



Memorandum of Understanding between Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and Ferry/Cruise Operators for the Carriage of Recognised Assistance Dogs

Section 1 – General Information

Part 1 – Application of the Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding applies to:

- transport companies offering ferry services by sea where the port of disembarkation or a port of call is situated in the territory of Great Britain (hereinafter referred to as 'Ferry Operators')
- transport companies offering sea cruises where the port of embarkation is situated in the territory of a Member State and a stop-over is made in Great Britain (hereinafter referred to as 'Cruise Operators')

Part 2 – Legal Obligations on Ferry/Cruise Operators

Ferry/Cruise Operators as defined above have a legal obligation under EU law to accept disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility on their vessels and should not refuse transport on the grounds of disability or lack of mobility except for reasons which are justified on the grounds of safety and prescribed by law. This obligation extends to the carriage of recognised assistance dogs.

The legal obligations are set out in full in Regulation (EU) No. 1177/2010 of 24 November 2010 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by sea. The main obligations relating to the carriage of recognised assistance dogs are as follows:

Article 11.5 of Regulation (EU) No. 1177/2010

Where a disabled person or person with reduced mobility is accompanied by a recognised assistance dog, that dog shall be accommodated together with that person, provided that the carrier, travel agent or tour operator is notified in accordance with applicable national rules on the carriage of recognised assistance dogs on board passenger ships, where such rules exist.

Article 10 of Regulation (EU) No 1177/2010

Subject to the access conditions provided for in Article 9(1), carriers and terminal operators shall, within their respective areas of competence, provide assistance free of charge to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility, as specified in Annexes II and III, in ports, including embarkation and disembarkation, and on board ships. The assistance shall, if possible, be adapted to the individual needs of the disabled person or person with reduced mobility.

Annex II and III as referred to in Article 10 make reference to:

- Ground handling of recognised assistance dogs when relevant (Annex II)
- Carriage of recognised assistance dogs on board the ship, subject to national regulations (Annex III).

Part 3 – Status of Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding sets down the common position agreed between APHA and Ferry/Cruise Operators regarding how they will facilitate the carriage of recognised assistance dogs by sea into Great Britain and ensure assistance dogs are presented to the appropriate persons for checks prior to disembarkation at a port in Great Britain.

By signing the Memorandum of Understanding, the Ferry/Cruise Operator agrees to use all reasonable endeavours to comply with the written procedures set out below and in the addendum to the MOU.

APHA and Ferry/Cruise Operators will review these written procedures and the operation of the Memorandum of Understanding from time to time.

Name of Operating Company:

Date of Completion/Amendment:

Section 2 – General Procedures:

Operation

1. Check-in Procedures

A. Carriers are required through their ticketing and booking systems to identify travellers with recognised assistance dogs. Before accepting a booking, checks should be made to ensure that the dog is a recognised assistance dog.¹

Description of the process

B. Passengers should be reminded of the import requirements for entering the UK with an assistance dog as set out in the EU Pet Travel Scheme when booking is received.

The Carrier could supply a checklist for the owner to confirm that they have the required documentation to comply with the Pet Travel Scheme

¹ 'Recognised assistance dog' means guide and other assistance dogs, which are highly trained to assist a wide range of disabled persons with everyday tasks. Guide dogs which are trained primarily to provide mobility assistance to blind or partially sighted people are trained by an organisation that is accepted by and affiliated to the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF). Assistance dogs are trained by an organisation that meets the full membership criteria of Assistance Dogs International (ADI). Additional information can be found in - "Guidance for the carriage of recognised assistance dogs (e.g. guide or hearing dogs) when travelling by ship (Guidance Note 4)" at- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/36772/draft-guidance-note-4.pdf

Operation

2. Detection of undeclared animals

The identification of undeclared pets is an essential part of prevention of smuggling. Carriers should describe the instruction and training given to all staff and points in transit through the journey where illegal imports might be detected.²

Description of the process

²In the event that an undeclared dog or other pet is smuggled onto the vessel and is detected by staff, the seacraft captain must inform the seaport of disembarkation which would be asked to inform the Local Authority. If a recognised assistance dog is smuggled into the UK or fails the PET Travel Scheme checks at the seaport of arrival, then the owner will be responsible for any costs and charges incurred should the dog be placed in quarantine.

3. Inspection procedures at and prior to embarkation

A. Records of checks must be available and provided to APHA if requested.

B. Describe how staff will be trained to carry out checks and their knowledge kept up to date.

4. Completion of the pets check database

Describe how the Carrier database (website) will be completed for all pets checked.

5. Dogs that failed the checks

A. All dogs that fail checks at embarkation cannot be accepted unless the owner obtains a Rabies Import licence.

A. Carrier staff will not allow assistance dogs to travel that failed the Pets checks at embarkation unless an Import Licence has been obtained from APHA by the Owner.

B. Carrier staff will inform the Local Authority of the Port of disembarkation if a dog fails the Pets checks prior to disembarkation.

B. Dogs that fail their checks at disembarkation must be treated as illegal landings and the Local Authority for the Port must be contacted.

The above details must not be changed without giving notice to APHA (Centre for International Trade – Carlisle (CITC)). Written agreement must be obtained from CITC before any change is made.

Signed for Ferry/Cruise Operator:

Date:

Name in BLOCK LETTERS:

Status/Designation:

Address:

Email address:

Recommendation by Regional APHA office

Signature:

APHA office:

Name in BLOCK LETTERS

Date:

Regional Veterinary Lead/Scotland Veterinary Lead/Veterinary Lead Wales

This form must be submitted with the Addendum to the Centre for International Trade – Carlisle - Imports@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Animal and Plant Health Agency
Centre for International Trade - Carlisle
Import Team
Eden Bridge House
Lowther Street
Carlisle
CA3 8DX

Tel: 03000 200 301
Fax: 0208 0260 498

FAIR PROCESSING NOTICE

Defra, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the Food Standards Agency are Data Controllers in Common in respect of personal data processed by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). For the purposes and usage of the data by APHA and the data sharing arrangements, please see the Personal Information Charter on GOV.UK. A hard copy of this can be provided if required; please contact your local APHA Field Service office. APHA will not permit any unwarranted breach of confidentiality or act in contravention of their obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998. APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs working to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.