A case of rabies has been confirmed in a seven-month-old dog in the Loire, Rhone-Alpes region of France. The dog was reported to have bitten several people and another dog before it was presented to a veterinarian.

Reporting the case to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) on May 22, Loic Evain, France’s chief veterinary officer, said that the diagnosis had been confirmed by the Pasteur Institute in Paris on May 21. The dog had been illegally brought to France from Hungary in late December 2014, when it was younger than the minimum age permitted; it also had no vaccination or identification. It was placed under surveillance by the French authorities, but was taken to Algeria by its owners from April 21 to May 7, ‘again without respecting the regulations on movements of domestic carnivores’. It was reported to have run away while in Algeria.

Following its return to France on May 7, the dog remained in one place until being presented to the veterinarian on May 16 having shown signs of aggressiveness associated with hyperthermia. It was reported to have had contact with at least nine people and a dog during this time. The dog was placed under quarantine at the veterinarian’s, but died overnight on May 17/18. A rabies investigation was launched.

Dr Evain reported that, following confirmation of the diagnosis, a regulated zone had been put in place to limit the movement of domestic carnivores, establish increased surveillance and strengthen the capture of stray animals. Carnivores that had not been properly vaccinated and that could have had contact with the infected animal would be euthanased, while those that had been properly vaccinated would be monitored clinically for six months.

The report to the OIE says that the confirmation of the virus as type Africa 1 indicated that the dog was infected during its stay in Africa.

The last case of rabies reported in France was in April 2014.

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Rabies confirmed in an illegally imported dog in France

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