

Australian Wildlife Forensic Services

Murdoch University, 90 South Street,
Murdoch, Western Australia, 6150.



October 28th 2011

To: Mr David Hunt, Australian Customs Service



Case Report: Investigation into alleged importation of clothing manufactured with hair/fur from prohibited animal(s).

Case Number: HIF0004

Receipt of Item

On the 18th October 2011 I received one (1), unpackaged, grey knitted sleeveless vest from Mr. Michael HOLLINS (Customs Officer, Australian Customs Service). Upon receipt this item was placed into a secure storage area.

Aim of the Analyses

To determine whether the apparent animal hair/fur trims on the vest were of animal in origin, if so, to effect an identification of the animal family/species.

Description of item

The item received comprised of a grey knitted, sleeveless vest with apparent animal hair/fur trim on collar and lapels and on main body of garment. The garment labeled "AMEISE" at back of neck and "100% RABBIT FUR 100% ACRYLIC" (with washing instructions) on the lower left, inside seam.

Examination of Item

The collar comprised of grey apparent animal hair/fur, which was long and 'shaggy' in appearance; the top of the collar had a crimped appearance and the apparent hair/fur was soft and pliable to the touch.

The remainder of the garment was trimmed with numerous discrete tufts of grey, apparent animal hair/fur, which were fine and extremely soft to the touch.

Two (2) areas from each of the collar and tufts were sampled for further microscopical analyses (HIF004/1 to HIF004/4).

Analyses and Results

The collar samples (HIF004/1 & HIF004/2) and tuft samples (HIF004/3 and HIF004/4) were confirmed as animal in origin via microscopy on the basis of the presence of outer scales and internal morphological features (medulla).

The samples from the collar exhibited microscopical morphological features, characteristic for hairs originating from sheep (*Ovis spp*).

The samples from the two (2) tufts from the main body of the garment exhibited microscopical, morphological features characteristic for members of the rabbit and hare family (*Leporidae*).

Summary and Opinion

On the basis of the microscopical, morphological features of the animal hairs/fur of the areas sampled from the vest, I am of the opinion that the hairs/fur did not originate from a cat (*Felis catus*), dog (*Canis familiaris*) or Raccoon dog (*Nyctereutes procyonoides*). Although garments containing raccoon dog hairs are not prohibited imports, the hairs from this animal are used as hair/fur trims and for this reason I have cited this animal.

The animal hair/fur trims on the garment-exhibited characteristics typical for hair originating from sheep (*Ovis spp*) and from members of the rabbit and hare family (*Leporidae*).

Should you have any further queries or wish to discuss the matter further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,



Silvana TRIDICO
(AWFS Forensic Scientist)