

Hygiene Protocols for the Prevention
and Control of Diseases
(Particularly Beak and Feather Disease)
in Australian Birds

Transportation protocol
for Live Birds



Australian Government

Department of the Environment and Heritage

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Note

This document describes a *Transportation Protocol for Live Birds* and has been developed with the involvement and cooperation of a broad range of stakeholders, but the making of this document does not necessarily indicate the commitment of individual stakeholders to undertaking any specific actions. The attainment of objectives and the provision of funds may be subject to budgetary and other constraints affecting the parties involved. Proposed actions may be subject to modification over the life of the document due to changes in knowledge.

Transportation Protocol for Live Birds

The protocols outlined in this document have been adapted from the IATA (2005).

General standards for transportation of birds

- Birds must be healthy and independent
- Birds should be transported in a secure, darkened and well-ventilated container. Most birds will settle into a dark carrying container.
- Have the bird checked and certified healthy by a qualified avian veterinarian
- Ensure that the transportation cage is sturdy and provides enough room for the bird to stand, turn around, and flex its wings without damaging its tail.
- If the cage is to be re-used, it should be constructed of a material that is light, impervious, and which can be easily cleaned and disinfected.
- Encourage water intake before the flight, if possible.
- Transportation containers should be sturdy enough to survive dropping and minor impacts.
- They should be closed on all sides, except for an open front for ventilation.
- On long trips water should be provided by wetting cotton wool in fixed containers.
- For short trips fruit and seeds will suffice.
- Transportation causes stress and should be kept to an absolute minimum time
- Containers should be sufficiently robust for the species they contain and should be securely closed during transportation to prevent injury or escape
- If there is more than one transportation cage, they should not be packed together in such a manner as to obstruct efficient air circulation between them.
- Food should always be available during transportation, especially for small or young birds, and water should be provided at intervals of at least every eight hours.
- In hot weather this should be reduced to every six hours.
- Birds should not be exposed to temperature extremes - they should not be shipped in very hot weather, unless in an air-conditioned environment.
- A bird should not be transported in a container with a bird of an incompatible species.
- As far as is practical, birds should be transported one bird per compartment to avoid birds injuring each other due to stress (this may occur even with bonded pairs).
- Aggressive species must be shipped singly.
- The floor of a carry cage should allow birds to obtain a secure footing.
- The floor should be sealed and covered with a non-toxic absorbent material to stop the escape of urine or faeces.
- Cages should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between consignments. Cages of wooden construction cannot be cleaned and disinfected effectively. Wooden perches should be discarded between shipments.

Shipper's Responsibilities (within Australia)

Before a bird is handed to the carrier, the shipper must:

- Verify that the species to be transported are not protected or restricted, whether nationally or internationally.
- Have all the necessary supporting documentation in hand
- Pack the birds in containers that match the basic construction principles found in the IATA Live Animals Regulations, regarding safety, protection and comfort.
- Attach to the transportation documentation a copy of feeding and watering instructions to be followed in case of delays or other emergencies. The shipper must record on the container instructions the date and time that food and water had been given to the animals, prior to carrier's acceptance.
- Plan, together with the carrier, the most direct route possible.
- Birds in lay must not be transported
- Verify that the animals of a shipment are in good health and conditions to be transported by air. This must be confirmed by the Shipper's Certification for Live Animals.
- Verify that wild-caught birds are accustomed to confinement and the provided diet.
- Ensure that the container is free of sharp edges or projections that might cause injury
- The carrier will not accept an animal container when:
 - ▶ The container is not sufficiently sturdy or is in disrepair and the animal is likely to escape
 - ▶ The container is unclean
 - ▶ The bird appears diseased
 - ▶ The container could cause injury or suffering to the bird
 - ▶ The container fails to meet the RSPCA regulations that the bird must be able to stretch its wings, allow the bird to stand in a natural position and turn around without traumatising its tail.

Carrier's Responsibilities

- Provide a suitable vehicle or aircraft for transportation.
- Provide the required space within the cargo compartment
- Ensure adequate environmental conditions in the cargo compartment in relation to ventilation range, air flow and temperature control.
- Ensure adequate environmental conditions apply during intermediate stopovers and during loading or unloading
- Ensure that other cargos do not affect the birds.
- Determine whether attendance is required during transportation.
- Ensure that required documentation is present eg shipper's Certification for Live Animals, health and welfare certificates for the animals, export, import and transit permits (when required).

Attendant's Responsibilities

- The attendant must be provided by the shipper and must be deemed competent by the carrier. They must show competent skills in handling the birds
- The attendant must bear all the documentation necessary to enter the country of destination as well as the country of transshipment when required [i.e. passport, visa, vaccination certificates (if required), etc.].

Container Marking and Labelling

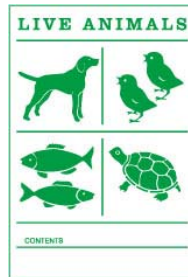
Full name and address and a 24 hour telephone number of the shipper, consignee or a person responsible for the shipment if other than the shipper or consignee.

The scientific and common names of the animals in the container and quantity of each animal as shown on the shippers declaration.

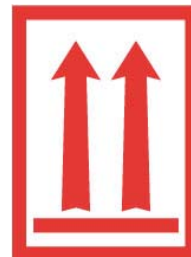
Labels

The following labels (minimum dimensions of label 10 x 15 cm must be used on an animal container:

“Live Animals” label (green)



“Package Orientation” label on four sides of the container



Reference

1. IATA 2005. IATA Live Animals Regulations. 2005. 32nd Edition ISBN 92-9295-560-4. IATA, PO Box 113, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H4Z 1M1