

**Department of Agriculture****National Directorate Animal Health**

<b>Notice No. VPN-2002-22</b>	<b>Date: 1 OCTOBER 2002</b>
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<b>TO: STATE VETERINARY OFFICERS</b>
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**SUBJECT: Standards for the registration of an import quarantine facility for reptiles.**

<b>PART I</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
<b>PART II</b>	<b>registration of a private import quarantine station for reptiles</b>
<b>PART III</b>	<b>Listing of approved private import quarantine station for reptiles.</b>
<b>ANNEX A</b>	<b>Application for official registration of a private import quarantine station for reptiles.</b>
<b>ANNEX B</b>	<b>Inspection report of a private import quarantine station for reptiles.</b>

# PART I

## DEFINITIONS

### FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS STANDARD DOCUMENT

<b><i>Authorised person</i></b>	means any person authorised to exercise or perform any power or duty, or requested to render any service, by the Controlling Authority.
<b><i>Approved Private Quarantine Station for reptiles.</i></b>	means a facility under the control of the controlling authority where a group of animals is maintained in isolation, with no direct or indirect contact with other animals, in order to undergo observation for a specified length of time and, if appropriate, testing and treatment.
<b><i>Controlling Authority</i></b>	means the authority which is directly responsible for the application of animal health measures.
<b><i>Manager</i></b>	in relation to a facility includes any person for the time being responsible for the management of the facility.
<b><i>Official veterinary control</i></b>	means that the Controlling Authority knows the location of the animals and the identity of their owner or responsible keeper and is able to apply appropriate animal health measures, as required
<b><i>Owner</i></b>	means the person in whom the ownership in respect of animal, thing or property is vested.
<b><i>State Veterinarian</i></b>	A veterinarian authorised by the Controlling Authority to perform animal health inspections.
<b><i>State official</i></b>	An officer authorised by the Controlling Authority to perform animal health inspections.

**Note:** The definitions used in the South African Animal Diseases Act (No 35 of 1984) should be used in case of uncertainty.

## PART II

### REGISTRATION OF A PRIVATE IMPORT QUARANTINE STATION FOR REPTILES

#### 1. REGISTRATION FOR IMPORT STATUS

The applicant must apply in writing to the Controlling Authority, if he wishes to register for a private import quarantine station for reptiles.

The purpose of this policy is to update the quarantine requirements for reptiles in order that the legal importation of reptiles becomes more user friendly and scientifically accurate. This policy is based on the principle that metabolically active reptiles will generate antibodies to neutralize a viraemia/bacterimia, similar to warm-blooded animals. Therefore it must be proven that the reptiles were kept above 26°C for the duration of the quarantine period.

##### 1.1. Existing Reptile Quarantine Facilities

These facilities will not be expected to implement any changes which this policy may require them to make unless they wish to continue importing reptiles. In order for reptiles currently under lifelong quarantine to be released, it will be necessary for the facility owner to prove that the reptiles have been kept above 26°C for at least 30 days. This must be done under the supervision and control of the State Veterinarian who is responsible for the facility.

The State Veterinarian and facility owner must agree on one of the following methods to prove that the reptiles were kept at over 26°C for at least 30 days:

- the placement under veterinary supervision of a minimum thermometer to measure the ambient temperature in an enclosed room. The thermometer must be put in a secure wire cage, which must be officially sealed to prevent unauthorised tampering. This thermometer should be read 30 days later under veterinary supervision and obviously not show a temperature of less than 26°C.
- the placement of a tamperproof thermograph in an enclosed room, the tracing of which can be read by the State Veterinarian after 30 days. This is the best option, but unfortunately an expensive one, for old established quarantine centres which may no longer import reptiles.

Once the State Veterinarian is satisfied that all reptiles have been subjected to the 30 day heat treatment, without the possibility of reptiles post treatment having been contaminated by pre-treatment reptiles or fomites then he/she must cancel the quarantine in writing, accurately describing all the reptiles released from quarantine. A copy of this cancellation notice must be kept on record at the office of the State Veterinarian and a copy must be sent to the National Department of Agriculture, Directorate Animal Health so that the facility can be removed from the list of approved Reptile Quarantine Stations.

Any existing facility, which still wishes to import reptiles, must organise an inspection by the responsible State Veterinarian, before any further import permits are applied for. The State Veterinarian will inspect the facility and ensure all requirements of this policy which can be immediately implemented, such as the management requirements, are in place and a schedule is drawn up indicating when any major alterations which need to be done will be completed. The below listed, necessary application documents, which

have not been lodged with the National Department of Agriculture, Directorate Animal Health must be forwarded together with Annexure B, the inspection report, to the registrar of private quarantine stations at the National Department of Agriculture, Directorate Animal Health. Remember an inspection report must also be forwarded to the National Department of Agriculture, Directorate Animal Health for annual re-approval.

Whilst the facility is adjusting to the new policy they will be allowed to continue importing in accordance with the old life long quarantine policy. Once the necessary alterations have been completed the new policy will be applied to the facility.

## **1.2. Indigenous Reptiles from Neighbouring States**

These reptiles will be exempt from any form of quarantine, provided they are indigenous to Southern Africa. The reason for this decision is that these reptiles could cross the border anyway and since they are indigenous, they cannot alter the health status of South Africa in any significant manner. Please see the proposed permits at the end of this document.

The below listed documents must be presented to the Senior Manager Animal Health on application for registration:

- Annex A - Application form.
- Site and detailed structural plans.
- Annex B - Inspection Report completed by a Controlling Authority or inspector from the National Department of Agriculture Directorate of Animal Health.
- Written undertaking from the Controlling Authority that they are able to supply the necessary inspection services.
- Written permission from the Local Municipal Authority to erect a reptile holding facility.

Note that registration is valid for one year only, in order to prevent dilapidation only an Inspection Report need be submitted, unless there is structural changes that a new plan must be submitted.

In conclusion it must be stated that the ***approval of the facility can be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of the Senior Manager Animal Health if any shortcomings are detected.*** Quarantine can only be lifted in writing by a state official.

## 2. MINIMUM structural REQUIREMENTS FOR A VETERINARY APPROVED PRIVATE IMPORT QUARANTINE STATION FOR REPTILES

- 2.1. The establishment should consist of a burglar resistant building with one access point. This access point should have a double door access system with a vestibule of at least 1 metre wide between the doors. The doors should be solid, tight fitting and robust enough to present a significant barrier to any animals outside the facility, as well as unauthorised visitors. The doors must be closed and locked when the facility is unattended, except to allow the passage of authorised persons. The two doors may never be open both at the same time. A warning sign prohibiting unauthorised entrance must be prominently displayed on the outer door.
- 2.2. Buildings housing reptiles should be vermin protected and direct contact with non-quarantine reptiles must not be possible. Provision must also be made to prevent escape of reptiles under quarantine, even if they escape their holding cages.
- NB:** In the case of insect free quarantine the building must be a solid insect proof structure. There must be no openable apertures except for the door which opens into a solid insect proof vestibule, which has its only aperture as the door that opens independently to the outside of the structure. The doors must fit tightly with a rubber or silicon seal. The doors should close automatically to limit access of insects on entry and facilitate the maintenance of the positive/negative pressure within the structure. There must be an acceptable automatic form of flying insect control in the vestibule.
- 2.3. Buildings should be constructed so that all surfaces inside, are of an impervious, smooth material to facilitate cleaning and disinfection.
- 2.4. The area immediately in front of the access point to the building should be devegetated (except for trees) and debris free. Ideally concrete should be used to facilitate the maintenance of a hygienic establishment.
- 2.5. Provision must be made within the quarantine facility for storing all equipment and waste products, including uneaten food, especially live prey, so that no pathogen contained in such matter can infect a susceptible host, until quarantine is lifted. Effluent and run-off which cannot be stored must be effectively treated e.g. incineration, municipal sewerage system, french drain via collection pit or septic tank.
- NB:** In the case of insect free quarantine, drains must be constructed so that insects cannot enter i.e. they must be properly sealed and lead out through a U-shaped water trap. Air must be filtered in and out through suitable insect proof filters. Ensure enough air changes per cubic meter are catered for by the ventilation equipment.
- 2.6. A work area for treatments, post mortems etc. must be provided.
- 2.7. A tamperproof thermograph must be fixed inside the facility to prove that the ambient temperature was never less than 26°C during the quarantine period. Electrical temperature monitoring equipment dependent on power from the mains must have a back up power source, which can take over the power supply in the event of a power failure.
- 2.8. Temperature control equipment must be safe, suitable for the species concerned and properly installed.

### 3. Management REQUIREMENTS FOR A VETERINARY APPROVED PRIVATE IMPORT QUARANTINE STATION FOR REPTILES

1. Good co-operation and communication with the State Veterinarian. This includes immediate notification of any illness, death or other problems.
2. Quarantine establishments must be single purpose and the all in, all out principle must be strictly adhered to. Where several rooms are run as individual units the all in, all out principle can be applied room by room.
3. Appropriate biosecurity measures must be applied. This means limited access must be enforced and no reptiles, including any progeny born during quarantine maybe removed from the facility until quarantine is lifted. No potential fomite of any kind may be removed without written permission of the State Veterinarian. Dead reptiles must be temporarily stored in a refrigerator within the quarantine facility until state officials can institute safe proceedings for the necessary diagnostic work and effective disposal.
4. Full records relating to inspection visits, identification, arrival dates, mortality, disease diagnosis, treatment, etc. should be maintained and readily available for inspection.
5. Only authorised persons (officially authorised by the State Veterinarian) may enter the premises. No visitors are allowed.
6. The facility must be re-approved on an annual basis and the onus of application for re-approval rests with the owner. The facility must be re-inspected after the necessary cleaning and disinfection has been completed on the lifting of quarantine before a new import permit will be granted. Only disinfectants with the necessary virucidal, bacteriocidal and fungicidal effects, registered with Act 36 of 1947 may be used.

In conclusion it must be stated that the *approval of the facility can be withdrawn at any time without warning, if any shortcomings are detected*. Quarantine can only be lifted in writing by a State Official.

#### **4. INSPECTION TO APPROVE A PRIVATE IMPORT QUARANTINE STATION FOR REPTILES.**

- 4.1 An official will be appointed by the Controlling Authority to inspect a private quarantine station for reptiles of import status
- 4.2 The owner of the private quarantine station and the official as appointed in 4.1 will agree upon a suitable date for the inspection. The official will inform the owner of the private quarantine station of the conditions under which the inspection will be carried out.
- 4.3 The basis for facility approval will be the requirements as described in this document.
- 4.4 The official appointed by the Controlling Authority will be responsible for the following actions/procedures:
  - a. Acquaint himself/herself with the minimum requirements of a import private quarantine facility for reptiles
  - b. Provide a new applicant with a registration form that corresponds in form and content to the model in Annex A.
  - c. Inspect the private quarantine station for reptiles and complete Annex B with appropriate comments, upon receipt of the properly completed and signed registration form.
  - d. If the facility does not comply with the requirements in 4.4.a the official must provide the owner of a facility with a detailed report with the reasons why a facility can not be approved. The report must correspond in form and content to the model in Annex B.
  - e. Arrange for another inspection when the owner indicates that all the deficiencies had been rectified.
  - f. Provide an acceptable inspection and disease reporting service to the private quarantine station for reptiles. Import approval will only be considered once such a service is in place.
  - g. Keep the original registration document on file.
  - h. Submit a copy of the registration (Annex A) to the Senior Manager Animal Health for attention Dr. B.B.P. Qwalela. The fax number is 012 319 7491.

## PART III

### LISTING OF APPROVED IMPORT PRIVATE QUARANTINE STATIONS FOR REPTILES.

1. All approved private quarantine station for reptiles must be listed in an official “List of Approved Veterinary Facilities” to be compiled and regularly up-dated by the Controlling Authority with a copy to the Senior Manager Animal Health.
2. The list must contain the following information for each approved import private quarantine stations for reptiles.
  - a. Registration number
  - b. Name of owner
  - c. Registered name of private quarantine station.
  - d. Postal address
  - e. Telephone number
  - f. Fax number
  - g. Province
  - h. District
  - i. Map co-ordinates
3. The list will only be made available upon request to interested parties or persons.



(Logo of Controlling Authority)

**ANNEX A (VPN/2002/22)**  
**APPLICATION FOR IMPORT/EXPORT APPROVAL:**  
 .....

Reference no

**A. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT**

DATE		
NAME OF REPORTING PROVINCIAL OFFICER		
NAME OF HOLDING		
APPROVAL NUMBER		
PHYSICAL ADDRESS		
POSTAL ADDRESS		
POSTAL CODE		
TOWN		
PROVINCE		
TELEPHONE NUMBER		
FAX NUMBER		
NAME OF THE MANAGER / OWNER		
E-MAIL ADDRESS OF MANAGER / OWNER		
NAME OF THE HYGIENE MANAGER		
E-MAIL ADDRESS OF HYGIENE MANAGER		
NAME OF AUTHORISED VETERINARIAN RESPONSIBLE FOR VETERINARY INSPECTIONS AND EXPORT CERTIFICATION		
NAMES OF AUTHORISED PROVINCIAL OFFICERS RESPONSIBLE FOR INSPECTING THE HOLDING ON A REGULAR BASIS		
EXPORTING TO (COUNTRIES)		
IMPORTING FROM (COUNTRIES)		
TYPE OF ESTABLISHMENT	LIVE ANIMALS FOR BREEDING	
	LIVE ANIMALS FOR SLAUGHTER	
	SEMEN	
	EMBRYOS/OVA	
	EMBRYONATED EGGS	
	TANNERY	
	TAXIDERMY	
	CANNED FEED FOR ANIMALS	
	DRY FEED FOR ANIMALS	
	OTHER (SPECIFY)	

SPECIES	CATTLE	
	SHEEP	
	GOATS	
	PIGS	
	HORSES	
	WILD GAME	
	POULTRY	
	CAGE REPTILES	
	OSTRICH	
	CROCODILE	
	PRIMATES	
	OTHER (SPECIFY)	

**B. DECLARATION BY STATE VETERINARIAN**

I \_\_\_\_\_ the veterinarian responsible for providing an inspection and certification service at the facility mentioned in the preceding pages hereby declare that:

Drawings of the establishment and a comprehensive inspection report are attached to this application; and

I agree to abide by all the conditions set by the Department of Agriculture and importing countries for the export of animals/animal products obtained from this facility.

**and/or**

I agree to abide by all the conditions set by the Department of Agriculture for the importation of animals/animal products.

Signed at (place) \_\_\_\_\_ on, (date) .....

.....  
(signature of official veterinarian)

Stamp \_\_\_\_\_  
(name in capital letters, title and qualification)

## ANNEX B

### INSPECTION REPORT FOR A PRIVATE REPTILE IMPORT QUARANTINE STATION

1. The site and location must be approved by the Senior Manager Animal Health. A plan, indicating surrounding structures, neighbouring activities and a detailed plan of the facility must accompany the application for approval, as well as this form completed by either the Provincial State Veterinarian or an inspector from the National Department of Agriculture.

Yes       No

2. Describe the surroundings and the general impression gained from outside the building. Particularly highlight security and isolation aspects.

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3. Is there a warning sign at the entrance?     Yes     No

4. Comment of the suitability of the building as a secure reptile quarantine station, paying particular attention to construction materials used, soundness of structure and insulation properties. Mention any doubtful qualities.

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5. Comment on the entrance compliance to this description: a double door access system with a vestibule of at least 1 metre wide between the doors. The doors should be solid, tight fitting and robust enough to present a significant barrier to any animals outside the facility, as well as unauthorised visitors.

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6. Is the facility adequately protected against vermin, please give reasons for your answer?

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6. What provision is made to prevent escape of reptiles under quarantine, even if they escape their holding cages?

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8. If the facility is to be approved as insect proof please comment on compliance with the following:

- the building must be a solid insect proof structure. There must be no openable apertures except for the door which opens into a solid insect proof vestibule, which has its only aperture as the door that opens independently to the outside of the structure. The doors must fit tightly with a rubber or silicon seal. The doors should close automatically to limit access of insects on entry and facilitate the maintenance of the positive/negative pressure within the structure. There must be an acceptable automatic form of flying insect control in the vestibule.

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- the drains must be constructed so that insects cannot enter i.e. they must be properly sealed and lead out through a U-shaped water trap. Air must be filtered in and out through suitable insect proof filters. Ensure enough air changes per cubic meter are catered for by the ventilation equipment.

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9. Describe surface inside the building with regard to disinfection:

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10. How are uneaten food, especially live prey, waste products, bedding, handling equipment, fluid effluents, etc. dealt with:

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11. Describe the temperature monitoring equipment in DETAIL, particularly highlight the tamperproof features: \_\_\_\_\_

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12. Is a back up power source necessary and if so what alternative power is available?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. Are you sure the management of the facility was clearly understood by the responsible people?

Yes  No

14. Comment on the records currently available and outline what your recommendations to improve the current record system were: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Department)

certify that I have today inspected the facility \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of facility)

at \_\_\_\_\_  
(Physical Address)

and found the above detailed conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Official Signature

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Official stamp

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_