Coast	JT Johnston Island
CK Cook Islands	KE Kenya
CM Cameroon	KG Kyrgyzstan
CN China	KH Kampuchea
CO Colombia	KI Kiribati
CR Costa Rica	KM Comoros
CU Cuba	KO Kosovo
CV Cape Verde	KP Korea, Dem. People's Rep.
CX Christmas Islands	KR Korea, Republ.
DJ Djibouti	KW Kuwait
DM Dominica	KZ Kazakhstan
DO Dominican Republic	LA Lao People's Dem. Rep.
DZ Algeria	LB Lebanon
EC Ecuador	LC St. Lucia



LK Sri Lanka	SC Seychelles
LR Liberia	SD Sudan
LS Lesotho	SJ Svalbard, Jan Mayen Islands
LY Libyan AJ	SL Sierra Leone
MA Morocco	SN Senegal
MD Moldova	SO Somalia
ME Montenegro	SR Suriname
MG Madagascar	SS Serbia and Montenegro
MH Marshall Islands	ST Sao Tome and Principe
MK Macedonia	SV El Salvador
ML Mali	SY Syrian Arab Republic
MM Myanmar	SZ Swaziland
MN Mongolia	TC Turks and Caicos Islands
MO Macau	TD Chad
MP North.Mariana Islands	TF French southern Territories
MR Mauritania	TG Togo
MV Maldives	TH Thailand
MW Malawi	TJ Tajikistan
MZ Mozambique	TK Tokelau Islands
NA Namibia	TL East Timor
NE Niger	TM Turkmenistan
NF Norfolk Islands	TN Tunisia
NG Nigeria	TO Tonga
NI Nicaragua	TP East Timor
NP Nepal	TR Turkey
NR Nauru	TV Tuvalu
NT Neutral Zone	TZ Tanzania
NU Niue	UA Ukraine
OM Oman	UG Uganda
PA Panama	UY Uruguay
PC Pacific Islands (Trust Terr.)	UZ Uzbekistan
PE Peru	VE Venezuela
PG Papua New Guinea	VN Vietnam
PH Philippines	WS Samoa
PK Pakistan	YD Yemen Dem.
PN Pitcairn	YE Yemen
PR Puerto Rico	YU Serbia and Montenegro
PW Palau	ZA South Africa
PY Paraguay	ZM Zambia
QA Qatar	ZR Zaire
RS Serbia	ZW Zimbabwe
RW Rwanda	
SA Saudi Arabia	
SB Solomon Islands	

**Part I : Details of consignment presented**

I.1. Consignor Name Address Postal code Country	I.2. TRACES Certificate reference number I.2. Certificate reference number:	I.3. Central Competent Authority
I.5. Consignee Name Address Postal code Country		Person responsible for load in EU Name Address Postal code Country
I.7. Country of origin, ISO code	I.8. Region of origin, Code	I.9. Country of destination ISO code
I.10. Region of destination Code		
I.11. Place of origin Holding <input type="checkbox"/> Semen centre <input type="checkbox"/> Establishment <input type="checkbox"/> Name Address Name Address Name Address		I.12. Place of destination Holding <input type="checkbox"/> Semen centre <input type="checkbox"/> Assembly centre <input type="checkbox"/> quarantine <input type="checkbox"/> Establishment <input type="checkbox"/> warehouse <input type="checkbox"/> Approved body <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Name Address Postal code
I.13. Place of loading Address Approval number		I.14. Date of departure Estimated date and time of arrival
I.15. Means of transport Aeroplane <input type="checkbox"/> Ship <input type="checkbox"/> Road vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> Railway wagon <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Identification:: Document:		I.16. Entry BIP in EU Name BIP unit no.:
I.18. Commodity description		I.17. No.(s) of CITES
I.19. Commodity code (Code SH)		I.20. Quantity
I.21. Temperature of products Ambient <input type="checkbox"/> Chilled <input type="checkbox"/> Frozen <input type="checkbox"/>		I.22. Number of packages
I.23. Identification of container/Seal number		I.24. Type of packaging
I.25. Commodity certified as: Breeding <input type="checkbox"/> Fattening <input type="checkbox"/> Slaughter <input type="checkbox"/> Approved bodies <input type="checkbox"/> Artificial reproduction <input type="checkbox"/> Quarantine <input type="checkbox"/> Game restocking <input type="checkbox"/> Registered horses <input type="checkbox"/> Pets <input type="checkbox"/> Circus <input type="checkbox"/> Relaying <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Humane consumption <input type="checkbox"/> Animal feedingstuff <input type="checkbox"/> Further process <input type="checkbox"/> Pharmaceutical use <input type="checkbox"/> Technical use <input type="checkbox"/>		
I.26. For transit to 3rd Country by EU 3rd country <input type="text"/> ISO code <input type="text"/>		I.27. For import or admission into EU Definitive import <input type="checkbox"/> Horses Re-entry <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary admission horses <input type="checkbox"/>
I.28. Identification of the commodity		

## 2005/64 Import of dogs, cats and ferrets destined for bodies, institutes or centres approved in accordance with Annex C to

<b>Part II: Certification</b>	II. Health information	II.a. TRACES Certificat reference number	II.b. Local reference number:		
	<p>1. VACCINATION AGAINST RABIES</p> <p>Manufacturer and name of vaccine:</p> <p>Batch No:</p> <p>Vaccination date (3):</p> <p>Valid until (3):</p> <p>2. RABIES SEROLOGICAL TEST (when required – strike out when not certified)</p> <p>I have seen the official record of the result of a serological test for the animal, carried out on a sample taken on (3), and tested in an EU-approved laboratory, which states that the rabies neutralizing antibody titre was equal to or greater than 0.5 IU/ml.</p> <p>3. CLINICAL EXAMINATION</p> <p>I declare that the animal is at present free of clinical signs and transportable and comes from a holding approved or registered by the competent authority for the breeding of the species concerned, and which is not subject to any official restrictions for health reasons.</p> <p>4. TICK TREATMENT (when required – strike out when not certified)</p> <p>Manufacturer and name of product:</p> <p>Date (3) and time of treatment (24-hour clock):</p> <p>5. ECHINOCOCCUS TREATMENT (when required – strike out when not certified)</p> <p>Manufacturer and name of product:</p> <p>Date (3) and time of treatment (24-hour clock):</p> <p>NOTES FOR GUIDANCE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identification of the animal (tattoo or microchip) must be verified before any entries are made on the certificate.</li> <li>2. The rabies vaccine used must be an inactivated vaccine produced in accordance with OIE standards.</li> <li>3. The certificate shall be valid for 10 days from the date of signature for the purpose of import into the EU and controls at its borders. It shall be valid for 4 months from the date of signature for the purpose of further movement between EU Member States, in place of the pet passport.</li> <li>4. Animals from, or prepared in, third countries not listed in Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 998/2003, may not enter Ireland, Sweden or the United Kingdom, either directly or via another country listed in Annex II unless brought into conformity with National Rules.</li> <li>5. The clinical examination (Part VI) must be done within 24 hours before movement.</li> <li>6. Parts not certified must be struck out.</li> </ol> <p>APPLICABLE</p> <p>Completion of Part II.3 is compulsory</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Parts II.1, II.2, II.4 and II.5 shall be completed depending on the request of the Member State of destination. Member States can derogate to any of these conditions</p>				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) The third country must be listed in Section 2 of Part B or in Part C of Annex II to Regulation (EC) n° 998/2003</li> <li>(2) The original must accompany the consignment to the final destination</li> <li>(3) The copy must be kept by the responsible of the holding of origin</li> <li>(4) Depending on the requirements of the Member State of destination</li> <li>(5) Continue as necessary</li> </ol>					
<p>Official veterinarian or official inspector</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"> <p>Name (in Capital):</p> <p>Local Veterinary Unit:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Stamp</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"> <p>Qualification and title:</p> <p>LVU N°:</p> <p>Signature:</p> </td> </tr> </table>				<p>Name (in Capital):</p> <p>Local Veterinary Unit:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Stamp</p>	<p>Qualification and title:</p> <p>LVU N°:</p> <p>Signature:</p>
<p>Name (in Capital):</p> <p>Local Veterinary Unit:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Stamp</p>	<p>Qualification and title:</p> <p>LVU N°:</p> <p>Signature:</p>				



# Docked dogs – questions and answers

January 2008

**Cropping or docking, when the ears and/or tail of a dog are either cut off or ligated until they fall off, is extremely painful for the animal. Moreover, these parts of the body are then lacking in communication with other dogs. This practice contravenes principles of animal welfare and is therefore banned in Switzerland. Needless to say, this applies to all dogs, whether they are mongrels or pedigree dogs.**

To make sure that dogs are not simply docked abroad or that docked dogs are not bought or acquired abroad, there is also a ban on **importing docked dogs** into Switzerland. Anyone who illegally imports a docked dog into Switzerland runs the risk of prosecution. This applies not only to purchased dogs, but also to animals that come from a foreign animal home or that have been “rescued” from circumstances that violate the principles of animal welfare.

The following are answers from the Federal Veterinary Office to some frequently asked questions on the subject.

## **Is it still possible to bring docked dogs into Switzerland despite the import ban?**

In principle it is forbidden to import docked dogs. Any such dogs are therefore turned back at the border. Owners living abroad, however, may bring their docked dog into Switzerland with them for holidays or other short stays. Also anyone **who moves to Switzerland from abroad** may bring his docked dog with him. It is essential to obtain information from customs in good time before relocation to establish whether the criteria are met in your case, so that your dog can be classed as so-called personal property (<http://www.ezv.admin.ch>).

## **Am I allowed to import docked dogs from animal homes abroad or docked foundlings into Switzerland to give them a new home?**

No. The import ban applies in principle to all dogs, regardless of your motivation in helping the animal. Circumstances in other countries that violate principles of animal welfare do not justify importing docked dogs into Switzerland in contravention of animal welfare laws. Caution should also be exercised with dogs that have not been docked. In many regions of the world, diseases occur which are unknown to us in this country. Imported dogs then not only need expensive treatment, but may also jeopardize the health of dogs and humans in Switzerland.

## **Am I allowed to travel abroad with a docked dog?**

If you want to travel with your docked dog, you must get the veterinary office in your canton of residence to make an entry in your pet ID to confirm that the animal meets the conditions laid down in animal welfare law for returning to Switzerland. Otherwise, journeys abroad are not possible, because the animal would be turned back when **re-entering Switzerland**. However, a confirmation of this kind will only be provided in a few exceptional cases (for example, if it can be proved that the dog was imported into Switzerland as personal property or that the docking procedure was medically indicated).

## **If I have imported a docked dog illegally and been punished accordingly, am I then allowed to travel abroad with the dog?**

No. You are punished for the fact that you have violated a ban. The punishment is the penalty you have to pay for having imported a docked dog into Switzerland on a given day. Even after the prosecution, the dog will only ever be “tolerated” in Switzerland and will remain classified as an “illegal import”. Legalization is not possible despite the payment of a penalty. If you therefore travel abroad with your dog and return to Switzerland, either the dog will be refused entry at the border or, if you smuggle the dog through customs, you will face renewed prosecution.

**Am I allowed to adopt a docked dog from an animal home in Switzerland and is the dog then considered legal?**

This is possible if, for example, the previous owner of the dog has died, necessitating a new placement for the dog. In such cases, the veterinary office\* in your canton of residence may, by way of exception, classify the dog as legal in the pet ID. Ultimately, however, evidence must be furnished to show that the dog is in Switzerland legally and that you have not done anything illegal or that no illegal transaction has taken place. Contact the veterinary office\* in your canton of residence.

**Can I take part in shows in Switzerland with a docked dog?**

Docked dogs that have been either docked illegally or imported illegally are forbidden by law to take part in dog shows. Furthermore, the Swiss Cynological Society decided not to allow any more docked dogs in shows from 2006 onwards.

**What happens if I want to travel to a rabies country (urban rabies) with a docked dog and therefore need a permit from the FVO for re-import?**

The Federal Veterinary Office may only issue a re-import permit for docked dogs if the cantonal veterinary office\* has confirmed in the pet ID that the animal meets the conditions laid down in animal welfare law for re-entry into Switzerland and is thus legally in Switzerland. First of all, therefore, contact the veterinary office\* in your canton of residence. If this office refuses an entry in the pet ID, then no permit can be issued for re-importing the animal.

**Are the same rules applicable for dogs with congenitally short tails or with a tail / ear amputated after an accident as for docked dogs?**

For practical reasons, the bans on docked dogs also apply in principle to all these other dogs. Only after the veterinary office in your canton of residence has made an appropriate entry in the pet ID are such dogs regarded as legal.

If you want to import a dog with a congenitally short tail or with an amputated tail / ear, please contact the Federal Veterinary Office. To prevent docked dogs being brought illegally into Switzerland under the guise of a medical indication, owners of such dogs must furnish watertight evidence for the FVO actually to recognize the congenitally short tail / amputated tail or the amputated ear. To this end, a medical report on the need for the amputation or on the presence of a congenital defect is absolutely essential. A simple statement by a veterinarian is not sufficient for this. The report must clearly show beyond any doubt that the short tail is a congenital defect or that the amputated tail/ear is the result of a medically indicated intervention.