



Australian Government

Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service



Cargo Management eBulletin No: 03-2004 (APRIL)

[click here to print eBulletin or to view online](#)

✦ Current issues concerning AQIS Cargo Management and the Cargo and Seaports Industries

✦ Upcoming changes to the laboratory testing of imported food samples

Food importers will soon be able to easily choose which laboratory samples of their imported food products are sent to, as part of a major change to the testing procedures for imported foods. Because the changes associated with implementing this fully contestable testing environment are significant, AQIS is seeking the assistance of industry in bringing these changes to the attention of all food importers in order to minimise any inconvenience during the changeover process.

The most significant change that will take place is that importers will be required to nominate the laboratory their food sample is to be sent to for testing. At present, if a food requires analysis, it is AQIS that generally makes the decision as to which laboratory samples are sent to, not the importer. However, AQIS is making the change to an importer-nominated laboratory system in response to a recommendation made by the Australian Government's National Competition Policy (NCP) Review. It is anticipated that this will make the choice of laboratory an open and transparent process, reduce unnecessary restraints on competition, and allow importers to choose the level of service they require by choosing their testing provider. In addition, there are opportunities to benefit from reduced costs and turn around times, particularly for those laboratories who are able to receive deliveries 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

[Click here to access further information regarding which tests each approved laboratory can perform on each food group.](#)

Other changes that will take place relate to importers having to provide appropriate packaging (where required) for the samples collected by AQIS. To assist importers that do not currently provide their own packaging, AQIS will produce guidelines on the types of packaging required. The provision of packaging by importers will be phased in during the contestability implementation period. AQIS will also nominate sample collection points which AQIS inspectors will deliver samples to. Importers will be required to advise the laboratory or laboratory courier when and where these testing samples can be collected from.

AQIS plans to introduce the arrangements on 1 July 2004. Information on the introduction, including AQIS contact details for any queries, is available in Imported Food Notice 12/04 below. Additional information will be provided in further Imported Food Notices in the coming weeks. [Click here to access all Imported Food Notices released in 2004.](#)

✦ Changed conditions for the importation of Douglas fir from the USA

Quarantine officials in New Zealand have discovered a serious timber disease - Pine Pitch Canker - in Douglas fir nursery stock from the USA. As a result, AQIS has reviewed its import conditions for materials known to harbour the disease. Pine Pitch Canker is recognised as posing a high quarantine risk to

Australia, particularly as a result of its potential impact on *Pinus Radiata* plantations and associated forest industries.

The current import conditions for timber of Douglas fir and *Pinus* spp. do not address the risk of this disease gaining entry into Australia. Therefore, AQIS will introduce additional import conditions for Douglas fir material on 7 June 2004 to improve quarantine integrity. These conditions will involve mandatory treatment - either by gamma irradiation or kiln sterilisation.

On receipt of the required technical information from the USA and review by AQIS, additional treatments may also be added to this list. Options under consideration include an "area freedom" approach and heat treatment at a core temperature 56° Celsius for 30 minutes regardless of residual moisture content. AQIS will inform industry when any other treatments have been assessed as acceptable. An Import Risk Analysis (IRA) is also being carried out by Biosecurity Australia to assess this risk posed by these and other coniferous products from the USA more comprehensively. Further information is contained in Public Quarantine Alert 0325 in the table below.

✦ More states gain access to "Broker Reports" system

Following on from the release of "Broker Reports" in Western Australia on 15 February 2004, several other states will shortly gain access to the system. Queensland gained access to the system on 19 March 2004, while South Australia and Victoria will gain access on 14 April 2004. New South Wales will follow shortly thereafter on 21 April 2004.

The "Broker Reports" system allows brokers to monitor the progress of AQIS services and fees related to each quarantine entry via the Internet. It allows brokers to see the status of each entry, how much they currently owe and then (if the entry is finalised) find out the total amount owing, before the actual invoice is sent off from AQIS.

The "Broker Reports" system will not replace the existing e-mail broker notification system in the short term - AQIS will maintain the e-mail Broker Notification process that is currently running. Once the "Broker Reports" system is fully implemented, AQIS will assess the ongoing need for the e-mail notification.

Brokers in these states interested in using the new system should contact AQIS by sending an email to: brokerreportsadmin@aqis.gov.au.

✦ Accreditation scheme set to improve effectiveness of methyl bromide fumigations in Indonesia

Importers should encounter fewer potential problems with methyl bromide fumigations performed in Indonesia with the upcoming implementation of the Australian Fumigation Accreditation Scheme (AFAS) in that country.

One of the most effective methods of preventing exotic pests and diseases from becoming established in Australia is to address quarantine risks before goods are shipped. In the case of fumigation, ensuring offshore operators are treating goods effectively is important in ensuring quarantine risks stay offshore, thus helping AQIS to protect Australia's quarantine integrity.

Under the AFAS scheme, AQIS assists quarantine agencies in other countries by providing training for government officers and fumigation providers in satisfying AQIS's methyl bromide treatment requirements. The end result of AFAS is that the offshore quarantine authority develops a list of registered and certified fumigation establishments, staffed by employees that have completed AFAS methyl bromide fumigation training. These establishments are checked on a regular basis by the offshore quarantine authority to ensure continued compliance with AQIS requirements. Each accredited facility is denoted by a unique Identification Number issued by the country's quarantine authority. Being somewhat outside AQIS's core business, funding for AFAS comes from the AusAID program run by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

In the case of Indonesia, AQIS has been working with Indonesian quarantine authorities for a number of years to establish education systems and compile a list of certified fumigation providers. As an example of the Indonesian government's commitment to the scheme, it has constructed a purpose-built training

facility for fumigation accreditation. Both the Indonesian government and fumigation companies have been receptive to the scheme, with 12 fumigation providers already certified by Indonesian authorities. It is expected this list will grow over the next few months as more fumigation providers complete the training program.

Once a country has fully implemented an AFAS scheme, AQIS will only accept fumigation certificates from companies accredited by the quarantine authority in the relevant country. At present, AQIS accepts treatment certificates from all Indonesian fumigation providers, unless a treatment by the company has previously been found to be ineffective, but this would change when the new AFAS scheme is implemented. However, in order to facilitate trade, AQIS will allow a grace period of a few months in order to allow importers to make any necessary adjustments and ensure they are using accredited offshore fumigators. In addition, AQIS will also accept fumigation certificates from non-accredited treatment providers if the relevant documentation has been witnessed by a government official who has undergone the training.

One of the key benefits to importers will be increased confidence in the effectiveness of their offshore quarantine treatments. An improved performance by Indonesian treatment providers should lead to a reduction in the number of consignments failing inspection, and therefore the need for re-fumigation, upon arrival in Australia. Countries implementing the AFAS scheme also benefit by capacity-building their quarantine systems. For example, once they have established an accreditation system they can use it as a model to develop companion systems for other quarantine treatments, such as ethylene oxide, and can offer training to other countries.

AQIS expects to fully implement AFAS for Indonesia as of 15 June 2004. For further information please email AIN_Report@aqis.gov.au.

.....

✦ **Controlling the quarantine risks associated with waste aboard international vessels**

Waste aboard international vessels presents a particularly high quarantine risk to Australia as it has the potential to harbour a wide range of exotic pests and diseases. Recently, AQIS released a revised fact sheet and additional information in order to further educate the public, so we can work in co-operation to minimise the quarantine risk. Thousands of international vessels arrive at Australian ports each year, each containing waste that may be harbouring pests and diseases.

As part of the "shared responsibility" approach taken to quarantine issues, AQIS works closely with a range of government, regulatory and industry groups to ensure waste aboard vessels is being dealt with effectively. Examination of vessel waste and any on-board waste management is undertaken by AQIS as part of the Pratique inspection. This involves inspecting vessel waste and waste storage areas and considering how this waste is managed on board and while in port.

AQIS requirements for the handling of waste aboard vessels when in an Australian port include:

- Ensuring that waste held on vessels is secured in such a way that it cannot be accessed by insects, birds, rodents or other pests;
- Ensuring all deck areas are free from food waste;
- Not using galley grinders and sealing swing bins while in Australian ports or waters;
- Not using waste as bait for fishing; and
- When disposing of waste, ensuring the process is supervised by AQIS, or undertaken by a waste contractor authorised by AQIS.

The collection, transport, storage, treatment and disposal of quarantine waste at Australian Ports should be undertaken by contractors who have been approved by AQIS, meaning that they have entered into a compliance agreement with AQIS. Non-approved contractors may be used with AQIS permission, however these contractors must be fully supervised by AQIS. A fee-for-service charge applies in these cases. Other waste management methods may also be approved on a case-by-case basis, such as the temporary storage of quarantine waste in refrigerated reefers until such time that collection can be arranged.

If any problems arise with the incorrect storage of waste, or if contamination with exotic pests or diseases is suspected, operators and the public in general are encouraged to contact AQIS on 1800 020 504 for assistance.

.....

✦ Next AICCC meeting scheduled for April 2004

The next meeting of the AICCC will take place in Canberra on 27 April 2004. The major item for discussion will be the Value / Efficiency Project, in addition to a wide range of other items for discussion as listed below:

- Progress reports on:
 - Timber and associated quarantine issues
 - CMR / ICS Issues
 - Communication
- Financial matters:
 - Progress of the Import Clearance program fee reduction
 - Import Clearance 2004-05 budget
 - Seaports 2004-05 budget and charging review
- Reports on the Increased Quarantine Intervention (IQI) initiative:
 - High Volume Low Value (HVLV)
 - Air cargo and containers
 - External Container Inspection Regime (ECIR)
 - Seaports
- Bio Security Issues
- Committee reports:
 - Quarantine Exports Advisory Council (QEAC)
 - Cargo Management Committee (CMC)
 - Imported Food Consultative Committee (IFCC)
 - Industry Working Group on Quarantine (IWGQ)
 - AICCC Secretariat report

.....

✦ Summary of documents and alerts released by AQIS Cargo Management in March 2004

Reference Number	Document (Clicking on the links below will take you to the relevant page of the AQIS website)	Overview
1	Containerised Cargo Clearance (CCC) manual amendment 1/03/04 - Chapter 1 Section A	List of the most recent amendments to the CCC manual
2	CCC Manual 1/03/04 - Chapter 1 Section B	AQIS contacts (national officer)
3	CCC Manual 1/03/04 - Chapter 2 Section 7	AQIS-approved treatment certificates (Kiln drying)
4	CCC Manual 1/03/04 - Chapter 3 Section 12	Australian Metropolitan postcodes
5	CCC Manual 1/03/04 - Chapter 3 Section 13	Preservatives for treating timber
6	CCC Manual 1/03/04 - Chapter 3 Section 14	Italian acceptable fumigation providers list
7	CCC Manual 1/03/04 - Chapter 3 Section 15	Unacceptable treatment providers list
8	List of Quarantine Approved Premises (QAPs) for Automatic Entry Processing (AEP) 1 March 2004	Updated list of QAPs with AEP approval
9	Public Quarantine Alert (POA) 0322	Live vaccines for cats and dogs
10	Imported Food Notice 09/04	Extension to Symbio Laboratories Pty Ltd conditions of appointment
11	POA 0323	Presentation of documents fax cover sheet

Reference Number	Document (Clicking on the links below will take you to the relevant page of the AQIS website)	Overview
12	Seaports Advice to Agents 06/04	Quarantine waste management
13	PQA 0321	Commercial consignments of meat-based flavours require an import permit
14	PQA 0324	Basileum SI-84 as a preservative for softwood ply in shipping containers
15	PQA 0037	Update - burnt pine longicorn season in New Zealand
16	Imported Food Notice 10/04	Imported food testing of colours and artificial sweeteners
17	Imported Food Notice 11/04	Extension to EML Consulting Services QLD Pty Ltd conditions of appointment
18	PQA 0326	<i>Hoya spp</i> imported as leaf cuttings
19	Imported Food Notice 12/04	Implementing a fully contestable laboratory services environment-Stage 1
20	PQA 0330	Annual manufacturer's declarations no longer required
21	PQA 0325	Update - Change to import conditions for Douglas fir and <i>Pinus spp</i> timber from the USA

.....

✦ **Contact cargobulletin@aqis.gov.au if you have any queries, suggestions or requests for further information**

The Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry seeks to publish its work to the highest professional standards. The Commonwealth does not warrant the accuracy or currency of the information which comes from third parties. Readers should rely on their own skill and judgement in applying any information to particular issues or circumstances. To the maximum extent permitted by law, the Commonwealth disclaims all liability for any loss, damage, expenses and costs incurred by any person arising out of using or relying on any part of the information provided in this eBulletin.

✦ **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY** ✦