

WAF largest utility in the Pacific

Source: WATER AUTHORITY OF FIJI

OUT of the 22 water utilities in the Pacific region, the Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) is by far the largest utility with over 140,000 water connections and 55,000 wastewater connections recorded last year.

This was revealed in the 2012 edition of the Pacific Water and Wastewater Utilities benchmarking report.

The report was released by the Pacific Water and Wastewater Association (PWWA) with the support of the Pacific Infrastructure Advisory Centre (PIAC) on May 14, 2013.

Based on the PWWA report, the Authority was rated the Best Wastewater and Sanitation Utility in the Pacific.

The PWWA report stated that only WAF and Water Papua New Guinea were compliant with the Pacific benchmark on managing the collection and treatment of wastewater.

According to the report, WAF had shown a remarkable increase in the population coverage of wastewater from 49 percent in 2011 to 75 per cent last year.

The report further stated that WAF was one of the few utilities where most of the treated wastewater was compliant to secondary standards.

"In Fiji, the upgrading of existing plants is in progress and will bring the standard to an advanced level complying with international standards."

Team Leader Wastewater Central/Eastern Matapule Finiasi said there are a total of 11 wastewater treatment plants in Fiji.

"The Authority is continuously working on improving its wastewater facilities in the country," he said.

Mr Finiasi said wastewater treatment was important for the environmental as well as the people of Fiji.

"Wastewater is treated to prevent bad odour, water bone diseases, spread of disease organisms and other hazardous substances that could prove fatal for the marine life as well," he said.

Despite the Authority's continuous efforts in improving its wastewater facilities to cater for the growing population, the Authority is also facing challenges at the same time.

Mr Finiasi said manhole blockages and overflows were some of the common problems faced by the Authority almost on a daily basis.

He said some of the common causes of blockages resulted from the dumping of rags, plastics and other objects in the manholes.

Mr Finiasi said other factors which contributed to blockages were the open wastewater chambers due to the missing manhole lids.

He said overflows from manholes posed health risks on the public.

"By throwing rubbish into the manhole, you are not only affecting your health but the whole



Water Authority of Fiji wastewater treatment plant in Kinoya.

community in which you live," said Mr Finiasi.

Customers who are aware of wastewater blockages are advised to immediately inform the Authority's personnel.

Moving pets to Fiji

Source: BIOSECURITY AUTHORITY OF FIJI

An important issue that often confronts many people planning to relocate to another country is the question of what to do with their pets. Should you bring them with you, leave them behind with friends or family, give them up for adoption or drop them off at the local animal shelter. It's difficult for many pet owners to imagine moving overseas without their beloved pet in tow.

For the Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF), the main concern with regards to pets or domesticated animals brought into Fiji is the potential transmission of diseases; particularly rabies which is a deadly viral infection that can be spread by the infected animals to humans. Fiji is free of rabies and it is important that we maintain that status. The introduction of rabies would have serious consequences for Fiji's animal and human health. As such, BAF has strict biosecurity controls on import of domesticated animals (dogs and cats) into Fiji to help prevent introduction of exotic (foreign) diseases into Fiji. Currently BAF is only allowing domesticated dogs and cats into Fiji.

This article outlines some of the biosecurity requirements which will not only help pet owners bring in their pets safely and legally into Fiji but also protect our country from unwanted animal diseases.

1. Before arriving into Fiji

Below are some of the some of the procedures that pet owners need to follow before the animal arrives into Fiji.

• Apply for import permit

One of the first requirements for bringing pets (dogs and cats) into Fiji is to apply for an Import Permit from the Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF). Application form for the Import Permit can be accessed from www.biosecurityfiji.com or e-mail import@biosecurityfiji.com. Completed application forms can be emailed back to BAF on import@biosecurityfiji.com or faxed on 3305043. The fee for Import Permit is FJ\$302.63 which should be paid while lodging the application. It takes BAF 21 working days to process applications for Import Permits. Once the applications are processed, BAF will send the applicant an Import Permit outlining conditions that the applicant needs meet to allow BAF to determine whether the dog or cat imported will pose risk to other animals or humans in Fiji. Import conditions will differ depending on the country from which the dog or cat is exported from. Import permits also include forms that must be completed and certified by a registered and government veterinarian from the country the dog and cat are exported from. These forms include a vet-

erinary health certificate, Veterinary Certificate A and Veterinary Certificate B. The animal will only be allowed into Fiji when all conditions provided in the permit have been met. All Import Permits are valid for six months so the pet must arrive to Fiji within the six months or on the date the permit expires. Pet owners should also ensure that original Import Permit is with the animal when it arrives in Fiji.

• Vaccinating your pet

All dogs and cats brought to Fiji must be vaccinated against rabies and other infectious diseases and BAF should be provided with the proof that the immunisation has taken hold. The other vaccination for dogs apart from rabies includes canine distemper, infectious canine hepatitis, canine parvovirus and parainfluenza virus. Vaccination for cats includes feline panleucopenia virus, feline rhinotracheitis virus, feline calicivirus and chlamydia psittaci. These vaccinations must be carried out at least 30 days before but not more than 12 months prior to the animals brought into Fiji. The vaccinations certificates or copies endorsed by a government veterinarian must be attached to the Veterinary Certificate A included in the Import Permit.

• Rabies neutralising antibody titre (RNATT) and other tests

Within 2 to 3 weeks after the rabies vaccination, animal must receive a Rabies Neutralising Antibody Titre Test (RNATT) ensure that the rabies vaccination has provided adequate rabies antibody levels. The results of the blood test must be 0.5 IU/ml or above. Within 30 days of departure all dogs must also be tested for leptospirosis and brucellosis with negative results.

• Treatment for internal and external parasites

Within 30 days prior to arriving in Fiji, all dogs and cats should also be treated twice for internal and external parasites such as hookworms, lice, ticks and fleas. This treatment should be done 14 days apart.

• Pre-export inspection

Within 48 hours prior to export of the dog or cat, the animal must undergo a final examination by a registered veterinarian and found to be free of symptoms of infectious and contagious disease, external and internal parasites and be fit to travel. After the examination the registered veterinarian should complete Veterinary Certificate A provided by BAF with the Import Permit and certify that dog or the cat is healthy and fit to travel to Fiji. Information provided in Veterinary Certificate A must then be endorsed by a government veterinarian through the Veterinary Certificate B which is also provided with the Import Permit.



Biosecurity staff Mohammed Nair taking Hurley from South Korea for a walk at the government Post Entry Quarantine facility in Koronivia

• Transporting the animal to Fiji

All dogs and cats must be brought to Fiji by air in a crate which meets the standard required by the Container Requirements 1 of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Live Animals Regulations. They should be transported directly to Fiji. The official seals on the crates must remain intact upon arrival to Fiji. The aircraft bringing the dog or cat should not be carrying any animals from other countries. Once the animal has arrived into Fiji it should be transported to the government Post Entry Quarantine (PEQ) station in Koronivia, about 8 miles away from Nausori Airport. It is important to know that animals are not permitted to travel to the PEQ facility by road from Nadi. If they are not in a direct flight to Nausori airport then they should be booked on a flight from Nadi to Nausori Airport. Prior notice of the arrival of the animal should be given to BAF office at the Nadi Airport (6720053) and Post Entry Quarantine in Koronivia Research Station (3477044 or email snacola@biosecurityfiji.com) to arrange for quarantine clearance and accommodation.

• Documentation

All animal arriving into Fiji must have the following documents:

- Original of the Import Permit issued by BAF

- The Health Certificate

- Veterinary Certificate A signed by a Registered Veterinarian and endorsed by Government Veterinarian

- Veterinary Certificate B signed by Government Veterinarian

- Copies of Veterinarian Certification from the animal's country of origin including all laboratory results of all tests.

• Identification

All animals must also be identified by a microchip that can be read by an AVID, TROVAN, DESTRON or other ISO- Compatible Microchip Reader. Where microchip is not available a clear, legible ear-tattoo identification number is acceptable. Identification is important as it helps in reuniting the pet owner and the pet if they get separated.

• After arriving in Fiji

Some of the mandatory quarantine requirements that animals have to go through after they arrive in Fiji are:

• Post Entry Quarantine

Provided all the other condition of importation has been met and the Quarantine fees have been paid, all dogs and cats brought into Fiji needs to undergo a mandatory quarantine period at the government Post Entry Quarantine (PEQ) Station in Koronivia. The mandatory quarantine period is to allow BAF to monitor for diseases that may have not



Pet owner visiting her dog at the Post Entry Quarantine in Koronivia

shown signs during departure or arrival of the animal in Fiji.

The mandatory quarantine period for dogs and cats brought from Australia and New Zealand is 7 days while for the other countries it is 30 days. The fee for 7 days is FJ\$962.78 while for 30 days it is FJ\$4,126.20.

Booking for accommodation at the PEQ should be done 6 to 8 weeks before the animal arrives into Fiji.

Animals will be released after minimum quarantine period if they remain healthy throughout the post entry quarantine period and all fees for PEQ are paid.

BAF has a Rabies Monitoring and Surveillance Policy for all animals brought into Fiji from countries other than Australia and New Zealand where after being released from the PEQ, the animal will be examined at the interval of 10 days by veterinarian from BAF for up to 6 months which will be followed by an examination on the 9th month and a final examination on the 12th month.

• Other requirements

Other requirements that people need to know are:

• Animals transiting through Fiji

Dogs and cats transiting through Fiji need to apply for a transit permit from BAF. The fee for transit permit is FJ\$164.50.

• Prohibited dogs and cats

Dogo argentine, fila Brasileiro, Japanese tosa, Pit bull terriers, including American pit bull terriers or crosses of any of these breeds are not allowed into Fiji. Serval cats, any breed of cats crossed with serval cats and any cat within 5 generations from original serval cat parentage are also prohibited into Fiji.

Cats and dogs below 4 months of age are prohibited and so are the females who are more than 21 days pregnant at the time of being exported to Fiji.

• Requirements for guide/service dogs into Fiji

The main requirements for bringing guide or service dogs into Fiji includes an Import Permit from BAF which would have similar conditions as importing regular dogs such as rabies test, a medical certificate showing that the person requires the guide dog and certificate from the Service Dog Association identifying the dog as the service dog assigned after training and bonding period of 3-6 weeks with the person. Guide dogs must accompany the person they are assigned to.

They may automatically qualify for home quarantine and access to public places with the owner but they must be leashed.

• Bringing dogs and cats through Yachts

BAF does not allow dogs and cats to be brought into Fiji through yachts. Animals on yachts must be bonded to remain on the vessel during the entire period the yacht is in Fiji waters.

BAF advises all pet owners intending to bring their dogs and cats to Fiji or take their pets to overseas to contact us on 3312512 or email info@biosecurityfiji.com for advice and assistance.