

Live Animals (AVI) Airfreight Handling

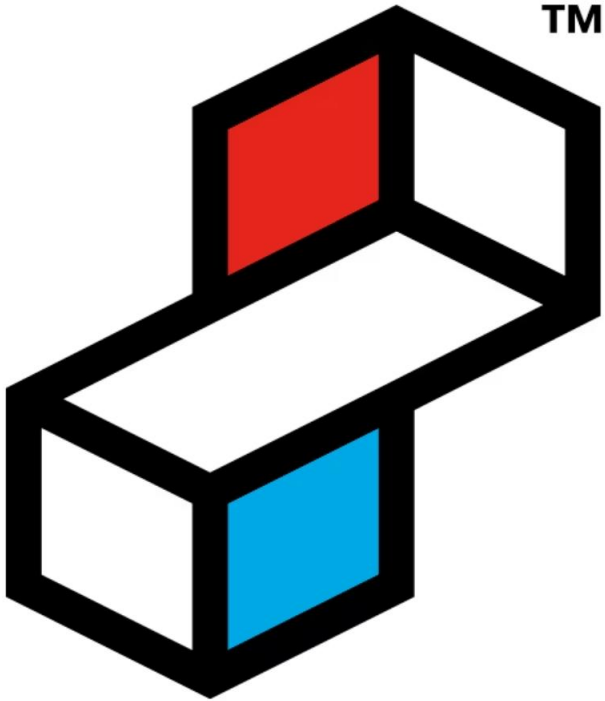
Standard Operating Procedure — IATA LAR-Compliant Manual

A comprehensive, audit-ready SOP for the safe, compliant, and welfare-focused air transport of live animals — from pre-booking through final delivery.

IATA LAR COMPLIANT

ICAO CERTIFIED

EU REGULATION 1/2005



CLUSTER FOR LOGISTICS

LUXEMBOURG

ADDING VALUE IS THE KEY.





Section 1

Purpose

This SOP defines the **end-to-end handling requirements** for Live Animals (AVI) transported by air. It exists to ensure every shipment – regardless of species, routing, or operator – meets the highest standards of animal welfare, operational safety, and regulatory compliance. The document serves as the authoritative reference for all parties in the transport chain, from shipper to consignee.

Animal Welfare

Guarantee humane treatment and minimum stress throughout all transport stages.

Regulatory Compliance

Full alignment with IATA LAR, ICAO Annex 18, EU Regulation 1/2005, CITES, and national veterinary laws.

Operational Integrity

Ensure safe, consistent, and auditable operations across all handling agents and airline partners.

Section 2


Scope

Applicable Parties

- Shippers
- Freight forwarders
- Road feeder service providers
- Ground handling agents (GHA)
- Airlines
- Airport veterinary authorities
- Consignees

Species Covered (IATA LAR)

- Pets – dogs and cats
- Birds (including endangered species)
- Reptiles and amphibians
- Zoo and wild animals
- Livestock and farm animals
- Laboratory animals
- Exotic species – subject to airline approval

 All species must be accepted under current IATA LAR before booking is confirmed.

Regulatory References

All procedures in this SOP are grounded in the following authoritative frameworks. Handlers and airline staff must remain current with the latest published editions, particularly the IATA LAR which is updated annually.

IATA Live Animals Regulations (LAR)

Primary global standard governing all aspects of live animal air transport – latest edition always applicable.

ICAO Annex 18

Safe transport of dangerous goods by air; applicable where AVI intersects with biological risk classifications.

EU Regulation 1/2005

Protection of animals during transport within and through the European Union; applies to all EU-routed shipments.

CITES Convention

International treaty controlling trade in endangered species; mandatory permits required for listed species.

Airline AVI Handling Manual

Carrier-specific AVI policies, acceptance criteria, and aircraft configuration requirements.

National Veterinary Laws

Import and export veterinary legislation of the origin, transit, and destination countries must be verified for every shipment.

Section 4

Key Definitions

AVI

Live Animals – the IATA special handling code denoting any shipment containing living creatures requiring dedicated care protocols.

LAR

Live Animals Regulations – the IATA publication establishing globally accepted standards for crating, documentation, and handling.

CITES

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species – requires specific permits for the transport of protected species.

Veterinary Certificate

Official health document issued by a competent veterinary authority, confirming the animal's fitness to travel.

Crate / Container

IATA LAR-approved transport container sized and constructed to allow the animal to stand, turn, and lie naturally.

Quarantine

Mandatory isolation period imposed by destination or transit country veterinary authorities for certain species or health risk profiles.

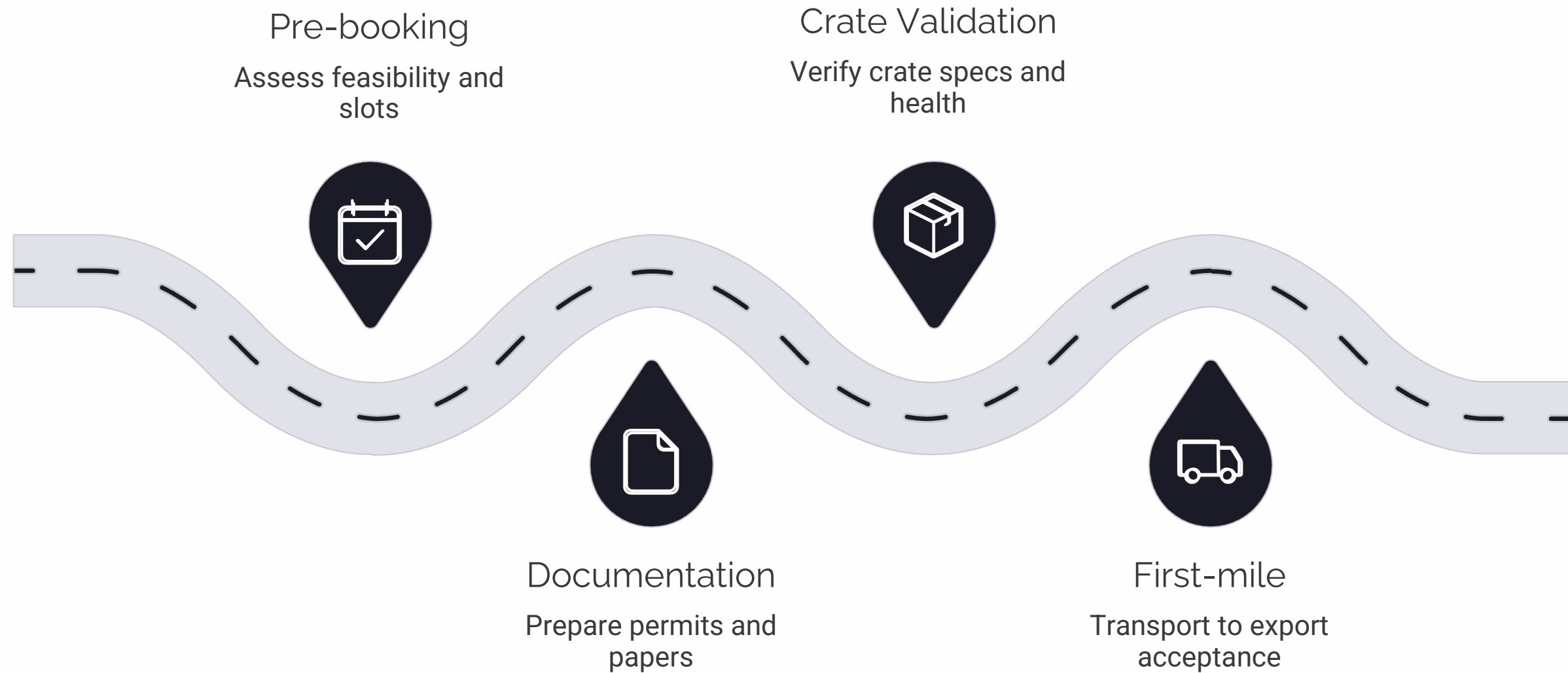
Section 5 Responsibilities

Clear accountability across every party in the transport chain is essential for welfare and compliance. Each role carries distinct, non-delegable obligations.

1	<p>Shipper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide IATA LAR-compliant crate• Provide all veterinary and customs documents• Confirm animals are healthy, fit to fly, and not sedated• Supply written feeding and watering instructions
2	<p>Freight Forwarder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Validate all documentation for accuracy and completeness• Pre-alert airline and GHA in advance of arrival• Confirm crate compliance; coordinate veterinary inspections
3	<p>Ground Handling Agent (GHA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct formal AVI acceptance procedure• Operate temperature-controlled AVI holding facilities• Monitor animals pre-flight; liaise with airline and vet authority
4	<p>Airline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grant shipment approval; confirm aircraft suitability• Issue NOTOC (Notification to Captain)• Ensure proper stowage and hold ventilation
5	<p>Veterinary Authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspect animals and validate official documents• Approve or refuse export and import clearance• Enforce quarantine requirements as applicable

End-to-End Process Overview

The AVI transport process spans 15 discrete stages from initial feasibility through final delivery and incident review. Each stage is governed by specific procedures detailed in Section 7.




Every stage must be completed in sequence. No stage may be bypassed. Any deviation must be documented and escalated to the supervising airline or GHA quality manager immediately.

Section 7

Detailed Procedures

The following sections provide step-by-step operational procedures for all 15 stages of the AVI airfreight handling process. These procedures are mandatory for all parties identified in the Scope section and must be applied to every AVI shipment without exception.

-  **Compliance Notice:** Failure to follow any procedure in this section may constitute a violation of IATA LAR, national veterinary law, or EU Regulation 1/2005, and may result in shipment rejection, regulatory sanction, or harm to the animals.



Section 7.1

Pre-Booking & Feasibility

7.1.1 Species Acceptance Check

Before any booking is confirmed, verify the carrier's current acceptance policy for the specific species. The following categories require special approval or are frequently restricted:

- Brachycephalic (snub-nosed) dog and cat breeds
- Primates – subject to strict welfare conditions
- Venomous reptiles
- CITES-listed endangered species
- Pregnant animals and very young animals

7.1.2 Routing Feasibility

- Avoid routings with long layovers exceeding permissible journey times
- Avoid airports with extreme climate conditions
- Confirm veterinary services are available at all transit points
- Verify aircraft type compatibility with AVI hold requirements

7.1.3 Space & Equipment Availability

- AVI holding room confirmed at origin, transit, and destination
- Temperature-controlled storage available
- Species-specific crates on hand or sourced
- AVI-trained staff rostered for all relevant shifts

Section 7.2

Documentation Requirements

Complete and valid documentation must be assembled **before** the animal is tendered for transport. Document deficiencies are the leading cause of AVI shipment rejection and regulatory incidents.

Mandatory Documents

- Official health certificate (government-issued)
- Vaccination records – current and validated
- Export veterinary certificate
- Import permit (destination country)
- CITES permit – where applicable
- AWB with correct AVI special handling codes
- Written feeding and watering instructions
- Non-sedation declaration signed by shipper

Document Verification Checklist

- Confirm all validity dates – no expired certificates accepted
- Verify species description matches the animal presented
- Cross-check microchip number where required by destination country
- Confirm no sedation has been administered unless supported by a signed veterinary medical justification



Section 7.3

Crate & Packaging Validation

7.3.1 IATA LAR Crate Requirements

- **Size:** Animal must be able to stand upright, turn around, and lie down naturally
- Ventilation openings on a minimum of 3–4 sides
- Fully leak-proof floor with absorbent bedding
- Escape-proof, tamper-resistant locking mechanisms
- No exposed sharp edges or protrusions
- Water and food containers accessible from outside without opening crate
- "LIVE ANIMALS" labels prominently displayed
- Orientation arrows on all four sides
- Species identification label affixed externally

7.3.2 Crate Inspection Protocol

A physical inspection must be completed by a trained AVI handler at acceptance. Check and document:

- Structural integrity – no cracks, broken welds, or damaged joints
- Ventilation openings – clear and unobstructed
- Bedding – dry, clean, and appropriate for species
- Water supply – full and accessible
- All door locks – tested and confirmed secure

☐ Any crate failing inspection must be **rejected**. The shipment may not proceed until a compliant crate is provided.

Section 7.4

First-Mile Transport

The first-mile journey from shipper premises to the cargo terminal sets the tone for the animal's welfare throughout the entire journey. Vehicles and procedures must minimise stress from the very first moment of loading.



Vehicle Standards

- Temperature-controlled throughout journey
- Low-noise engine and suspension
- Clean, disinfected, and free of chemical odours
- No contamination risk from previous cargo



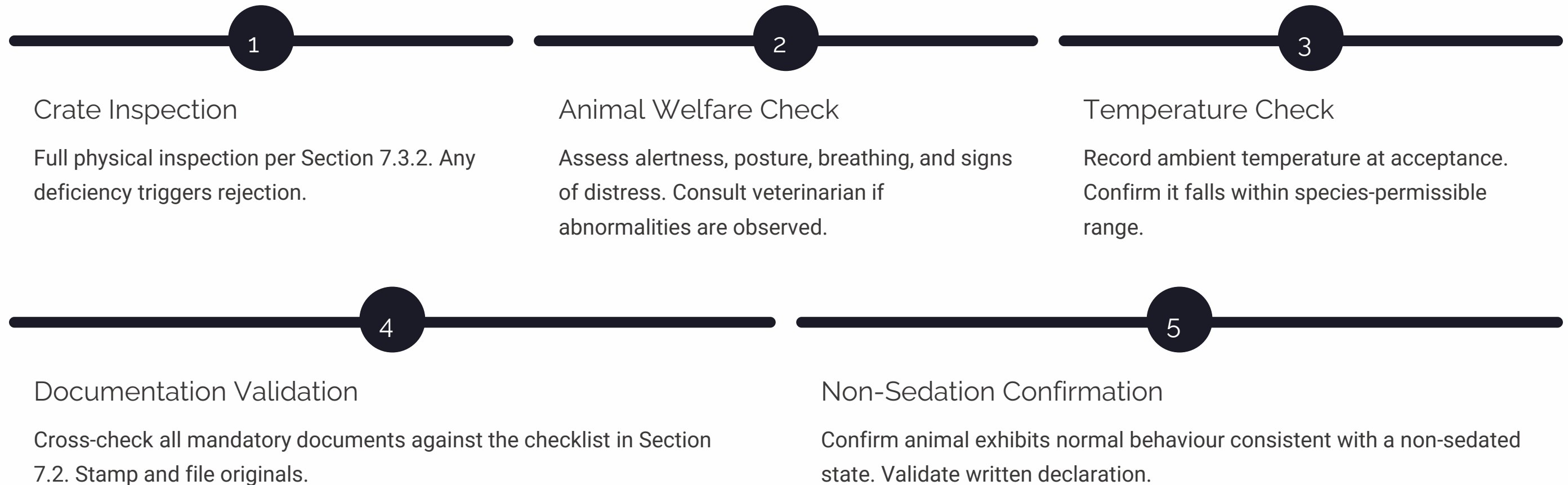
Pickup Procedure

- Visually verify animal condition before loading
- Confirm crate compliance at point of collection
- Verify all documents are present and correctly filed
- Load crates gently – no dropping or tilting
- Employ calm, low-stress handling techniques throughout



Export Acceptance at GHA

Formal AVI acceptance at the ground handling facility is the **critical control point** of the entire transport process. This is where welfare, documentation, and crate compliance are formally verified and recorded before the animal enters the airside environment.



Veterinary inspection by an airport veterinary authority officer is **mandatory** for primates, CITES species, livestock, and as required by the destination country. The vet must check health status, behaviour, microchip, and vaccination records before approving the shipment.

Section 7.6

AVI Storage — Pre-Flight

7.6.1 Storage Facility Requirements

- Quiet, low-stimulation environment — away from main cargo activity
- Temperature continuously maintained within species-specific range
- Predator/prey species strictly segregated in separate areas
- Fully escape-proof with no shared air space between incompatible species
- Adequate ventilation — HVAC inspected and certified

7.6.2 Pre-Flight Monitoring Protocol

Trained AVI staff must monitor and log the following at intervals not exceeding 60 minutes:

- Ambient temperature and humidity — with continuous data logger
- Noise levels — escalate if sustained above threshold
- Animal behaviour — note any signs of distress, aggression, or illness
- Crate structural integrity — check for damage or escape attempts



Section 7.7

Build-Up

Build-up is the preparation of the AVI shipment into its final airside unit prior to loading. This stage requires dedicated equipment and strict procedures to protect animal welfare during the transition to flight-ready configuration.

→ No Standard ULD Build

Live animals must **never** be built into standard unit load devices (ULDs).
Dedicated AVI pallets with open-frame design must be used to ensure continuous ventilation airflow around all crates.

→ Secure & Strap

All crates must be secured to the AVI pallet using approved cargo straps, preventing movement during loading and in-flight. Ventilation openings must remain fully unobstructed after securing.

→ Labelling & Documentation

Apply AVI special handling tags to all visible surfaces of the pallet. Attach temperature range labels, feeding and watering instructions, and species identification to the outside of each crate before movement to airside.

Section 7.8

Airside Transfer

The airside transfer is among the highest-risk stages for animal welfare due to exposure to the ramp environment. Procedures must minimise the time animals spend on the apron and protect them from environmental hazards.



Covered Dolly Required

All AVI shipments must be transported airside on a covered, climate-appropriate dolly. Open flatbed transfer is not permitted for any AVI shipment.



Avoid Jet Blast

Route the transfer vehicle to avoid all active taxiways and engine run-up areas. Jet blast causes acute stress and potential injury.



Minimise Noise & Vibration

Select the smoothest available ramp route. Avoid hard braking and rapid acceleration. Ramp noise should be minimised by keeping the vehicle away from engine run-up areas.



Temperature Extremes

In ambient temperatures outside the species-permissible range, transfer must occur within strict time limits and the covered dolly must provide active heating or cooling as required.

Section 7.9

Aircraft Loading

7.9.1 Loading Rules

- Load AVI exclusively in the ventilated lower deck hold designated for live animals
- Maintain separation from dangerous goods (DG), strong-smelling perishables, and any cargo that could cause contamination
- Secure all crates and pallets to prevent movement in turbulence
- Verify that ventilation inlets and outlets are fully unobstructed after loading is complete
- Confirm hold temperature is set to species-appropriate range before aircraft doors close

7.9.2 Crew Briefing (NOTOC)

The captain and relevant cabin/cargo crew must be briefed on the AVI shipment prior to departure:

- Review the **NOTOC** – species, quantity, location in hold, and special requirements
- Confirm hold temperature instructions are programmed and verified
- Communicate any species-specific notes (e.g., venomous animals, respiratory sensitivity)
- Establish escalation protocol if abnormality is detected in-flight

Section 7.10

In-Flight Care

Once airborne, the welfare of live animals depends on the aircraft's environmental control systems and the vigilance of the flight crew. Although direct access to the hold is limited, monitoring and response protocols must be followed rigorously.

Environmental Monitoring

- **Temperature:** Hold temperature must be continuously maintained within the range specified on the NOTOC. Deviations must be actioned immediately.
- **Pressurisation:** Confirm the live animal hold is fully pressurised. No live animals may be carried in unpressurised holds.
- **Ventilation:** Confirm ventilation system is operational. Any system fault must be reported to the captain without delay.

Crew Actions & Escalation

- Follow NOTOC instructions for the duration of the flight
- Log any abnormal hold temperature or environmental readings in the flight technical log
- In the event of suspected animal distress or environmental failure, the captain must be notified and diversion considered if animal welfare is at serious risk

Transit & Connection Handling

Connecting flights introduce the highest risk of welfare compromise. Animals may be exposed to the ramp environment during breakdown and re-assembly, and timing pressures can tempt shortcuts. **No shortcuts are permitted.**

1

Priority Unloading

AVI shipments must be the **first** cargo offloaded from the arriving aircraft. No AVI crate may remain in an unpowered, unventilated hold.

2

Transfer to AVI Room

All animals must be moved immediately to the transit station AVI holding facility and placed under the same storage conditions as specified in Section 7.6.

3

Veterinary Check

A veterinary inspection is mandatory at transit stations where required by local regulations, or whenever an animal shows signs of stress, injury, or illness upon arrival.

4

Care During Transit

Execute feeding and watering strictly per the shipper's written instructions. Record every care action with a time stamp. Minimise noise and human interaction to reduce stress.



Section 7.12

Arrival & Breakdown

7.12.1 Unloading Procedure

As at transit, AVI shipments hold **priority status** at arrival. The following sequence is mandatory:

- AVI offloaded first, before all other cargo
- Covered transport to the AVI holding area without delay
- Animals must not remain on the apron for more than the minimum operationally necessary time

7.12.2 Breakdown Inspection

Upon receipt in the AVI holding area, a full breakdown inspection must be completed and documented:

- Crate structural integrity – check for damage sustained in transit
- Animal welfare assessment – observe for injury, distress, or abnormal behaviour
- Temperature check – record ambient and hold temperature readings
- Documentation verification – confirm all documents are present and intact for customs clearance

Section 7.13

Veterinary & Customs Clearance

Regulatory clearance at the destination is a formal, multi-authority process that must be completed before any animal is released to the consignee. Both veterinary and customs approvals are required – neither can be bypassed.

Veterinary Authority Clearance

- Physical health inspection conducted by government-authorized veterinarian
- Microchip scanned and cross-referenced against travel documents
- Health certificate and vaccination records validated
- Quarantine decision issued – if ordered, animal transferred immediately to approved quarantine facility



Customs Clearance

- Import declaration filed and verified against AWB and veterinary documents
- CITES permit validated – species, quantity, and permit number must match precisely
- Customs hold lifted only after both veterinary clearance and import approval are confirmed

Section 7.14

Delivery to Consignee

The final handover to the consignee marks the end of the GHA's and airline's duty of care. The handover must be conducted in a calm, controlled environment, and all required documents must be transferred to the consignee in full.

01

Identity Verification

Verify the identity of the collecting party against the consignee name on the AWB. Require photographic ID. A third party may only collect with written authorisation from the named consignee.

03

Document Transfer

Hand over the complete original document set: veterinary health certificate, vaccination records, CITES permit (if applicable), import permit, and the shipper's written feeding and watering instructions.

02

Crate & Animal Condition

Conduct a joint crate integrity and animal welfare check with the consignee present. Document the condition at point of handover. Any injury, distress, or damage must be noted on the delivery receipt.

04

Consignee Signature

Obtain a signed delivery receipt confirming the animal and documents were received in acceptable condition. Retain a copy in the shipment file.

Post-Operations, CAPA & Archiving

7.15.1 Incident Types Requiring Reporting

- Animal injury – minor or serious
- Escape – at any stage
- Acute stress or behavioural emergency
- Temperature deviation outside permissible range
- Shipment delay affecting welfare
- Death of animal during transport

All incidents must be reported to the airline quality manager and the veterinary authority within 24 hours of occurrence. A full written incident report must be filed within 72 hours.

7.15.2 CAPA Process

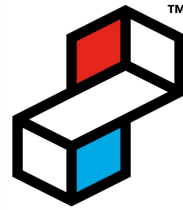
- **Root Cause Analysis:** Identify the underlying cause – procedural, environmental, human error, or equipment failure.
- **Corrective Actions:** Immediate steps taken to address the incident outcome.
- **Preventive Actions:** Systemic changes implemented to prevent recurrence.

7.15.3 Archiving Requirements

Retain for a minimum of **2 years**:

- AWB and all handling records
- Veterinary certificates and CITES documentation
- Chain-of-custody log
- All incident reports and CAPA records

Complete, Audit-Ready SOP



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This document constitutes a **full, end-to-end, IATA LAR-compliant SOP manual** for Live Animals (AVI) airfreight handling, structured precisely as required by CEIV auditors, airline quality teams, and regulatory authorities.

Airline Station Manuals

Directly adoptable as a station-level procedure document for AVI acceptance and handling operations.

GHA SOPs

Structured for integration into ground handler operating manuals and staff training curricula.

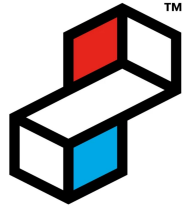
Audit Preparation

Fully aligned with IATA LAR, ICAO, and EU 1/2005 audit frameworks. Supports CEIV AVI certification.

Quality Agreements

Suitable as the basis for service level agreements and quality commitments between airlines, GHAs, and freight forwarders.





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Part II

Live Animals (AVI) Airfreight Handling

IATA LAR-Compliant Manual — Extended Reference Edition

This section provides the complete, extended reference version of the SOP for use in detailed operational planning, training programmes, and quality audit preparation across all AVI transport stakeholders.

FULL REFERENCE MANUAL

AUDIT READY



Purpose — Extended Reference

This SOP defines the **end-to-end handling requirements** for Live Animals (AVI) transported by air, ensuring full compliance with all applicable international, regional, and national regulations. It is designed to serve as a living document that evolves with each new edition of the IATA LAR and any changes to applicable law.

IATA Live Animals Regulations (LAR)

The global benchmark for all aspects of AVI air transport — container standards, species requirements, documentation, and journey planning.

ICAO Technical Instructions

Governs the interface between AVI and dangerous goods regulations, particularly for venomous species and biological samples.

EU Animal Welfare Regulation 1/2005

Mandates minimum space, journey time, and care standards for all animal transport within and transiting through EU member states.

National Veterinary Laws

Import, export, and transit veterinary requirements that vary by country and must be verified for every shipment routing.

Scope — Extended Reference

Applicable Parties

This SOP is binding upon all parties involved in the AVI transport chain:

- Shippers and animal owners
- Freight forwarders and brokers
- Road feeder service (RFS) providers
- Ground handling agents (GHAs)
- Airlines and operating carriers
- Airport veterinary authorities
- Consignees and collecting parties

Species Coverage

All species accepted under the current IATA LAR edition, including but not limited to:

- **Companion animals:** Dogs, cats, and small mammals
- **Avian:** All bird species including raptors and parrots
- **Reptiles:** Non-venomous and venomous (subject to strict conditions)
- **Zoo animals:** Large mammals, primates, cetaceans by special arrangement
- **Livestock:** Horses, cattle, sheep, and equine
- **Laboratory animals:** Rodents, rabbits, and primates under research protocols
- **Exotics:** Subject to individual airline approval and CITES compliance

Regulatory References

Compliance with this SOP requires working knowledge of the following authoritative documents. All staff involved in AVI handling must have access to current versions and be trained on their key requirements.

IATA LAR — Latest Edition

The primary global standard. Published annually. All crate specifications, species acceptability, and documentation requirements reference the current edition.

ICAO Annex 18

Safe transport of dangerous goods by air — applicable at the intersection of AVI and biohazard classifications.

EU Regulation 1/2005

Protection of animals during transport — sets minimum welfare standards mandatory throughout EU-routed journeys.

CITES Convention

Regulates international trade in endangered species. Permits must be obtained from both the exporting and importing country's CITES management authority.

Airline AVI Handling Manual

Carrier-specific policies supplement the IATA LAR and take precedence where they impose stricter requirements.

National Import/Export Laws

Country-level veterinary and customs requirements must be verified independently for every new routing.

Definitions — Extended Reference

AVI

The IATA special handling code for **Live Animals**. This code triggers specific handling, storage, loading, and documentation protocols at every point in the transport chain.

LAR

Live Animals Regulations — the IATA publication, updated annually, that constitutes the global standard for all aspects of live animal air transport.

CITES

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora — requires export and import permits for species listed in its three appendices.

Veterinary Certificate

An official health document issued by a competent (government-authorized) veterinary authority, certifying the animal's health status and fitness to travel.

IATA LAR-Compliant Crate

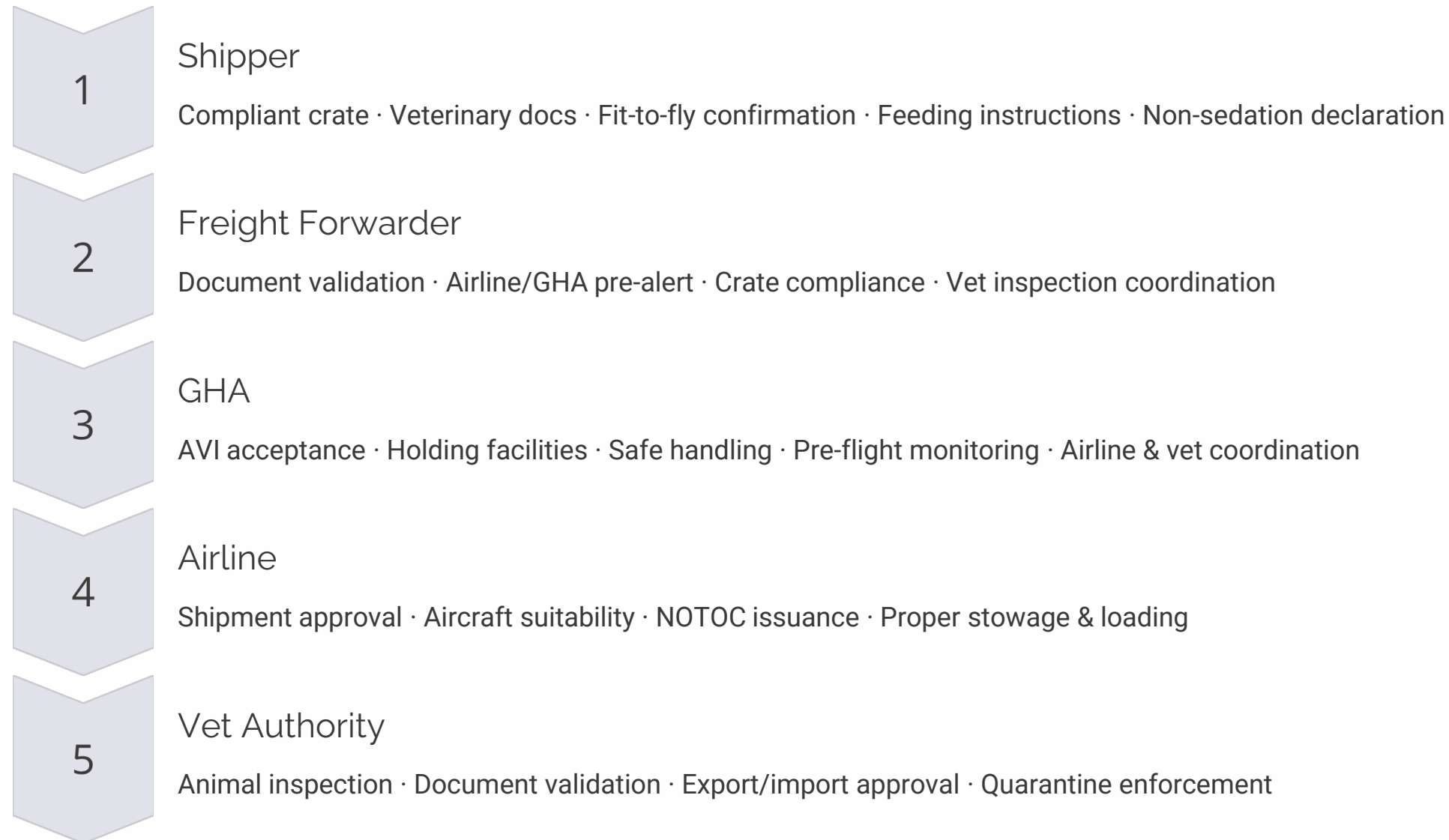
An IATA LAR-approved transport container meeting all size, ventilation, security, and labelling requirements for the specific species being transported.

Quarantine

A mandatory isolation period enforced by the destination or transit country's veterinary authority for disease prevention or species-control purposes.

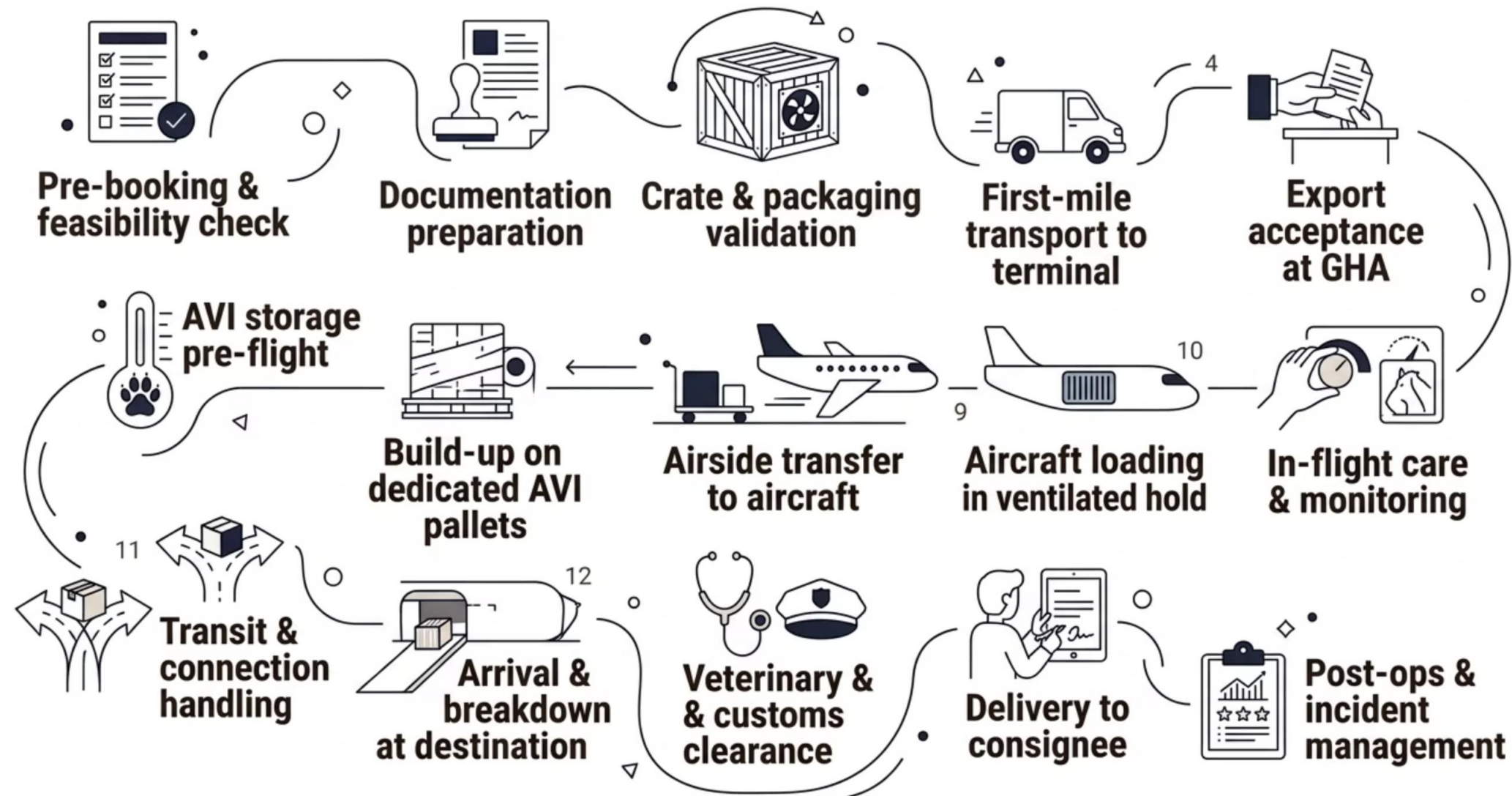
Responsibilities — Extended Reference

Each party in the AVI transport chain bears distinct, legally enforceable responsibilities. No party may delegate its obligations to another without a documented quality agreement.



Process Overview — Extended Reference

The complete AVI transport lifecycle comprises 15 sequential, mandatory stages. The process map below provides a structural overview; full procedural detail is contained in Section 7 of this document.



Every stage is mandatory and must be documented. Stages may not be combined, abbreviated, or bypassed for any operational reason. Any deviation constitutes a reportable non-conformance.

Part II – Section 7

Detailed Procedures

The following 15 procedure sections constitute the operational core of this SOP. Each section addresses one stage of the AVI transport process and provides prescriptive, step-by-step requirements for all relevant parties.

- 📄 **Mandatory Application:** All procedures apply to every AVI shipment without exception. Species-specific variations are noted within individual procedure sections. Where airline or national requirements are stricter than the IATA LAR, the stricter requirement prevails.

Pre-Booking & Feasibility

7.1.1 Species Acceptance Check

The species acceptance check is the first and most critical gate in the process. The following categories carry restrictions or require explicit airline approval:

- **Brachycephalic breeds** — many carriers impose seasonal or year-round bans
- **Primates** — restricted on most carriers; require CITES and welfare documentation
- **Venomous reptiles** — require specialist crating and operator agreement
- **CITES Appendix I species** — require pre-authorisation at the highest regulatory level
- **Pregnant animals** — not accepted without veterinary sign-off confirming journey safety
- **Very young animals** — minimum age thresholds apply per species under LAR

7.1.2 Routing Feasibility

- Avoid routings with layovers exceeding maximum permitted journey times
- Avoid airports experiencing extreme heat, cold, or monsoon conditions
- Confirm veterinary inspection and AVI holding services at all transit points
- Verify aircraft type — narrow-body aircraft may not have suitable ventilated holds

7.1.3 Equipment & Staff Availability

- AVI-certified holding room confirmed at each station
- Temperature-controlled storage capacity verified
- Species-appropriate crates available
- IATA LAR-trained AVI staff rostered for all relevant shifts

Documentation Requirements

Documentation is the legal and regulatory backbone of every AVI shipment. Missing, expired, or incorrect documents are the single most common cause of shipment delays, rejections, and regulatory violations. Document preparation must begin **well in advance** of the planned departure date.

Official Health Certificate

Government-issued by a licensed veterinary authority. Must confirm the animal is healthy and fit for air transport. Check validity period – many certificates expire within 10 days of issue.

Vaccination Records

Current records for all species-relevant vaccinations, validated by a licensed veterinarian. Rabies vaccination is mandatory for dogs and cats entering most countries.

CITES Permit

Required for all species listed in CITES Appendices I, II, or III. Both export and import permits must be obtained from the relevant national CITES Management Authority.

AWB with AVI Codes

The Air Waybill must carry the AVI special handling code and reference all other attached documentation by number. Feeding and watering instructions must be attached directly to the crate.

Non-Sedation Declaration

A signed written declaration from the shipper confirming the animal has not been sedated and will not be sedated for the journey. Sedation is prohibited unless a veterinary medical justification is provided.

Import Permit

Required by many destination countries. Must be obtained by the importer or consignee before the shipment departs origin. Validity must be confirmed against the scheduled arrival date.

Crate & Packaging Validation

IATA LAR Crate Standards

- **Sizing:** The animal must be able to stand at full height, turn around in a full circle, and lie down in a natural position without touching the crate walls
- **Ventilation:** Openings on a minimum of 3–4 sides, sized per species LAR table
- **Floor:** Fully leak-proof with sufficient absorbent bedding for the journey duration
- **Security:** Escape-proof locking — tested by attempting to open from inside simulation
- **Edges:** No exposed nails, staples, splinters, or sharp protrusions
- **Access:** Food and water containers refillable from outside without opening the door

Labelling Requirements

- "LIVE ANIMALS" label — minimum 10 cm, in red or high-visibility print
- Orientation arrows on all four side panels
- Species name (common and scientific), quantity, and shipper contact
- Feeding and watering instructions attached securely to the outside

Crate Rejection Criteria

Reject and do not accept any crate exhibiting:

- Structural damage or inadequate ventilation
- Wet, soiled, or absent bedding
- Faulty or inadequate locking mechanism
- Undersized dimensions for the animal present

Part II — 7.4

First-Mile Transport

The first-mile journey — from shipper or veterinary premises to the cargo terminal — is the first test of the animal's ability to tolerate the transport environment. Vehicle standards and driver training are critical to minimising stress from the outset.



Vehicle Requirements

- Active temperature control — heating and cooling as required by species
- Low-noise engine and insulated cargo compartment
- Cleaned, disinfected, and odour-free prior to loading
- No previous hazardous or contaminating cargo residue
- Smooth suspension — avoid rough terrain routes wherever possible

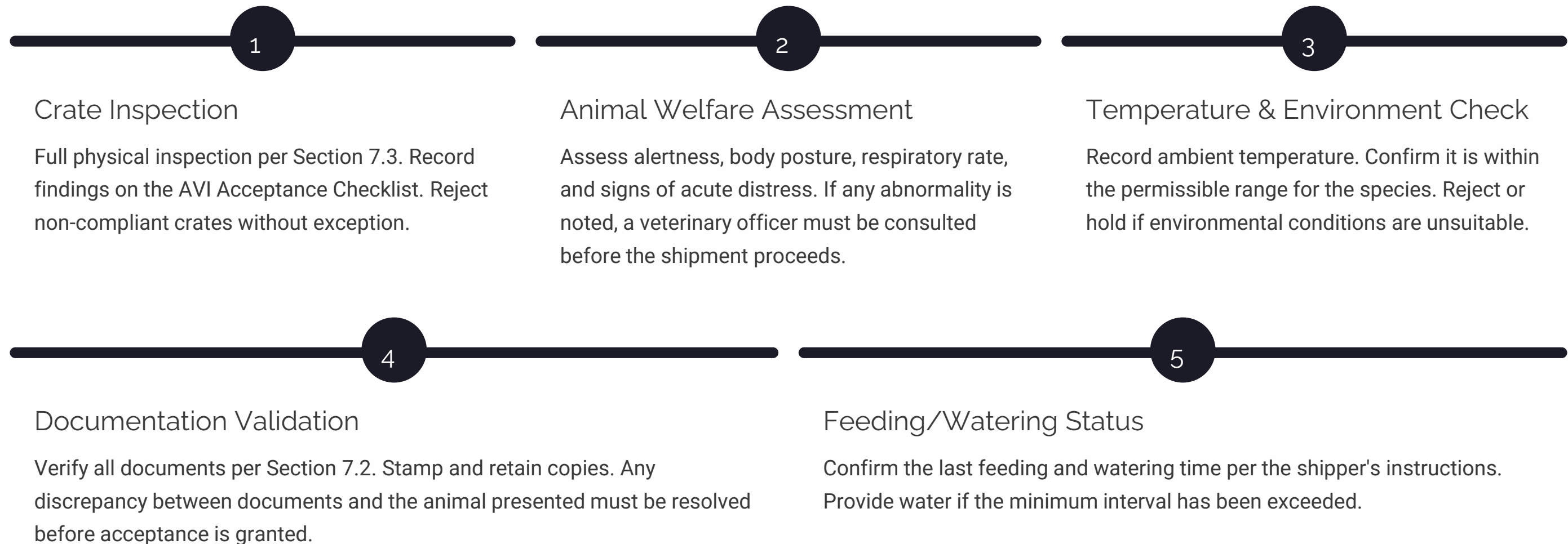


Pickup Checklist

- Visually assess animal condition before accepting for collection
- Confirm crate compliance against the IATA LAR checklist
- Verify that all documents are present, valid, and correctly packaged
- Load crates gently with a minimum of two persons — no solo loading of heavy crates
- Apply calm, quiet handling throughout — no raised voices near the animal

Export Acceptance at GHA

Formal AVI acceptance is the **definitive control point** before an animal enters the airfreight system. All welfare, documentation, and crate compliance issues must be identified and resolved at this stage – before the animal progresses to storage or airside operations.



Part II — 7.6

AVI Storage — Pre-Flight

Storage Facility Standards

- **Location:** Dedicated AVI holding room — not a shared general cargo area
- **Temperature:** Continuously maintained within species-specific permissible range; continuous data logging required
- **Segregation:** Predator and prey species in physically separate, sound-insulated sections
- **Security:** Fully escape-proof — all doors, vents, and access points inspected daily
- **Ventilation:** Certified HVAC system with documented maintenance schedule

Monitoring Protocol

AVI-trained staff must conduct and record welfare checks at intervals not exceeding **60 minutes**:

- Temperature and humidity readings — logged with timestamp
- Noise assessment — escalate and investigate if above threshold
- Animal behaviour observation — note any signs of distress, injury, or illness
- Water and food check — replenish per shipper instructions
- Crate structural integrity — check for damage or escape attempts

Part II – 7.7

Build-Up

Build-up is the process of assembling AVI crates into their airside transport units in preparation for loading. This stage requires dedicated equipment and careful sequencing to maintain both animal welfare and operational safety.

1 **Dedicated AVI Pallets Only**

Live animals must **never** be built into standard ULDs with solid sides. Use only open-frame AVI pallets that allow unobstructed airflow around all crates at all times. Ensure the pallet is clean and free of residue from previous cargo.

2 **Secure All Crates**

Strap every crate to the AVI pallet using approved cargo restraint. After securing, verify that all ventilation openings remain fully unobstructed. Perform a pull-test on each strap before transferring to airside.

3 **Apply All Required Labels**

Before the pallet leaves the build-up area: attach AVI special handling tags to all visible pallet faces; confirm temperature range labels are correct for the species; verify feeding and watering instruction cards are securely attached to each crate.

Airside Transfer

The airside ramp environment presents significant risks to animal welfare — jet blast, extreme temperatures, noise, vibration, and exhaust fumes. Airside transfer procedures exist to eliminate or minimise every one of these hazards.



Covered Dolly Required

All AVI pallets must be transferred airside on a fully enclosed or covered dolly. Open flatbed dollies are strictly prohibited for any AVI shipment under any weather conditions.



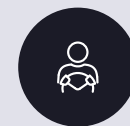
Jet Blast Avoidance

Route the transfer vehicle around all active taxiways and engine run-up zones. Jet blast can cause acute physical injury and extreme psychological stress in animals.



Minimise Exposure Time

Transfer must be completed as rapidly as operationally safe. When ambient temperature is outside the permissible range for the species, maximum exposure time on the ramp is **15 minutes**.



Smooth Driving

Drivers must use the smoothest available ramp route, avoid hard braking and sharp turns, and maintain a steady, low speed at all times during AVI transfer.

Aircraft Loading

7.9.1 Loading Rules

- Load AVI exclusively in the designated **ventilated, pressurised lower deck hold**
- Maintain minimum 1-metre separation from dangerous goods (DG) cargo
- Separate from strong-smelling perishables and any cargo generating fumes
- Secure all crates and AVI pallets to aircraft floor with approved restraints
- Conduct post-loading ventilation check — confirm all inlets and outlets are unobstructed
- Confirm hold temperature is programmed to the species-appropriate range before door closure

7.9.2 Crew Briefing — NOTOC

The NOTOC (Notification to Captain) must be issued and briefed before pushback:

- Species and quantity on board
- Hold position and pallet reference
- Required temperature range for the entire flight duration
- Any species-specific notes — e.g. venomous animals, respiratory-sensitive breeds
- Emergency contact for the GHA AVI supervisor

In-Flight Care

Although direct access to the cargo hold during flight is not always possible, the flight crew's responsibility for the welfare of live animals on board is continuous and legally enforceable. Environmental monitoring and rapid response to abnormalities are essential.

Temperature Monitoring

Hold temperature must be maintained within the range specified on the NOTOC for the entire flight. Any deviation must be actioned within 10 minutes. If the hold temperature cannot be restored, the captain must assess the need for a precautionary diversion.

Pressurisation

Confirm the AVI hold is fully pressurised to cabin-equivalent levels. Live animals may not be carried in unpressurised holds under any circumstances. Loss of pressurisation is an immediate emergency requiring captain notification.

Ventilation System

The hold ventilation system must be confirmed operational before departure and monitored throughout the flight. Any HVAC fault must be reported to the captain immediately and logged in the technical log.

NOTOC Compliance

All crew members with AVI responsibility must review the NOTOC before departure, follow all species-specific instructions throughout the flight, and log any abnormal observations or actions taken in the flight technical log.

Transit & Connection Handling

Transit handling at connecting airports is statistically the highest-risk phase of the AVI journey. Time pressure, staff unfamiliarity, and ramp exposure combine to increase the probability of welfare incidents. Priority procedures are non-negotiable.



Priority Offloading

AVI is unloaded first from every arriving aircraft. The pallet must be in a covered vehicle and en route to the AVI room within 10 minutes of aircraft on-blocks.



Veterinary Assessment

A veterinary check is mandatory where required by local regulation, and recommended whenever an animal shows any signs of stress, injury, or abnormal behaviour upon arrival.



Transfer to AVI Holding Room

Animals must be placed in a temperature-controlled, species-segregated AVI holding room immediately upon arrival. The same storage standards as Section 7.6 apply without exception.



Feeding & Watering

Execute feeding and watering strictly per the shipper's written instructions. Record every care action with a time stamp. Do not feed animals beyond the instructed amount or schedule.

Part II — 7.12

Arrival & Breakdown

7.12.1 Priority Unloading at Destination

AVI shipments hold **Category A priority** at arrival. The following sequence is mandatory and must be timed and documented:

- AVI offloaded as the **first cargo** from the arriving aircraft
- Covered vehicle to AVI holding area — departure within 10 minutes of aircraft on-blocks
- No AVI crate may remain in an unventilated, stationary hold for more than 15 minutes

7.12.2 Breakdown Inspection

Upon receipt in the AVI holding area, a full condition assessment must be completed:

- **Crate integrity:** Inspect for damage, breakage, or escape attempts during flight
- **Animal welfare:** Observe for injury, signs of acute distress, abnormal posture, or laboured breathing
- **Temperature:** Record ambient temperature in the holding area and confirm it is within the permissible range
- **Documents:** Confirm all original documents are present, intact, and ready for customs clearance

Veterinary & Customs Clearance

Destination clearance is a formal, multi-authority regulatory process. Both veterinary and customs approvals must be obtained before the animal is released. The GHA must ensure that all documentation is complete and presented promptly to avoid unnecessary detention of the animal.

Veterinary Authority Inspection

- Full physical health inspection by a government-authorized veterinarian
- Microchip scanned and matched against travel documents and vaccination records
- Health certificate and all attached veterinary documentation validated
- **Quarantine decision:** If imposed, the animal is transferred immediately to a government-approved quarantine facility. The shipper and consignee must be notified without delay.

Customs Clearance

- Formal import declaration filed against the AWB and veterinary documents
- CITES permit validated – species, quantity, permit number, and authority issuing the permit must match precisely with the animal presented
- Customs hold lifted only after both veterinary clearance **and** import approval are confirmed in writing
- Any discrepancy triggers an immediate escalation to the airline and freight forwarder

Delivery to Consignee

Handover Protocol

The formal delivery handover must be conducted in a calm, dedicated area away from main cargo operations. The following steps are mandatory:

- **Identity verification:** Require photographic ID from the collecting party; match against the consignee name on the AWB
- **Third-party collection:** Permitted only with written, signed authorisation from the named consignee
- **Crate inspection:** Conduct a joint crate integrity check with the consignee present and document the condition
- **Animal welfare assessment:** Observe and record the animal's behaviour and physical condition at handover

Document Transfer & Sign-Off

The following original documents must be handed to the consignee and receipt acknowledged:

- Official veterinary health certificate
- Vaccination records
- CITES permit — where applicable
- Import permit
- Shipper's written feeding and watering instructions

Obtain a **signed delivery receipt** confirming animal and documents received in acceptable condition. Retain a copy in the permanent shipment file.

Post-Operations, CAPA & Archiving

Incident Types Requiring Immediate Reporting

- Animal injury — minor or serious — at any stage of the process
- Escape from crate or holding facility
- Acute stress or behavioural emergency requiring veterinary intervention
- Temperature deviation outside the permissible range for the species
- Significant shipment delay with welfare implications
- Death of animal during transport or in holding

Report to the airline quality manager and veterinary authority within **24 hours**. Full written incident report required within **72 hours**.

CAPA — Corrective & Preventive Actions

- **Root Cause Analysis:** Identify the true underlying cause — procedural gap, environmental factor, human error, or equipment failure
- **Corrective Actions:** Immediate remedial steps taken to address the incident outcome and prevent further harm
- **Preventive Actions:** Systemic process or training changes implemented to ensure the incident cannot recur

Documentation Archiving — 2-Year Minimum Retention

- AWB and all AVI handling records
- Veterinary certificates and CITES documentation
- Complete chain-of-custody log
- All incident reports and associated CAPA records