

ECASBA POSITION PAPER



VETERINARY CHECKS – CARGOES OF ANIMAL ORIGIN

BACKGROUND:

Veterinary checks are a crucial component of the border controls for both import and transshipment cargoes of animal origin. In both cases the ship agent at the port of arrival is responsible for correct compliance with, and lodgement of, reporting formalities to the veterinary inspection authority (BIP) and, in case of import cargo, to the consignee and the forwarder. Additionally in case of transshipment cargo, the agent is required to organise the transfer of the cargo from the deep-sea vessel to the feeder vessel. This position paper focuses on the transshipment of veterinary cargo only.

ECASBA POSITION:

Given the vital role played by the ship agent in complying with the relevant procedures, minimising the impact on the onward logistics chain and coordinating the transshipment, ECASBA and its member associations should be consulted immediately any new developments in laws or procedures related to veterinary inspections for import and transshipment cargo are proposed.

The following issues are important for the agent:

- Extend the period of seven days for cargo to stand before requiring a documentary check. In recent years, changes to sailing schedules, particularly of feeder services, have led to a significant increase in the number of containers staying at transshipment ports in excess of seven days. Containers are also able to maintain the required temperatures for extended periods so there are no practical reasons why the seven day inspection free stay time cannot be extended.
- The original documentation for the cargo is usually sent directly to the final receiver and under normal circumstances is not available for inspection at the transshipment port. It should be sufficient for the health authorities at the transshipment port to initially sight copies of the documentation, from which they can determine if there is a need for further action. If so the original documentation can be provided.
- Determining the need for inspections should in all cases be based primarily on risk-based analysis, for example known (AEO, trusted trader etc.) or unknown shipper or consignee, cargo description, place of origin and similar.
- For consistency, there should be a level playing field between Member States in terms of application of regulations, operational and inspection requirements.

PARTIES INVOLVED:

- ECASBA Secretariat and Member associations
- DG-SANTE
- Local veterinary and animal health authorities
- Other European associations (especially ECSA)

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RESPONSIBLE ADVISORY PANEL MEMBER:

Marco Tak

SECRETARIAT:

Jonathan Williams

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