

3. The issue of a certificate of disinfection of merchandise which is the subject of trade between two countries may be governed by bilateral agreements between the exporting and the importing countries.

*Article 48*

Except in the case of an infected person or suspect, baggage may be disinfected or disinfected only in the case of a person carrying infectious material or insect vectors of a disease subject to the Regulations.

*Article 49*

1. Mail, newspapers, books, and other printed matter shall not be subject to any health measure.

2. Postal parcels may be subject to health measures only if they contain:

(a) any of the foods referred to in Article 64 which the health authority has reason to believe comes from a cholera-infected area;

(b) linen, wearing apparel, or bedding, which has been used or soiled and to which the provisions of Part V are applicable;

(c) infectious material; or

(d) living insects and other animals capable of being a vector of human disease if introduced or established.

*Article 50*

A health administration shall ensure as far as practicable that containers used in international traffic by rail, road, sea or air shall, in packing, be kept free of infectious material, vectors or rodents.

**PART V - SPECIAL PROVISIONS RELATING  
TO EACH  
OF THE DISEASES SUBJECT TO THE REGULATIONS**

**Chapter I — Plague**

*Article 51*

For the purposes of these Regulations the incubation period of plague is six days.

*Article 52*

Vaccination against plague shall not be required as a condition of admission of any person to a territory.

*Article 53*

1. Each State shall employ all means in its power to diminish the danger from the spread of plague by rodents and their ectoparasites. Its health administration shall keep itself constantly informed by systematic collection and regular examination of rodents and their ectoparasites of the conditions in any area, especially any port or airport, infected or suspected of being infected by rodent plague.

2. During the stay of a ship or an aircraft in a port or an airport infected by plague, special care shall be taken to prevent the introduction of rodents on board.

*Article 54*

1. Every ship shall be either:

(a) permanently kept in such a condition that it is free of rodents and the plague vector; or

(b) periodically deratted.

2. A Deratting Certificate or a Deratting Exemption Certificate shall be issued only by the health authority for a port approved for that purpose under Article 17. Every such certificate shall be valid for six months, but this period may be extended by one month for a ship proceeding to such a port if the deratting or inspection, as the case may be, would be facilitated by the operations due to take place there.

3. Deratting Certificates and Deratting Exemption Certificates shall conform with the model specified in Appendix 1.

4. If a valid certificate is not produced, the health authority for a port approved under Article 17, after inquiry and inspection, may proceed in the following manner:

(a) If the port has been designated under paragraph 2 of Article 17, the health authority may derat the ship or cause the deratting to be done under its direction and control. It shall decide in each case the technique which should be employed to secure the extermination of rodents on the ship. Deratting shall be carried out so as to avoid as far as possible damage to the ship and to any cargo and shall not take longer than is absolutely necessary. Wherever possible deratting shall be done when the holds are empty. In the case of a ship in ballast, it shall be done before loading. When deratting has been satisfactorily completed, the health authority shall issue a Deratting Certificate.

(b) At any port approved under Article 17, the health authority may issue a Deratting Exemption Certificate if it is satisfied that the ship is free of rodents. Such a certificate shall be issued only if the inspection of the ship has been carried out when the holds are empty or when they contain only ballast or other material, unattractive to rodents, of such a nature or so disposed as to make a thorough inspection of the holds possible. A Deratting Exemption Certificate may be issued for an oil tanker with full holds.

5. If the conditions under which a deratting is carried out are such that, in the opinion of the health authority for the port where the operation was performed, a satisfactory result cannot be obtained, the health authority shall make a note to that effect on the existing Deratting Certificate.

*Article 55*

In exceptional circumstances of an epidemiological nature, when the presence of rodents is suspected on board, an aircraft may be disinfected and deratted.

*Article 56*

Before departure on an international voyage from an area where there is an epidemic of pulmonary plague, every suspect shall be placed in isolation by the health authority for a period of six days, reckoned from the date of the last exposure to infection.

*Article 57*

1. A ship or an aircraft on arrival shall be regarded as infected if:

(a) it has a case of human plague on board;

(b) a plague-infected rodent is found on board.

A ship shall also be regarded as infected if a case of human plague has occurred on board more than six days after embarkation.

2. A ship on arrival shall be regarded as suspected if:

(a) it has no case of human plague on board, but such a case has occurred on board within the first six days after embarkation;

(b) there is evidence of an abnormal mortality among rodents on board of which the cause is not yet known;

(c) it has a person on board who has been exposed to pulmonary plague and has not met the requirements of Article 56.

3. Even when coming from an infected area or having on board a person coming from an infected area, a ship or an aircraft on arrival shall be regarded as healthy if, on medical examination, the health authority is satisfied that the conditions specified in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article do not exist.