

# Bringing a dog into Tasmania

Date: July 2015

## BIOSECURITY TASMANIA FACT SHEET

### Does Tasmania have any special Import Requirement for bringing a dog into the State?

Yes. Dogs must be treated for hydatid Tapeworm (*Echinococcus granulosus*). There are only a few exceptions to this requirement (see below).

### Why does Tasmania have a special Import Requirement for bringing a dog into the State?

Tasmania is the only Australian state to be provisionally free of hydatid disease. To keep it that way, Tasmania has some conditions that you must meet before you can take your dog into the State.

Hydatid disease is a serious and sometimes fatal disease of humans. It is “caught” by close contact with an infected dog. An infected dog rarely shows any signs of being unwell.

Tragically, children are more susceptible to hydatid disease because they are the most likely to cuddle a dog, or let it lick them, and not wash their hands before eating.

Hydatid disease was a significant public health problem in Tasmania in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed, the number of human cases was much higher in Tasmania than in any other part of Australia. As a result, a statewide hydatid disease eradication program was established in the late 1960s. It was a huge undertaking that included mass testing and treatment for Tasmania’s dog population.

The disease was effectively controlled in the mid



1990s and Tasmania became officially recognised as having provisional freedom from hydatid disease. Part of that hydatid program is still in place – namely, the special requirements for dogs entering Tasmania.

### Prohibited Dogs?

Dingoes, foxes and wolves cannot be imported into Tasmania.

### How do I comply with the Import Requirement for bringing a dog into Tasmania?

Before a dog can enter Tasmania, its owner must have **evidence that it has been treated with praziquantel at a dose rate of 5 mg/kg body weight within 14 days before entry to Tasmania.**

The evidence can be:

- An official statement/certificate by a vet;
- A statutory declaration by the owner; or
- Other evidence of treatment (such as the pill packet and purchase receipt) that is carried by whoever accompanies the dog into Tasmania.

## Does the dog have to be treated by a vet?

No. You can treat the dog yourself.

There are several worm treatments on the market. Some are praziquantel only, some are combination intestinal wormers and some are heart worm treatments that include praziquantel.

But, please note that there are some worm treatments that do not include praziquantel and are therefore not effective against the hydatid tapeworm.

If you are administering the treatment yourself, check the box (pill packet) to make sure it is a product that includes praziquantel. Then it's just a case of giving your dog the correct dose, as per the instructions on the packet. It is important you do not under-dose.

## What dogs are exempt from this Import Requirement?

Dogs returning to Tasmania after no more than 14 days on the mainland are exempt, as are puppies under 12 weeks, greyhounds if racing within 6 days of arrival, law enforcement dogs and assistance dogs for the disabled.

## What would happen if a dog arrived in Tasmania without meeting this Import Requirement?

Any dog that arrives in Tasmania: Without the above evidence, **or** Treatment has expired (more than 14 days), **or** Returning Tassie dogs-interstate for more than 14 days.

You will be provided with tablets containing Praziquantel by Biosecurity Tasmania during the quarantine inspection.

A fee for service is issued to record this non-compliance. The owner will also risk an on-the-spot fine of \$308.00.

## What information should the letter from the Vet contain:

- Name of dog
- Date of treatment for the Hydatids tapeworm
- **Active ingredient name** and dosage rate
- Veterinarian's signature
- Contact details for the Veterinary Clinic

## Are there other things I should or should not do when taking a dog to Tasmania?

It is illegal in Tasmania to feed or allow dogs access to cooked or uncooked offal from cattle, sheep, goats or pigs.

Offal refers to all internal organs from these types of animals. So, fresh livers and hearts from butchers shops and supermarkets should not be fed to dogs.

Please note that offal is sometimes found in manufactured pet food. This is safe and legal to feed to dogs because it has been commercially sterilised or heat-treated according to an approved process.

You must never allow your dog to roam, especially in rural or semi-rural areas where there is a risk of it coming across a carcass and thereby accessing offal.

## Frequently asked questions:

**Q:** I'm travelling to Tasmania with my dog when is it best to treat it for Hydatids?

**A:** Biosecurity Tasmania recommends all dogs be treated within a few days of travelling to Tasmania.

**Q:** My dog was treated a fortnight ago for the Hydatids tapeworm is this okay?

**A:** No, Dogs treated more than 14 days is invalid, your dog will need to be treated again.

