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Dear local authority,

I am writing to provide an update regarding the arrangements applying to people fleeing from Ukraine who want to come to the UK with their pets, and to thank you for your support in this endeavour.

We recognise that pets are central to so many families and people's lives and that they should not be left behind, if possible, as their owners flee the conflict. We are making it easier for people to bring their pets here so we can support refugee journeys to a safe and stable life in the UK.

Whilst we are facilitating the arrival of these pets, we must be mindful that the UK has long been rabies free. We need to continue this to protect both public and animal health. Rabies is endemic in terrestrial animals in Ukraine so it essential that we facilitate pet movements in a way that maintains our biosecurity.

Quarantine spaces in the UK are limited and will not be able to meet the anticipated demand of 1000-2000 pets. We are therefore putting in place a risk-based approach to increase our capacity through the licensing of new quarantine facilities and using other isolation options such as boarding kennels and home isolation - where appropriate - for lower-risk animals. To streamline the process for providing licences whilst responsibly managing the risks, we have set out new arrangements for pets which are not fully compliant with our routine pet import conditions, upon arrival here. In summary:

- Pets enter quarantine facilities upon arrival here.
- After passing the 30-day anniversary of leaving Ukraine, the pet will be blood tested to determine if it has been successfully vaccinated against rabies. These results will take 3 days to be returned.
- Whilst we are awaiting the blood test results, the pet will be vaccinated against other diseases, such as kennel cough and parvovirus.
- If the blood test result confirms the pet has been successfully vaccinated against rabies, it will be moved out of quarantine and into home isolation.

- If the blood test result shows the pet has not been successfully vaccinated against rabies, then it will be vaccinated or re-vaccinated against rabies, moved to an isolation place in a rescue centre or boarding kennel, and re-tested 30 days later. If the pet passes this test, they will be eligible for home isolation.

### **Isolation in licensed boarding establishments and in rescue/rehoming centres**

I appreciate that there may be concerns about licensed boarding establishments taking in pets that have not completed their course of vaccinations for other notable diseases, at least two weeks before coming to these establishments. I want to reassure you that when in quarantine, all licensed Ukrainian pet dogs and cats will be vaccinated against these diseases (e.g. parvovirus). Follow up vaccinations will be given at the appropriate time spacing, administered wherever the animal is housed at that time.

### **Isolation in people's homes**

In order for a pet to enter home isolation, APHA will initially make a veterinary assessment and determine whether the pet meets the home isolation criteria. If they approve, APHA will send the pet owner a home isolation form. The owner and their host in the UK will need to complete this and confirm that they can meet the disease control isolation standards before a licence is issued. This will include the availability of a secure enclosed garden (in the case of dogs) and whether the accommodation agreement allows for pets in the home, or if they have the homeowner's permission for home isolation. If these standards cannot be met, we will pay for the pet to be isolated in a rescue centre or boarding kennel.

**If any animal comes to your attention that you suspect originated in Ukraine and has not completed a stay in quarantine or is unable to provide a copy of the home isolation licence**, please could you inform APHA at [Imports@apha.gov.uk](mailto:Imports@apha.gov.uk) under an email titled 'LA quarantine of suspected illegal pet landing from Ukraine'. APHA will then make the appropriate arrangements for the animal to be assessed by a vet and possibly moved into quarantine if required.

If any animal comes to your attention that is currently being isolated at home under a licence, but you **suspect that the conditions of the licence are not being complied with**, please could you discuss this with the home owner and the pet owner. Please could you ensure that they understand the importance of compliance, support them in resolving any challenges that they are experiencing in complying and advise them that they should also discuss this with their supervising vet. We would appreciate if you could then undertake a follow up visit to check subsequent compliance. Please inform APHA at [Imports@apha.gov.uk](mailto:Imports@apha.gov.uk) under an email titled 'LA suspected non-compliance with home isolation requirements' and please keep APHA updated if there is continuing non-compliance. APHA will then make the appropriate arrangements for the animal to be moved into quarantine if needed.

I want to thank you for all your support during this challenging period. We want to ensure that Ukrainian people seeking safety and stability are able to bring their beloved pets to the UK, in a way that protects both the public and animals.

Yours sincerely

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