



Ottawa, June 16, 2005

MEMORANDUM D19-9-3

In Brief

IMPORTATION AND SHIPMENT OF BODIES, BODY PARTS AND HUMAN ORGANS INTO CANADA

This memorandum has been revised to reflect the creation of the Public Health Agency of Canada and to include the shipment of human organs.



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IMPORTATION AND SHIPMENT OF BODIES, BODY PARTS AND HUMAN ORGANS INTO CANADA

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) assists Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) in the administration of the *Quarantine Act* and the Regulations established thereunder. This memorandum outlines the conditions under which bodies, body parts and human organs may be imported into Canada.

GUIDELINES AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Bodies

1. The PHAC advises the following best practices related to the importation of bodies:

(a) bodies must be embalmed or cremated; transported in leak-proof, air-tight, closed containers; and handled using universal precautions;

(b) cremated remains and skeletons do not require death certificates; however, skeletons must be dry and have been treated to eliminate any possibility of transmission of infectious, contagious, or dangerous diseases as defined by the *Quarantine Act*;

(c) embalmed bodies must be accompanied by death certificates signed by physicians at the location of death, specifying the cause of death, and attesting that death was not caused by communicable diseases of public health concern, and that the remains are free from insect vectors of any diseases; and

(d) cargo control documents are not required; however, where cargo control documents have been issued, they may be acquitted by a reference to this memorandum.

Body Parts

2. The *Quarantine Regulations* do not specifically cover body parts, which could include severed limbs, organs, and human tissues. As a general guideline, on the arrival of a body part at the point of entry into Canada, the carrier should provide a medical certificate indicating the following:

(a) name of amputee (if applicable);

(b) part of body;

(c) reason for amputation (if applicable);

(d) date of amputation (if applicable); and

(e) that the body part is free of contagious or infectious or dangerous diseases, and insect vectors of disease.

3. Organs and tissues for transplantations do not need to be accompanied by death certificates. Since organs for transplantation are transported hospital-to-hospital, it is expected that packaging, transportation, and handling meet universal hospital precautions. The urgent importation of organs and tissues for transplantation should be facilitated as expeditiously as possible.

4. The PHAC recommends that body parts be shipped in leak-proof, air-tight, sealed containers. Universal precautions should be used when handling body parts.

5. Dry bones and cremated body parts do not need to be accompanied by medical certificates.

6. Cargo control documents are not required. However, where cargo control documents have been issued, they may be acquitted by a reference to this memorandum.

7. Importations of anthropological or archeological specimens (e.g., shrunken heads or skulls and bones) are not prohibited by the *Quarantine Act* and Regulations. However, other regulations and international conventions on the import/export of cultural artifacts may apply.

Shipment of Human Organs

8. Shipments of human organs are to be released immediately upon arrival at the point of importation, without Customs documentation or examination. Should occasion arise whereby a vehicle or aircraft arrives with human organs at locations where the services of CBSA Inspectors are not available, CBSA Managers may grant either prior or retroactive approval for clearance of the conveyance without Customs formalities.

9. Cargo control documents are not required. However, where cargo control documents have been issued, they may be acquitted by a reference to this memorandum.

10. Special service charges are not to be assessed in any circumstances relating to release of human organs.

Additional information

11. Where properly completed medical certificates or death certificates do not accompany bodies or body parts, or where there are questions about the disposal of bodies or body parts, or where further general information is required, contact the PHAC at the following address:

Senior Advisor Quarantine and Migration Health
Public Health Agency of Canada

Telephone: (613) 957-7817
1-800-545-7661 (after hours)
Facsimile: (613) 952-8286

12. Questions concerning the CBSA's administration of these procedures should be directed to:

Health, Safety and Security Unit
Partnerships Division
Admissibility Branch
Canada Border Services Agency
14th floor
191 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa ON K1A 0L5

Telephone: (613) 946-0240
Facsimile: (613) 946-1520

REFERENCES

<p>ISSUING OFFICE –</p> <p>Partnerships Division Border and Compliance Programs Directorate</p>	<p>HEADQUARTERS FILE –</p> <p>7622-4-1</p>
<p>LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES –</p> <p><i>Quarantine Act</i>, paragraphs 5(b) and 21(1)(j) <i>Quarantine Regulations</i>, section 27 C.R.C., c. 1368</p>	<p>OTHER REFERENCES –</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>SUPERSEDED MEMORANDA “D” –</p> <p>D19-9-3, January 8, 2001</p>	

Services provided by the Canada Border Services Agency are available in both official languages.

