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Cargo Management eBulletin

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Providing information to the Cargo and Shipping industries on the latest AQIS developments

In 2007 AQIS met with the Customs Brokers and Forwarders Council of Australia (CBFCA) and the AQIS/Industry Cargo Consultative Committee (AICCC) to establish a joint set of priorities for the AQIS Entry Management plan. These priorities included the establishment of an Entry Management National Coordination Centre, the establishment of e-mail document lodgement and the creation of guidelines for entry processing. The following three articles give an outline of these priorities and their progress over the last year.

Import Condition (ICON) cases to include guidelines for entry processing

ICON (www.aqis.gov.au/icon) is progressively being updated to include guidelines for "entry processing" of commercially imported consignments.

The entry processing guidelines were originally designed to provide AQIS staff with a concise summary of the documents required to address commodity concerns and give a breakdown of the quarantine directions to be applied under a number of scenarios. These guidelines are designed to bring greater consistency and clarity to the outcomes of AQIS's entry processing activities.

AQIS has now made all current entry processing guidelines in ICON available to the public. To date, entry processing guidelines have been written for a limited group of commodities but this group continues to be expanded. So far, you will find entry processing guidelines attached to import conditions cases for:

- Machinery (new and used)
- Manufactured Wooden Articles
- Plywoods and Veneers
- Seeds for Sowing
- Dried Herbs (including those used for eastern medicines)
- Finfish products
- Yachts/Vessels
- Nursery Stock
- Stockfeeds
- Fertilisers

AQIS is very interested in feedback in response to this initiative and it can be provided either directly to the Entry Management Projects Team at emprojects@aqis.gov.au or through the Secretariat of the AQIS/Industry Cargo Consultative Committee at aiccc@aiccc.com.

For further detail please refer to Notice to Industry 40/2007/08 at the following link:
www.daffa.gov.au/aqis/import/general-info/ian/07-08.

Broker E-mail Trial to be expanded

AQIS is continuing to expand its trial of lodging documents through e-mail following the successful initial trial of e-mail lodgement of documents. This trial commenced in late 2007 with seven brokers lodging some documentation with the Victorian and NSW Regional Offices. Since that time the trial has continued to grow and the seven brokerages now lodge documentation relating to all commodities by e-mail with these two regions. As a result of the successful trial nearly all imported (uncooked) pig meat documentation is lodged by email as well.

On 14 July 2008, another 15 brokerages will be invited to participate in the current trial operating in Victoria and NSW. In addition to these brokerages coming online, the first steps of expanding the trial into other regions are also coming together. Later in July, AQIS South Queensland and AQIS Western Australia will commence local trials with some brokerages to ensure everything is in place to commence receiving e-mailed documents from all trial participants in the coming months.

None of this would be possible without the ongoing support of industry and the close working relationship established with them through the AQIS/Industry Cargo Consultative Committee (AICCC) Secretariat.

For further information on the e-mail trial please contact Brad Thomas on 02 6272 4648 or the AICCC Secretariat at aiccc@aiccc.com or on 02 9700 7522

Entry Management National Coordination Centre – First Anniversary coming up!

The Entry Management National Coordination Centre (EM NCC) in South Australia was the seventh national coordination centre set up by the AQIS Import Clearance Program to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of its operations Australia-wide.

Established in August 2007, the EM NCC has taken on a number of entry management activities previously undertaken in each of the AQIS regional offices. To date, this has included the finalisation of unsupervised quarantine treatments, destructions and re-exports as well as the responsibility for coordinating activities relating to imported (uncooked) pig meat shipments.

The establishment of the EM NCC has realised benefits for industry. By moving all imported (uncooked) pig meat entry management activities to the EM NCC, Import Clearance has been able to simplify the processes supporting these activities and now offers industry a "one-stop-shop" for pig meat imports such as the initial entry processing, managing movements and reporting discrepancies or concerns. Documents are now being received by e-mail, turn around times have been reduced and a strong working relationship has been developed between industry parties involved with imported (uncooked) pig meat imports and AQIS staff in the Adelaide NCC.

In line with the experiences in other NCC the consolidation of activities to one central processing location has realised significant benefits for AQIS and industry in making its activities more nationally consistent. For example, having all unsupervised treatments finalised in one place has allowed AQIS to clarify and standardise the information provided by treatment providers to give assurance that successful treatments have been performed. This in turn has led to more efficient processing, faster turn around times and greater transparency.

It is important to acknowledge that the establishment of the EM NCC has relied on active support of industry. Particular thanks from AQIS goes out to the industry treatment providers, quarantine approved premises, brokers, importers, imported (uncooked) pig meat processing facilities and others who have worked with AQIS to help us achieve the successful establishment of the EM NCC. AQIS looks forward to the ongoing partnership with industry in the development of the EM NCC and supporting the transfer of additional activities.

Recent AQIS Detections

AQIS and Australian Customs Service officers recently intercepted four live snakes in parcels at Sydney's International Mail Centre. The discoveries were made by the officers using state of the art X-Ray equipment. The snakes were identified as green tree pythons which are highly prized on the black market and can fetch up to \$15 000 each.

Investigations led to a man being arrested and charged with four counts of importing a specimen listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), under Section 303CD of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. The relevant legislation provides for maximum penalties of up to 10 years imprisonment and/or a fine of up to \$110 000.

The discovery of the four live snakes is a very significant find for AQIS due to the immense risk they pose to both Australia's reptile and human populations.

Other recent AQIS interceptions have included: Giant African Snails on a cruise ship from New Caledonia; fresh citrus leaves infected with citrus canker in Victoria; exotic African auger beetles, *Xylion adustus*, in a statue imported from Zimbabwe; and an exotic species of powder-post beetle, *Lyctus cavicollis*, in a guitar purchased on eBay.

More information on recent AQIS detections can be found in the AQIS Bulletin at www.daffa.gov.au/aqis/about/reports-pubs/aqis-bulletin.

Integrated Cargo System – Electronic GAS Holds Trial

When the Customs Integrated Cargo System (ICS) was activated in October 2005 significant problems with the AQIS Giant African Snail (GAS) electronic cargo and container holds arose causing major disruptions and delays in getting cargo and containers off the wharf. It was agreed that all AQIS GAS profiles would be temporarily turned off and a manual GAS hold and release system would be utilized.

Under the current manual system GAS holds are not visible to industry. As a result the ICS may show a clear status on cargo that is subject to a GAS hold resulting in transport being sent to the wharf to collect cargo that is not yet released.

In recent months the AQIS GAS National Coordination Centre (NCC), based in Brisbane, has undertaken the ICS GAS electronic holds trial in a live wharf environment. It is anticipated that electronic holds will facilitate a more rapid release of cargo from container terminals and ensure brokers and freight forwarders can readily confirm cargo status in the ICS directly.

The response from industry to the trial has been overwhelmingly positive and plans for the final phase of testing are underway.

Increase in Unacceptable Contamination on Used Machinery Imported into Australia

In recent months an increasing number of used machinery shipments have been found to be contaminated with unacceptable levels of Quarantine Risk Material (QRM). In the last fortnight alone, eleven pieces of agricultural machinery have been ordered for re-exportation, at considerable cost to the importers.

AQIS wishes to again remind importers that all imported used machinery require an import permit issued by AQIS. A major permit condition is that machinery arrives in a “clean-as-new” state. Failure to observe these import permit conditions causes delays in clearance at Australian discharge ports, and unacceptable contamination may lead to the re-export of the machinery, at considerable cost to the importer.

Through the AQIS Industry machinery Working Group considerable efforts have been made to improve the understanding of machinery importers of AQIS requirements. Despite these efforts the occurrence of unacceptable cleanliness standards has continued. AQIS may have to reconsider tolerance levels of contamination with resultant increasing inspections and permit compliance requirements which would add to the costs charged to importers.

More information on AQIS requirements and cleaning guides for different imported machinery can be found at www.aqis.gov.au/machinery.

To obtain further information on contamination issues with machinery please email the Import Clearance Sea Cargo Unit at treat.inspect@aqis.gov.au or contact Lindy Cayzer on 02 6272 4938.

New quarantine criteria for microbiological laboratories

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) has developed new systems to enhance quarantine controls and procedures for containment facilities.

Laboratories and other facilities registered with AQIS as class 5 Quarantine Containment Quarantine Approved Premises (QAP) will soon need to comply with the new criteria. The new classification system for Class 5 QAPs will shift from facility based to risk level based, using Australian/New Zealand standards for physical containment.

For further information on these changes and the transition to the new criteria, an overview is available at www.aqis.gov.au/qapco-location.

Summary of documents and alerts released by AQIS Cargo Management in June 2008

Reference Number	Document	Overview
1	Notice to Industry 35	Australia's Most Unwanted: Launch of the Cargo and Shipping Community Communication Campaign
2	Notice to Industry 36	New import conditions for wine barrels and associated wine making materials
3	Notice to Industry 37	AQIS import clearance fee review and changes
4	Notice to Industry 38	AQIS import clearance fees: Giant African Snail screening activities
5	Notice to Industry 39	Revision of Fees Applicable to Imported (Uncooked) Pig Meat Entries
6	Notice to Industry 40	Entry Processing Guidelines now available in ICON
7	Notice to Industry 41	New Import conditions for Chestnut bark hoops
8	Public Quarantine Alert 0559	Change to import requirements for wine barrels and associated wine making materials
9	Public Quarantine Alert 0558	Detection of a new bacterial disease in New Zealand
10	Public Quarantine Alert 0558	Revised requirements for frozen Agaricus mushroom imports
11	Public Quarantine Alert 0558	Emergency measures for nursery stock imports from New Zealand
12	Public Quarantine Alert 0558	Notice to AQIS staff and seed importers – interim measures for tomato seed imports
13	Public Quarantine Alert 0558	Entry Processing Guidelines available to Public
14	Public Quarantine Alert 0558	Changes to the Quarantine Proclamation 1998 Permitted Seeds List June 2008

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

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