



Ref: CTO 2019 045 [1]

Dog: Babesia PCR Testing Interval

CTO direction as to equivalent measures in relation to Babesia testing

Pursuant to section 27(1)(d)(iii) of the Biosecurity Act 1993 I, Leigh Sinclair, Manager (Acting) Animal Trade Team, Ministry for Primary Industries (under delegated authority), give the following directions for a dog to be given clearance in accordance with the following measures, different from those in the applicable Import Health Standard: Cats and Dogs [CATDOG.GEN]:

Equivalence is given to clauses 2.4 (4) and 2.5 (3) of the above IHS. These clauses require dogs to be subjected to two PCR tests for *Babesia canis* and *Babesia gibsoni* respectively with negative results on samples collected 30-37 days apart, with the second sample collected in the 16 days prior to the date of shipment.

In the present case, the second sample was collected from the dog 40 days after the first sample instead of the IHS's maximum allowable period of 37 days.

There does not appear to be any scientific justification for the upper limit of the timeframe i.e. 37 days, other than a repeat PCR performed approximately one month after the initial test, increases the chance of the PCR test picking up the presence of the *Babesia* organism in chronically-infected dogs.

The extension from 37 to 40 between tests is not considered to significantly increase the risk of *Babesia canis* or *gibsoni* entering New Zealand.

The reason for directing clearance is that the biosecurity risks associated with this CTO direction have been assessed and are managed effectively.

This direction takes effect from the date of signing and continues in effect until amended or revoked.