8.3 Container Requirements

GENERAL CONTAINER REQUIREMENTS FOR PET ANIMALS [1], FARM LIVESTOCK AND FARMED DEER OR ANTELOPE (CR 1–3)[1]

Design and Construction

When constructing containers for animal shipment, the normal habits and necessary freedom of movement must be considered.

For general transport purposes, animals will be carried only in closed containers. Carriage in open stall must be separately arranged with carrier concerned.

The container must be well constructed and be able to withstand other freight damaging it or causing the structure to buckle or bend. It must be rigid enough to prevent the animal escaping through gaps at the seams or joints. Certain species require reinforced containers due to size and weight.

It must be constructed of non-toxic materials. Chemically impregnated wood may be poisonous and must not be used.

The container must be suitable to keep the animal inside at all times and protect the animal from unauthorised access. The door must be constructed so that accidental opening cannot occur, either from the inside or the outside.

The container must not cause the animal to damage itself. All inside edges must be smooth or rounded. There must be no sharp projections, such as nails, upon which the animal can injure itself. Joints of a wooden container must be made so that they cannot be damaged by the animal gnawing or clawing the container from the inside.

The container must be clean and leak-proof. If the container is to be reused, it must be cleaned thoroughly and then disinfected or sterilised prior to reuse. Absorbent bedding must be provided by the shipper that is suitable for the species. Straw is unacceptable as many countries prohibit its importation.

It must be easy for staff to handle and provide the handlers protection from being clawed or bitten by the animal. Spacer devices must be incorporated into the design as they will provide handles for moving the container as well as preventing the ventilation openings becoming blocked by other freight. Handles may be attached in addition to the spacer bars.

If forklift spacers are required they must be at least 5 cm (2 in) thick. Allowance for the extra height must be made when calculating the dimensions of the container.

For certain small domestic livestock, rigid plastic pet containers are suitable. Modification to the door mesh must be carried out for pigs to prevent urine escaping. Food and water containers must be of a suitable type for the animal. These containers are best suited to individual animal shipments and must meet the general requirements for welfare and safety. Labelling is mandatory on these as all other containers.

If a container has wheels, they must be removed or rendered inoperable.

Dimensions and Stocking Density

Dimensions shown in these Regulations are illustrative and therefore must be related to the actual size of the animal for which the container is constructed. It must be in general allow the animal to stand, turn and lie down in a natural manner. There are a few exceptions to this rule found in the container requirements relevant to the particular species.

Ventilation

The container must be adequately ventilated on at least three sides, with the majority of the ventilation being provided on the upper part of the container. There are exceptions to these requirements which are stated in the specific container requirement for that particular species.

The ventilation openings must be small enough or covered with mesh in order to prevent escape or any part of the animal protruding with the resultant danger of injury.

Feeding and Watering

Separate food and water troughs must be provided, either fixed inside the container or attached to it so that they are accessible for replenishment purposes. They must have rounded edges and be made of non-toxic material suitable for the species.

The shipper's instruction for feeding and watering must be given in writing at the time of acceptance. Feeding and watering instructions must be affixed to the container and a copy of the instruction must accompany the shipping documents. Any feed or water given must be recorded on the container instructions with the date and time of supply.

Food must be provided by the shipper, but it must be checked that it does not contravene any regulations of the country(ies) of transit or importation. In the case of sealed containers, feeding is not possible and the shipper must be aware of this fact. Likewise, products of animal origin, such as meat or food containing meat, must not be accepted inside the container for the same reason.

Unauthorised food must not be offered.

Labelling and Marking

The container must be correctly labelled in accordance with the instructions contained in Chapter 9. Labels must not block ventilation openings, especially on small containers.

Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) Animals

When animals are carried in SPF conditions, the shipper must comply in all respects with the specific container requirement in this section. Special measures must be taken to ensure that the ventilation rates are maintained within the container.

[1] The definition of pet animals in this section refers to dogs and cats.

Special Care

For species which are obviously disturbed by the shipment, reducing the light within the container and the noise level within its vicinity will usually be sufficient to quieten the animal. They must be held in a darkened area with as little noise as possible nearby.

Pets are best left by their owner at the time of acceptance in order that they can become quietly accustomed to the strange surroundings.

Tranquillisation

Sedation of animals, except under certain conditions and carried out under veterinary direction, is not recommended. Most, if not all, commonly used tranquillising drugs have the effect of lowering the blood pressure, this also occurs naturally at high altitudes. The air pressure of an aircraft in flight is set at the equivalent of approximately 8,000 ft.

The combination of altitude and drugs is potentially fatal in the old, chronically sick or stressed animals. Sedation by darkening the container and putting it in a cool quiet place when not in the aircraft, will calm most pets and other animals. It is the preferred method for air travel. If sedatives are used, the name of the drug, the time and route of administration must be clearly marked on the container and a copy of the record must be attached to the documents relating to that shipment. Any further medication administered must be recorded and accompany the shipment with the name of the sedative, time of administration and the route of administration.

Important Notes

It must be noted that the IATA Live Animals Regulations container requirements stipulate the minimum requirements for air shipment. The construction principle of containers described within these Regulations are not intended to conform any airworthiness requirements. Structural aircraft containers must comply with the specifications published in the IATA ULD Regulations.

Although few limitations exist for freighter aircraft, such factors as the size of the compartment door and area of the aircraft hold determines the acceptability of live animal consignments. Consequently, this must be considered when determining the size of the container to be used, in accordance with the principles of design outlined in this section when routing the consignment.

It is a legal requirement by many governments that have incorporated these Regulations into their national legislation in regards of the shipment of live animals by air. Therefore, care must be taken that compliance is evident at the time of live animal shipment acceptance.

In addition to the above General Requirements, the Specific Requirements that are relevant to the individual species must be consulted and adhered to.

The illustrations shown in the following specific container requirements are examples only. Containers that conform to the principle of the written guidelines for the species but look slightly different will still meet the IATA standards.

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CONTAINER REQUIREMENT 1

The illustrations shown in this Container Requirement are examples only. Containers that conform to the principle of written guidelines for the species but look slightly different will still meet the IATA standards.

Applicable to:

Cats (domestic)

Dogs (domestic)

Note:
See also CR82.

STATE VARIATIONS: CHG-01/03/04, GBG-01/02/03/04/05, HKG-01, NZG-01, SAG-02, ZWG-02/03/04, EUR-01, USG-Variations

OPERATOR VARIATIONS: AC-03/04/07, AF-01, BA-04/05/07/08/09/10/11/12, CX-05/06/07, DL-06/07, D0-08/09, EI-01, EK-05/07/08/12, GF-05/06/10/11, KA-05/06/07, KL-01/02/08/09, LH-05/08/10, LX-05/06, MS-01, OK-01/06, SV-04/05/06/07/08, TG-01, QF-01, UA-08/09

Note:
For carriage of domestic pets in passenger cabins as accompanied baggage see Chapters 2 and 3.

For animals travelling in the aircraft cabin the travelling non-rigid container must:

- *Meet these container requirements except that the container construction does not have to be rigid and Spacer bars are not required;*
- *The requirement for one end to the container to be bars, welded mesh or smooth expanded metal does not apply to soft side/cloth bags;*
- *Allow the animal contained in the container to have enough space to turn about normally while standing, to stand and sit erect, and to lie in a natural position.*

1. CONTAINER CONSTRUCTION

(Some governmental regulations require that the container must be sealed during transportation. Certain airlines will not carry wooden containers. See exceptions AUG-01 and NZG-01 in Chapter 2; AC-01 and QF-01 in Chapter 3.)

Principles of Design

The following principles of design must be met in addition to the General Container Requirements outlined at the beginning of this chapter.

Containers made entirely of welded mesh or wire mesh are not suitable for air transport.

Rigid plastic containers are suitable for most breeds of dog but their acceptability is at the discretion of the carrier. If a container has wheels, they must be removed or rendered inoperable.

Some rigid plastic containers may not be suitable for large dogs, or dogs that are aggressive. Specially constructed containers of hardwood, metal, plywood or similar material, with two secure door fasteners on each side, are acceptable.

Materials

Fibreglass, metal, rigid plastics, weld metal mesh, solid wood or plywood.

Size

Each animal contained in the container must have enough space to turn about normally while standing, to stand and sit erect, and to lie in a natural position.

Frame

For wooden containers, an outer frame of 2.5 cm × 7.5 cm (1 inch × 3 inch) lumber screwed or bolted together and lined with solid wood or plywood sides is acceptable.

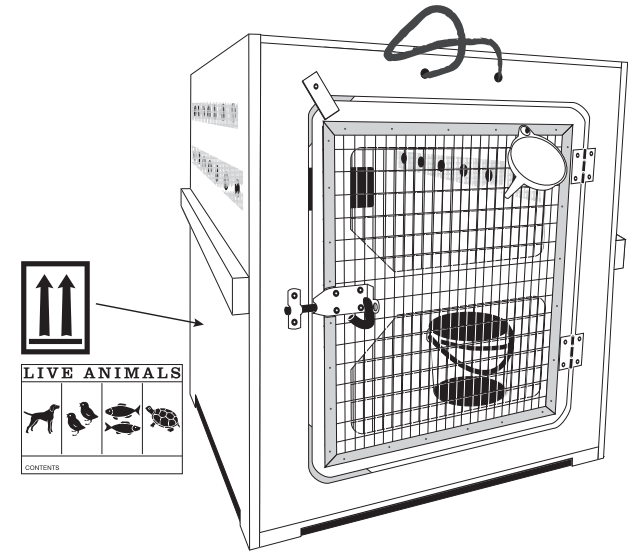
Sides

For two part, rigid plastic containers, all hardware must be present and properly installed. For containers made of wood, plywood or equivalent material of a minimum thickness of 12 mm (1/2 in) for dogs and 6 mm (1/4 in) for cats must be used to line the outer framework. Side walls must be solid with sufficient ventilation as prescribed. The interior of the container must be smooth with no protrusions that the animal can bite or scratch to cause damage to the integrity of the container in any way.

The whole of one end of the container must be open, covered with bars, welded mesh or smooth expanded metal which is securely fixed to the container so that the animal cannot dislodge it.

For both rigid plastic containers and wooden containers the welded wire mesh must be 2.5 mm or thicker for dogs and 2.0 mm or thicker for cats.

For wooden containers the maximum size openings in the welded mesh must be 25 mm × 25 mm (1 inch × 1 inch) fordogs, and 19 mm × 19 mm (¾ inch × ¾ inch) for cats. However, the openings may have to be smaller in order to be nose and paw proof.The welded mesh must fully overlap the frame. It must be attached to the outside of the frame using staples at least 20 mm (¾ inch) long and at intervals of no more than 25 mm (1 inch). In addition, for dog containers a wooden frame or strips of wood (to IPPC regulations or manufactured wood e.g. exterior grade ply) must be placed over the edges of the wire and affixed with screws. This compresses the wire between the strips of wood and the outer surface of the container. The wooden compression strips/frame must be at least 12 mm thick and of a placement to adequately secure the wire. Fasteners must not penetrate into the container.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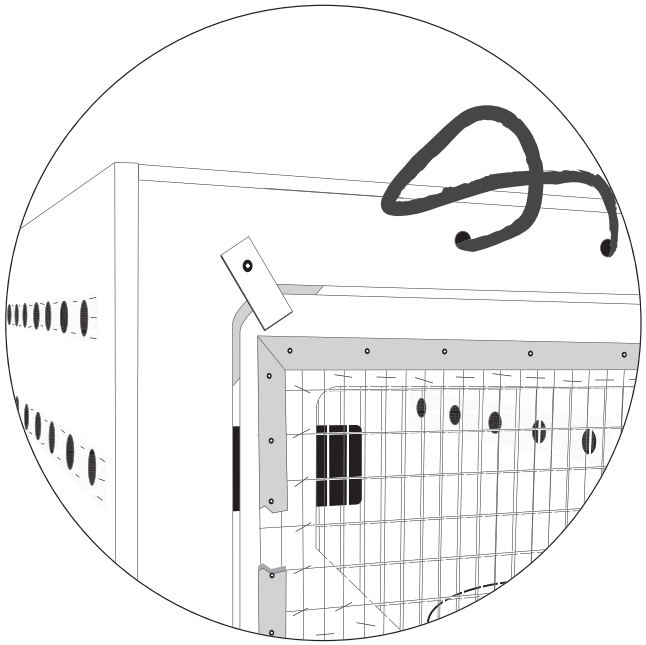

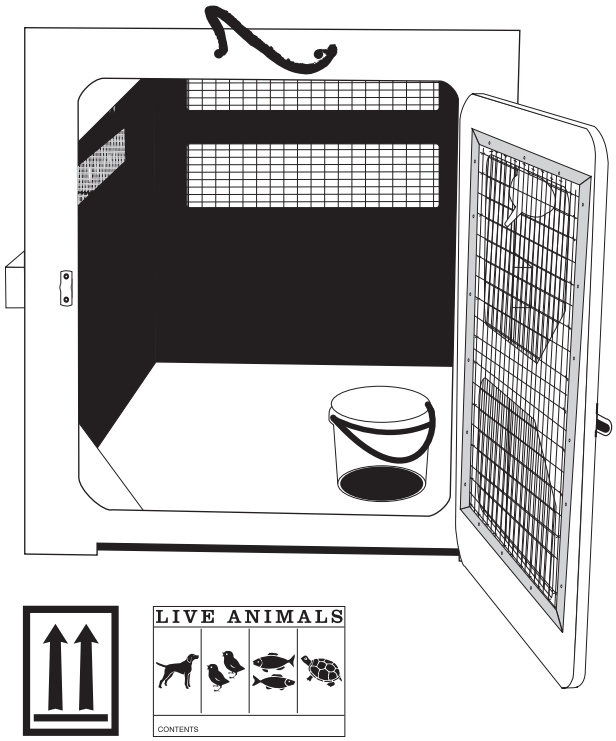

Handling Spacer Bars/Handles

Must be provided along the middle of both long sides of the container.

Floor

The floor must be solid and leak-proof.

Roof

The roof must be solid but ventilation holes are allowed over the whole surface provided that they do not reduce the integrity of the strength of the roof itself. For containers made of wood, plywood of a minimum of 12 mm (½ in) or equivalent material must be used.

Door

The door must form the whole of one end of the container. It can be either sliding or hinged.

There must be an adequate means of fastening and sealing for those containers destined for countries where sealing is required. Large doors will require additional hinges and two or three secure means of fastening to be fully secure.

The door must be constructed of plastic, wood, plywood, welded or cast metal of sufficient gauge or thickness so as to preclude the animal from bending or distorting the door. The mesh must be nose and paw proof to avoid injury to the animal and handlers. Doors made of plastic material are permitted, provided that hinges and locking pins are made of metal of sufficient gauge and thickness.

For rigid plastic containers and wooden containers using doors with locking pins and hinges, the pins must engage the container by at least 1.6 cm (5/8 in).

The shipper must ensure that all hardware and fasteners are in place and serviceable.

Ventilation

Ventilation is provided by an open end to the container (which can be the door) and by ventilation openings of a minimum of 2.5 cm (1 in) over the upper two thirds of the opposite end and the remaining two sides, at a distance of 10 cm (4 in) from centre to centre of each opening.

In the case of specially constructed large dog containers the open end must be covered by closely spaced metal bars or a double weld mesh with 1 cm (½ in) spacing between the meshes.

The total ventilated area must be at least 16% of the total surface of the four sides. The provision of additional holes on the roof or sides of the container or larger mesh covered holes in order to increase the ventilation are permitted.

All openings must be nose and paw-proof, in the case of cats and small dogs these may have to be covered with mesh. It is very important that no animal has any surface or edge at which it can gnaw or scratch.

Feed and Water Containers

Water container must be present within the container with outside access for filling. Food containers must be present either within the container, if sealed, or attached to it for use in cases of delay. Note illustrations above are illustrations only, containers that look or receptacles that are attached differently are acceptable.

Forklift Spacers

Must be provided for all containers where the total weight with the animal exceeds 60 kg (132 lb).

SPF Containers

Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) dogs and cats must be transported in containers whose dimensions conform to the requirements published in this Container Requirement. SPF labelling must be affixed to the container plus "This Way Up" labels. Filter containers for SPF consignments have special gauge air filters fixed in the ventilation apertures. Ventilation must be a minimum of 16% of the surface area of the four sides. Sufficient water must be provided for the journey. Food must be provided, if required, at the point of origin in order that the sealed container is not opened during transport. A viewing panel must be provided on SPF containers.

Labelling

A green "Live Animals" label/tag or a red "Laboratory Animals" label/tag is mandatory on all live animal consignments. "This Way Up" labels/tags are also mandatory and must be placed on all four sides of the container whenever possible. The label or tag can be imprinted on the container.

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2. PREPARATIONS BEFORE DISPATCH (see Chapter 5)

Tranquillisation of dogs and cats is not recommended.

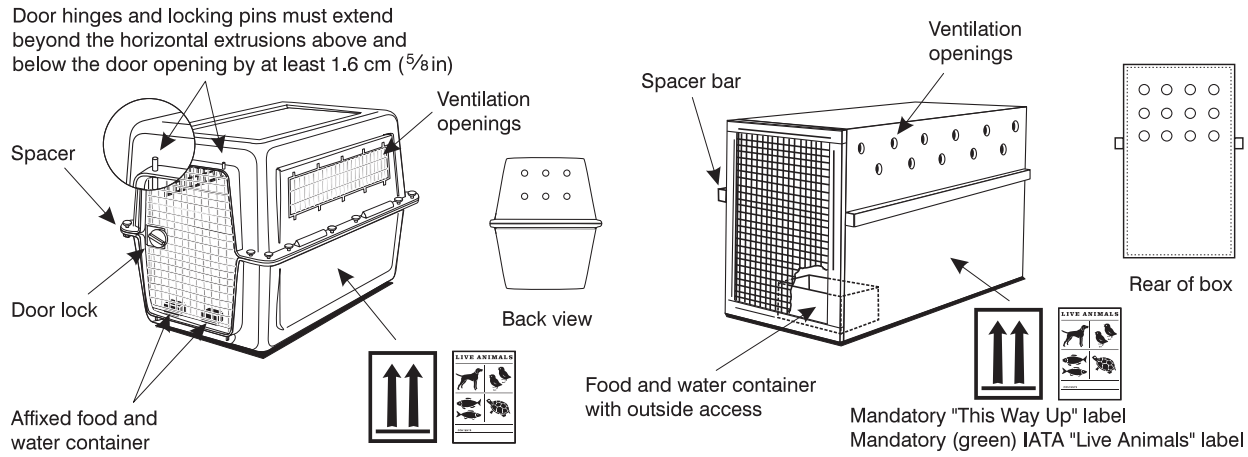
See General Container Requirements at the beginning of this chapter.

Feed the animal only a light meal and a short drink approximately two hours before dispatch and exercise the animal immediately before dispatch.

Snub nose dogs, such as boxers, bulldogs, pekinese and pugs, are affected more than other breeds by rarefied atmosphere and care must be taken to ensure that the front of the container has open bars from the top to the bottom of the box for ventilation. It is essential that the animal be free from respiratory troubles.

EXAMPLE:

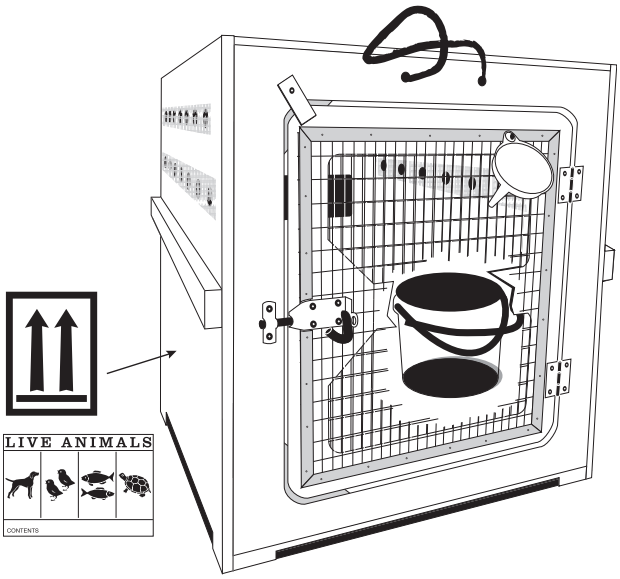
TYPICAL RIGID PLASTIC DOG CONTAINER



Notes:

1. *A maximum of two adult animals of comparable size up to 14 kg each, that are compatible, may be shipped in the same container. Animals over that weight must travel individually.*

2. *Animals up to six months old from the same litter, up to 14 kg each, up to a maximum quantity of three, may be shipped in the same container/ compartment.*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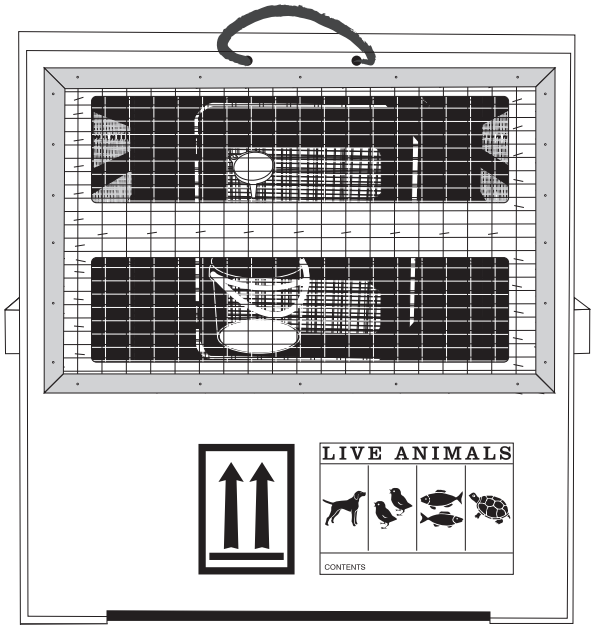
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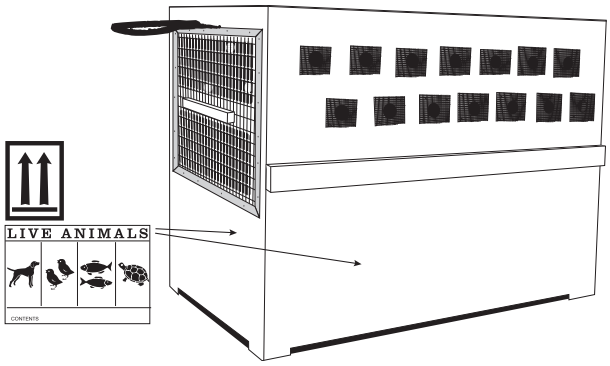
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Shipment of females in heat (oestrus) is not recommended.

Females with suckling young and unweaned animals will not be accepted for carriage.

Weaned puppies younger than eight weeks must not be shipped due to possible dehydration effects in air transportation. Kittens likewise, younger than 8 weeks must not be shipped but it is recommended that a veterinary certificate be provided for those under 12 weeks stating the animal(s) is/are fit to be transported because of their small size, especially as some breeds, renders them more susceptible to the effects of dehydration.

Weaned puppies and kittens may travel well together. The quantity must be related to the size and strength of the individual animal. Avoid shipping a weakling which could be harmed by its companions. Certain national regulations require cats or dogs to be crated individually unless the consignment is a litter over 8 weeks with the mother.

For pet animals, a familiar article in the container helps to placate the animal. Animal's name must be marked on the outside of the container.

Dogs & cats should be shipped during the first two thirds of pregnancy. During the last one third of pregnancy the chance of abortion or injury to the fetus increases. Significant debilitation or death of the mother can be initiated by the stress that may occur during transportation at this time in gestation.

Dogs & cats should not be shipped for seven days following giving birth.

3. FEEDING AND WATERING GUIDE (for emergency use only)

Animals do not normally require additional feeding during 12 hours following the time of dispatch. Water must be provided if total journey time exceeds 12 hours. Care must be taken not to overfill the container.

If feeding is required due to an unforeseen delay, meat, biscuits and canned pet food must be provided but care must be taken not to overfeed.

4. GENERAL CARE AND LOADING (see Chapters 5 and 10)

Containers of young animals of the same species may be loaded adjacent to each other. Containers with cats and containers with dogs must be kept apart, unless they are used to cohabiting. Care must be taken in loading different breeds of dogs to prevent snapping and disturbing one another and, in particular, where one animal is stronger than the other, subjecting the weaker of the two to fear.

Accompanied dogs and cats that are transported in the aircraft hold must comply with these Regulations.

Warning 1: *Snub-nosed dogs must be stowed as far away as practical from other loads to ensure they have the largest amount of air space available in the hold.*

Warning 2: *If it is necessary to open the box for any reason, this must always be done in an enclosed area in order to prevent the animals from escaping.*

Animals in quarantine must be segregated from those which are not.