



**Australian Government**

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**Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts**

**CONDITIONS  
FOR THE  
OVERSEAS TRANSFER  
OF  
TASMANIAN DEVILS**

March 2008

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## **PREAMBLE**

The Tasmanian Devil, *Sarcophilus harrisii*, is a specialised carnivorous marsupial that feeds primarily on the bodies of captured prey and carrion.

Adult Tasmanian Devils generally live in discrete home range areas that vary in size depending on the quality of the habitat (in terms of access to food).

Successful captive management of Tasmanian Devils is contingent upon the provision of an adequate diet, an understanding of the social behaviour of the species at the individual and population level and the recognition of such socio-biological considerations in captivity.

The short life-span and reproductive behaviour of Tasmanian Devils is complex and requires careful management if successful breeding and rearing of young is to be achieved in captivity. In the past, attempts to establish self-sustaining colonies of Tasmanian Devils in overseas facilities have been largely unsuccessful. One of the major problems has been a lack of understanding of reproductive behaviour and the conditions required to encourage it in captivity.

Tasmanian Devils are selected for overseas transfer according to approved species management principles.

Careful preparation and attention to detail together with the establishment and maintenance of close liaison between the Australian exporter and its overseas counterpart, is essential to the success of Tasmanian Devil transfers and overall well-being of the new colony.

The following conditions have been formulated to ensure the welfare of Tasmanian Devils involved in overseas transfers and to maximise the chances of establishing sustainable Tasmanian Devil populations for permanent exhibition. The conditions provide the framework within which it is determined whether the statutory requirements of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)* have been met regarding transport, accommodation and care en route to and from, and in, overseas facilities.

This document forms part of the process undertaken for the overseas transfer of Tasmanian Devils. In addition to meeting the terms of these conditions, the overseas transfer of Tasmanian Devils involves the assessment of an export permit application; facility assessments of individual receiving institutions to meet best practice management standards; and the entering into of an Ambassador Agreement between the exporter, the importer, Department of Primary Industries and Water, and the Australian Government.

These conditions have been developed in consultation with a number of interested groups including the Australasian Regional Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria (ARAZPA), in particular, the Monotreme and Marsupial Taxon Advisory Group. The Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) would like to thank the contributors for the work and effort they put into the compilation of this document. A list of contributors is available from DEWHA.

While DEWHA reserves the right to amend these conditions without prior notice to an affected person every reasonable effort will be made to discuss the amendment prior to its implementation. For further information, please contact Wildlife Trade Assessments, Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts GPO Box 787, Canberra ACT 2601 Australia, phone +61 2 6274 2343, fax +61 2 6274 1921, or email [wta@environment.gov.au](mailto:wta@environment.gov.au) .

## **1. SELECTION OF EXPORT STOCK**

- 1.1 The optimum age range for moving Tasmanian Devils for breeding is between 10 and 21 months. This should ensure that animals are fully weaned and in place at their new facility well before onset of first breeding.
- 1.2 Animals outside this age range may be approved for transfer where the applicant can demonstrate that the animal's health and behavioural characteristics are such that the risks to the animal are no greater than for optimum-age Tasmanian Devils.
- 1.3 Females should not be lactating (i.e. the litter should be fully weaned before transfer)
- 1.4 Tasmanian Devils are regularly bred in captivity. The DEWHA must be advised of the specific role each animal being exported will play at the receiving institution (i.e. only for display, to become part of a breeding group, etc). If the animal is to become a part of a breeding group it must be genetically suitable to others in the group.
- 1.5 Animals should be selected for export using the criteria in the document "Risk Categorisation for RELOCATION of captive Tasmanian devils" published by Tasmania's Department of Primary Industries and Water. Unless otherwise agreed with the relevant veterinary authorities, only animals from the low risk categories (1 and 2) should be exported.

## **2. PRE EXPORT REQUIREMENTS**

- 2.1 Tasmanian Devils to be exported from Australia must be isolated from animals not of similar health status for a minimum of 28 days prior to export. Enclosures used to house animals during this period must comply with the guidelines set out by ARAZPA for the husbandry of Tasmanian Devils<sup>1</sup>. If more than one animal is being exported, they should preferably be housed separately in a manner that would prevent transmission of pathogens between animals. The animals may be housed in a group, however, should an animal fail pre-export health screening due to the detection of an infectious disease it may preclude the others from being exported. Additional quarantine requirements may be required to address the issue of Devil Facial Tumour Disease (DFTD). However, knowledge of the disease and its transmission is changing rapidly. Any additional measures will be applied in the context of information available at the time of application.
- 2.2 Within the period of isolation, each Tasmanian Devil must be examined under anaesthetic by a veterinary surgeon experienced in the care and treatment of Tasmanian Devils. The examination should be conducted early in the isolation period to ensure that results are available well before the export date.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.3 If the animal has been examined by a veterinary surgeon without evidence of disease being detected, then a Certificate of Health will be issued by the examining veterinary surgeon in respect of each Tasmanian Devil to be exported. The Certificate of Health for each Tasmanian Devil to be exported must be provided to DEWHA before the animal is exported<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> ARAZPA PO Box 20 Mosman NSW 2088 Australia. Ph +61 2 9978 4797, Fax +61 2 9978 4761, email admin@arazpa.org.au

<sup>2</sup> It is recommended that when selecting animals for export prior to isolation that they are screened as per this protocol to minimise the risk of selecting animals that may fail pre-export health screening.

<sup>3</sup> It is the responsibility of the exporting institution to ensure that all aspects of the transaction are carefully planned and coordinated well in advance of the export.

## 2.4 The Certificate shall indicate:

- a) age;
- b) sex;
- c) the weight and body condition based on assessments taken twice during isolation<sup>4</sup>. An interpretation of any significant changes should be given;
- d) condition of teeth;
- e) the results of a parasite (internal and external) examination and the name and amount of drugs given if required;
- f) the results of the veterinary examination and of one complete haematological and serum biochemical examination with comments on interpretation;
- g) that the Tasmanian Devil does not have any unresolved health problems (a medical record for the animal must be supplied to the receiving institution);
- h) that the Tasmanian Devil is free from clinical signs of disease or abnormalities;
- i) transponder implant number and the details of other identification including studbook number.
- j) that the Tasmanian Devil is not carrying young.

2.5 Each Tasmanian Devil to be exported must be implanted with a suitable microchip/transponder identification system implanted by a veterinary surgeon. If a microchip/transponder is not already implanted in the animal then implantation will occur at the same time as the animal is examined during its 28 day period of isolation. Details of the data recorded on the implant must be supplied to DEWHA.

## **3. TRANSPORTATION REQUIREMENTS**

3.1 During transfer, including to and from the airport, the Tasmanian Devil(s) must be accompanied.

Note: If it is intended that the accompanying personnel will be staff from the overseas recipient, then approval will be required from DEWHA. This approval will only be given where the recipient currently houses Tasmanian Devils, or the selected personnel are experienced in Tasmanian Devil care and the personnel spend time (at least 5 days) in Australia with the individual animals prior to departure.

3.2 Fresh food is to be made available upon disembarkation at destination.

3.3 All available medical and animal management documentation must accompany the animals.

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<sup>4</sup> Relevant personnel, other than the veterinary surgeon, such as the appropriate keeper or other trained staff may carry out these measurements during the course of isolation.

- 3.4 Tasmanian Devils must not be removed from the crates or handled in transit unless it is considered essential by accompanying personnel.
- 3.5 Noise, and the time from crating to destination, must be kept to the absolute minimum.
- 3.6 The most direct route possible is to be taken when transferring animals.

#### **4. CRATES/BOXES**

- 4.1 Tasmanian Devils must be transported in IATA<sup>5</sup> standard crates.
- 4.2 Crates should be secured according to IATA standards.
- 4.3 Tasmanian Devils must not be subjected to temperatures greater than 25°C or less than 5°C during the transfer, including during plane changes and stopovers.

#### **5. ACCLIMATISATION**

- 5.1 The staff member accompanying the Tasmanian Devils must remain with the recipient for the period required for acclimatisation of the Tasmanian Devils.
- 5.2 The length of the period of acclimatisation shall be determined by the accompanying keeper or veterinary surgeon, but will not be less than five (5) days.
- 5.3 The keeper or veterinary surgeon accompanying the Tasmanian Devils shall remain at the receiving facility until satisfied that the responsible keeping staff are competent in husbandry and veterinary care of the Tasmanian Devils, providing extra training if required.
- 5.4 During the period in which the Tasmanian Devils are becoming acclimatised to the recipient, the recipient must ensure that:
  - a) public display and any publicity involving the animals not occur until at least 48 hours after the Tasmanian Devil has been released from its transport crate;
  - b) the ambient temperature remains between 5°C and 25°C;
  - c) other appropriate acclimatisation criteria, as agreed to by the exporter and recipient based on the ARAZPA husbandry guidelines, are established and monitored by keeping and veterinary staff (e.g. feeding, denning, behaviour, digging, climbing, use of environment, use of whole exhibit, location of den).

#### **6. RECIPIENT – EXHIBIT REQUIREMENTS**

- 6.1 The recipient must have a suitable enclosure for the Tasmanian Devils, ensuring that the following parameters have been addressed:
  - a) prevention of escape by Tasmanian Devils;

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<sup>5</sup> International Air Transport Association (IATA) Live Animal Regulations. Current edition at time of publication: 33<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2006. [www.iata.org](http://www.iata.org)

- b) protection of the Tasmanian Devils against interference from other animals and the public;
- c) shade for Tasmanian Devils during the hot parts of the day;
- d) shelter from strong or cold winds;
- e) appropriate enclosure furniture and a plan for regularly changing and varying exhibit furniture;
- f) a rest area within the enclosure where the ambient temperature is not outside the range of 5°C - 25°C.
- g) the dimensions and other characteristics of the enclosure will conform with those outlined in the ARAZPA husbandry guidelines.

## **7. RECIPIENT – FEEDING REGIME**

- 7.1 Tasmanian Devils in captivity require a diet that attempts to mimic their natural diet. The captive feeding regime must provide for nutritional balance as well as encouraging the expression of natural foraging and feeding behaviour.
- 7.2 Prior to the shipment of the Tasmanian Devils, the exporter must assist the recipient to prepare and provide a draft plan for a proposed feeding/behavioural management regime detailing food items that are available and methods/frequency/location of feeding.
- 7.3 The recipient must provide Tasmanian Devils with access to fresh drinking water at all times.

## **8. RECIPIENT – STAFFING**

- 8.1 If the recipient does not currently house Tasmanian Devils, it must send to an appropriate facility sufficient staff to be properly trained in Tasmanian Devil husbandry and management prior to any shipment taking place.
- 8.2 The recipient must demonstrate access to a qualified veterinary surgeon. The veterinary surgeon must become and remain familiar with the management requirements of Devil Facial Tumour Disease, as stipulated by the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries and Water.

## **9. GENERAL ITEMS**

- 9.1 Arrangements must be made between the recipient and the exporter, sufficient to ensure the establishment and maintenance of a close liaison and regular communication on matters affecting the management and health of the Tasmanian Devils in the overseas recipient's facilities. Where there is no common language between keeping or veterinary staff at the recipient and exporting institutions, a translator with knowledge of animal husbandry and veterinary specialist terminology should be available (at the recipients expense).
- 9.2 The overseas recipient institution is required to enter into an Ambassador Agreement. This document is a four-way agreement between the overseas recipient, the Australian exporter, the Tasmanian Government Department of Primary Industries and Water and DEWHA and stipulates a number of conditions that must be met and maintained for the duration of the lives of the Tasmanian Devils and any progeny. Note: The Ambassador

Agreement also covers any Tasmanian Devils already held by the recipient.

## Appendix A

### Checklist for Satisfying Conditions

This checklist is designed for the use of applicants to ensure that all conditions have been met. Items in **bold** indicate where information must be supplied to DEWHA. Required information will also be requested on Supplementary Form G (Tasmanian Devil Specific Version) to the Permit Application (excepting the Ambassador Agreement, which is referred to on Supplementary Form C).

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#### 1. SELECTION OF EXPORT STOCK

Tasmanian Devils within optimum age range (1.1)

**OR**

Justification provided for selection outside optimum range (1.2)

All Tasmanian Devils selected free from dependent or pouch young (1.3)

Tasmanian Devils not to form part of a breeding group (1.4)

**OR**

Tasmanian Devils genetically suitable to others in breeding group (1.4)

Tasmanian Devils from DPIW risk category 1 and/or 2 (1.5)

**Information on age, origin, presence of young and breeding plans provided to DEWHA**

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#### 2. PRE EXPORT REQUIREMENTS

Quarantine Conditions met (2.1)

Veterinary examinations performed (2.2)

**Certificate of Health, satisfying all relevant conditions, supplied to DEWHA (2.3 & 2.4)**

**Suitable microchip implanted in each animal to be transferred and microchip data supplied to DEWHA (2.5)**

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#### 3. TRANSPORTATION REQUIREMENTS

**Details of personnel selected to accompany Tasmanian Devils supplied to DEWHA (3.1)**

Personnel familiar with transit and post-flight conditions (3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.2, & 4.3)

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#### 4. CRATES/BOXES

**Details of crates supplied to DEWHA (4.1)**

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## 5. ACCLIMATISATION

- Personnel accompanying Tasmanian Devils familiar with acclimatisation conditions (5.1, 5.2, 5.3 & 5.4)
  - Acclimatisation criteria agreed to by exporter and recipient and submitted to DEWHA (5.4)**
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## 6. RECIPIENT – EXHIBIT

- Supplementary Form G Questions on Security and Facilities completed and submitted to DEWHA, demonstrating the Recipient's facilities are adequate for:**
    - Prevention of escape (6.1a)
    - Protection of Tasmanian Devils (6.1b)
    - Shade (6.1c)
    - Shelter (6.1d)
    - Enclosure furniture including provision for bathing water (6.1e)
    - Temperature range (6.1f)
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## 7. RECIPIENT – FEEDING REGIME

- List of food items, quantities, methods and frequency of feeding agreed between recipient and exporter (7.2)
  - Supplementary Form G Questions on Food and Management completed and submitted to DEWHA, demonstrating that the recipient has adequate:**
    - Food items to be fed
    - Methods of feeding
    - Frequency of feeding
    - Locations for feeding
    - Access to water
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## 8. RECIPIENT - STAFFING

- Supplementary Form G Questions on Staffing completed and submitted to DEWHA, demonstrating that the recipient has:**
    - 1 keeper on staff with sufficient Tasmanian Devil experience or with training at exporter facility (8.2)
    - Access to 1 veterinarian with sufficient Tasmanian Devil experience.
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## 9. GENERAL ITEMS

- Liaison and communication arrangements made between recipient and exporter (9.1)

**Ambassador Agreement signed by exporter, recipient, DPIW and DEWHA (9.2)**