

# **EXDOC**

**EXPORT DOCUMENTATION SYSTEM**

## **System Overview**

**Version 3.0  
October 2002**

## 1. Introduction

The EXport DOCumentation (EXDOC) system supports the preparation of export documentation for primary produce prescribed under the *Export Control Act* 1982 and associated legislation. The system is operated by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS), and has been in place since August 1992 originally for meat exports. The system has been redeveloped for use by non-meat commodities and is now available for dairy, fish, grain and horticulture exports. It forms an integral part of overall AQIS procedures, which ensure product meets Australian and importing country standards.

The system accepts details of proposed exports from exporters, links that with the results of inspection of product, and where product is eligible, issues export permits, health certificates, certificates as to condition and phytosanitary certificates to enable export. The central documents involved are the Request for Permit (RFP) provided by the exporter, and the Export Permit Number (EPN) and export documentation, both provided by AQIS.

Australian exporters are able to notify AQIS of exports using Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) techniques. The EDI message that complies with UN EDI for Administration, Commerce and Transport (EDIFACT) is used to submit an RFP. The RFP describes product, when and where it was processed, its overseas destination, and other details, for example describing consignor, consignee and transport.

Export information can be submitted as a single transaction, or incrementally as it becomes known. Depending on the particular AQIS inspection regime operating, AQIS may inspect and authorise product, allocate an EPN, and finally produce export documentation for one or more RFPs. The export documentation can be produced in paper or electronic form. Paper certificates are produced at AQIS Regional Offices for meat exports and may be remotely printed for non-meat exports, while the electronic versions are transmitted in EDI or XML format (known as SANCRT or E-cert respectively) directly to the relevant destination country import clearance authority. The importing authority may also view the electronic certificate on a secure web site.

Closely integrated with EXDOC is the Establishment Register system (ER), which is co-located with EXDOC on the AQIS Central Office network. ER is used to maintain an official register of establishments producing foodstuffs under the jurisdiction of AQIS. EXDOC accesses ER to validate the eligibility of establishments to produce the product that has been nominated for export to a particular market.

## 2. Users of EXDOC

EXDOC interacts with different types of users who are either internal to AQIS, in the private sector, or in other government agencies.

### 1. Exporters (and their agents)

Exporters interact with EXDOC to submit, amend, forward or transfer RFPs. They communicate indirectly with EXDOC via an independent carrier, which stores and forwards messages between the two parties. Data is exchanged using electronic mail messages, which carry the actual RFP business data in a structured EDI message.

2. AQIS and AQIS authorised inspection staff

AQIS inspection staff can query RFP or establishment details and update an RFP with the results of inspection. They use a personal computer loaded with EXDOC and ER client application software and communications facilities. Inspectors may be permanently stationed on establishments, in which case they use a desktop computer in office accommodation set-aside for inspectors by the establishment. Alternately, where size does not warrant a permanent inspection presence, the establishments are served by visiting inspection staff using a portable laptop computer.

AQIS authorised inspection staff, at establishments where an AQIS Approved Quality Assurance (AQA) arrangement is in place, interact with EXDOC in the same manner as exporters (ie indirectly through an independent carrier).

3. AQIS Regional and Central Office documentation staff

Documentation staff interact with ER and EXDOC to access and maintain information about establishments, EXDOC clients and RFPs. Typically, access is limited to querying, but documentation staff are able to amend RFP details on behalf of exporters should the need arise. Access is via the AQIS LAN/WAN network.

4. The Australian Customs Service (ACS)

EXDOC is able to act as the Customs agent for exporters, using a system known as the Single Electronic Window to Government (SEW). An exporter sends RFP information to EXDOC, which is processed, and EXDOC transmits information relevant to ACS into the EXIT system. A single response message is transmitted to the exporter. This process ensures EXIT and EXDOC data are fully reconcilable.

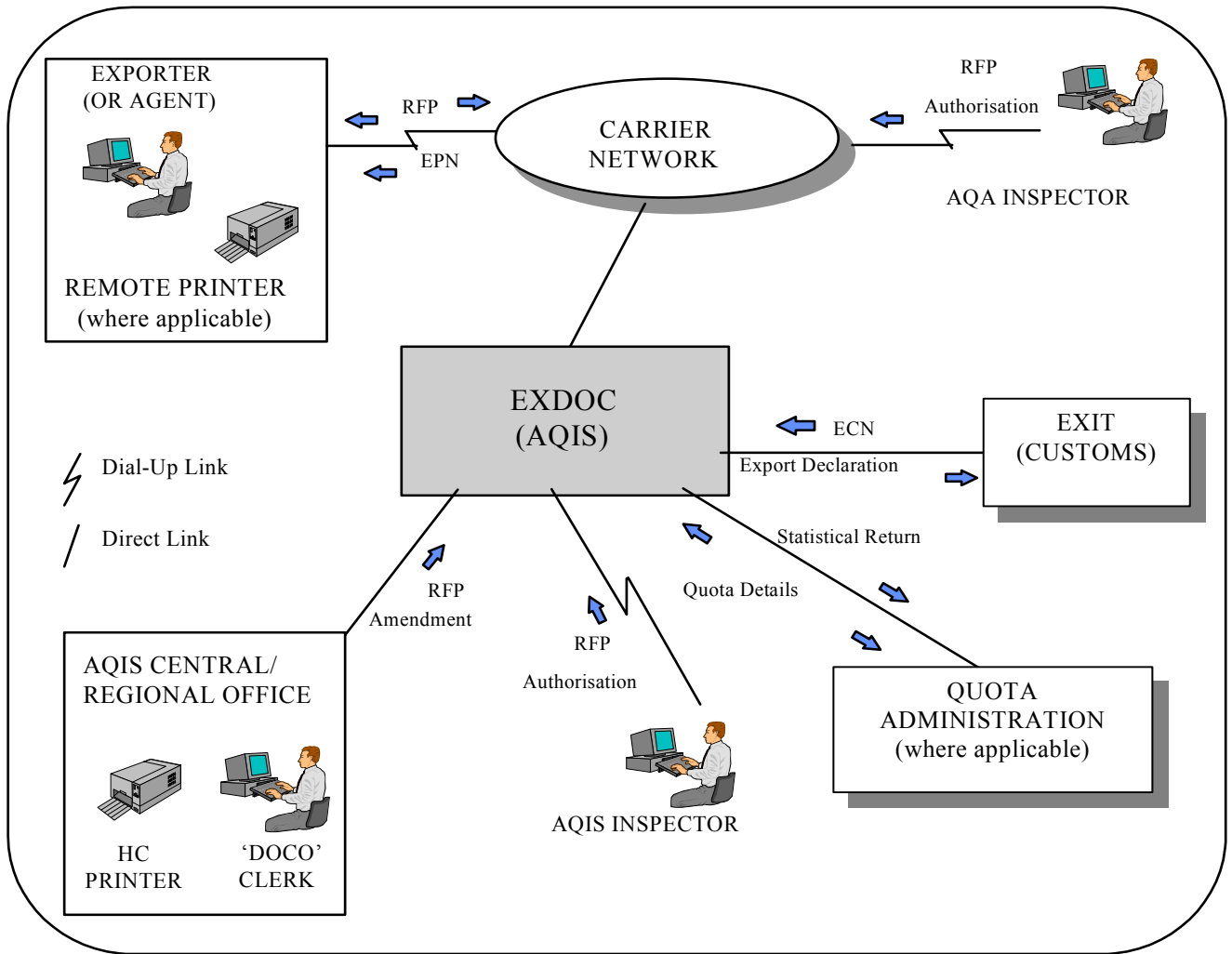
5. Livestock and Pastoral Division (LPD), AFFA

The AFFA Livestock and Pastoral Division has overtaken the quota administration and meat export statistics role of the now defunct Australian Meat and Live-stock Corporation. Information is exchanged with the LPD in EDI messages over a dedicated leased line.

6. Australian Dairy Corporation (ADC)

The ADC maintains statutory dairy export statistics, which will be sent by EXDOC in EDI messages via a dedicated leased line. These statistics will also be used to administer quotas.

Figure 1. User interaction with EXDOC



### 3. RFP Messages

Exporters prepare documentation on local personal computer (PC) based systems. These systems must be developed to specifications drawn up by AQIS in the *EXDOC Exporter System Interface Specification* to ensure that messages are of a format suitable for processing by EXDOC.

The systems package RFP details into EDI messages and pass them on to a carrier for relay to EXDOC. There are separate message types to submit, amend, delete, query and transfer RFPs. The RFP describes in detail the nature of the product, who was involved in its production, and how, when and where the export will take place.

Each RFP has a header and one or more detail lines, with information including:

Header

- RFP reference
- Exporter and consignee identification
- Discharge country and port
- Destination country and city
- Name of vessel, voyage number, date of shipment
- Health certificate print controls and identifiers
- Forward and transfer indicators
- Inspection establishment and date

Line (per product parcel)

- Product inspection description, and health certificate description
- Product packaging, quantity, shipping marks
- Quota references
- Container and seal numbers
- Slaughtering and packing establishments, and the periods of product processing

## 4. RFP Validation

The RFP is the legal notification by the exporter of their intention to export. Before AQIS can issue an EPN or produce export documentation, information in an RFP is required by law to be correct and complete. The receipt of an RFP in EXDOC initiates electronic checks to ensure:

- product is fully described
- commercial aspects of the export are fully described
- establishments involved were eligible to perform the nominated processes.

Validation of *product description* verifies that product is described at a level which enables inspection and certification. Minimum details include method of preservation, product type, quantity and type of packaging. Depending on product and country of destination, additional information may also be required, such as exporter declarations, import permits, imperial weights, durability dates, etc.

Validation of *commercial details* verifies that the commercial parties to the export and the details of product transport are identified. This information is required for certification and to product tracking should that become necessary. Commercial details include consignor, consignee, date of export, vessel name, voyage number, shipping marks, container numbers, and seal numbers.

Validation of *establishment operations* verifies that each of the establishments cited on an RFP is eligible to perform the processes prescribed for the product. EXDOC interacts with ER, which records the operations each export establishment is eligible to perform at a particular time. This includes operations such as slaughter, bone, freeze, and can meat, process butter, pack prawns, pack maize etc., also any overseas country requirements for which the establishment must be endorsed before it can produce for that country. EXDOC ensures that the production establishment is registered and eligible to produce the nominated product.

Much of the information in an RFP is coded to minimise the possibility of ambiguity or mis-description, for example country names, location names, weight units, product types, and currencies are all coded. EXDOC validation ensures not only that the right level of information is present for each export consignment but also that the codes used are current and valid. EXDOC also validates that the product described in an RFP, has not been prohibited, by checking product restriction lists within EXDOC. Program staff continually updates these lists, such as prohibited goods and harvest area, when restrictions are made by AQIS inspection staff.

## **5. RFP Authorisation**

Before AQIS can endorse an RFP, it must satisfy itself that the product has been produced to Australian and destination country standards. This is done by making RFPs available to AQIS authorised inspection staff, who update the RFPs with the results of routine product inspection processes. Authorised inspection staff may be employees of AQIS or of processing establishments with AQIS AQA arrangements.

The process of updating the RFP is known as ‘authorisation’. During authorisation, inspectors have the ability to either pass or reject product for export. Successful authorisation causes EXDOC to generate an Export Permit Number (EPN) where required for the RFP.

Authorisation and access to EXDOC will vary depending on whether AQIS inspection staff completes the inspection of product, or an AQIS AQA arrangement is in place at the producing establishment. These are outlined below.

### Authorisation by AQIS Inspection Staff

To perform authorisation, inspectors use a personal computer (PC) or laptop computer to dial into the EXDOC system. Once connected to EXDOC, AQIS inspectors can query the system for all RFP’s that require their authorisation action. Each RFP to be authorised is displayed in full giving full product description and processing details. If the RFP description on EXDOC correlates to the product that has actually been produced, and the product meets AQIS standards, the inspector indicates this on screen. In addition, the inspector supplies/confirms load-out details such as container number(s) and adds container seal number(s) together with any comments that may be appropriate.

### Authorisation by AQIS Approved Quality Assurance arrangement

Inspectors at establishments that have an AQIS AQA arrangement can only authorise their own RFP’s by including their authorised inspector’s unique identifier code in the RFP. The identifier code is issued to an authorised inspector by AQIS and is recorded in EXDOC for validation.

Access by AQA authorised inspection staff is restricted to submission of RFP details via the accredited third party software package and does not allow direct access to the EXDOC system in any way.

## **6. Export Documentation**

Using control fields in the RFP, the exporter may request the EXDOC system to produce the appropriate export documentation anytime after the RFP has been authorised. The system automatically determines from the data in the RFP particularly the destination country, number of lines in the RFP, and product type how many certificates are required and what form types they should be.

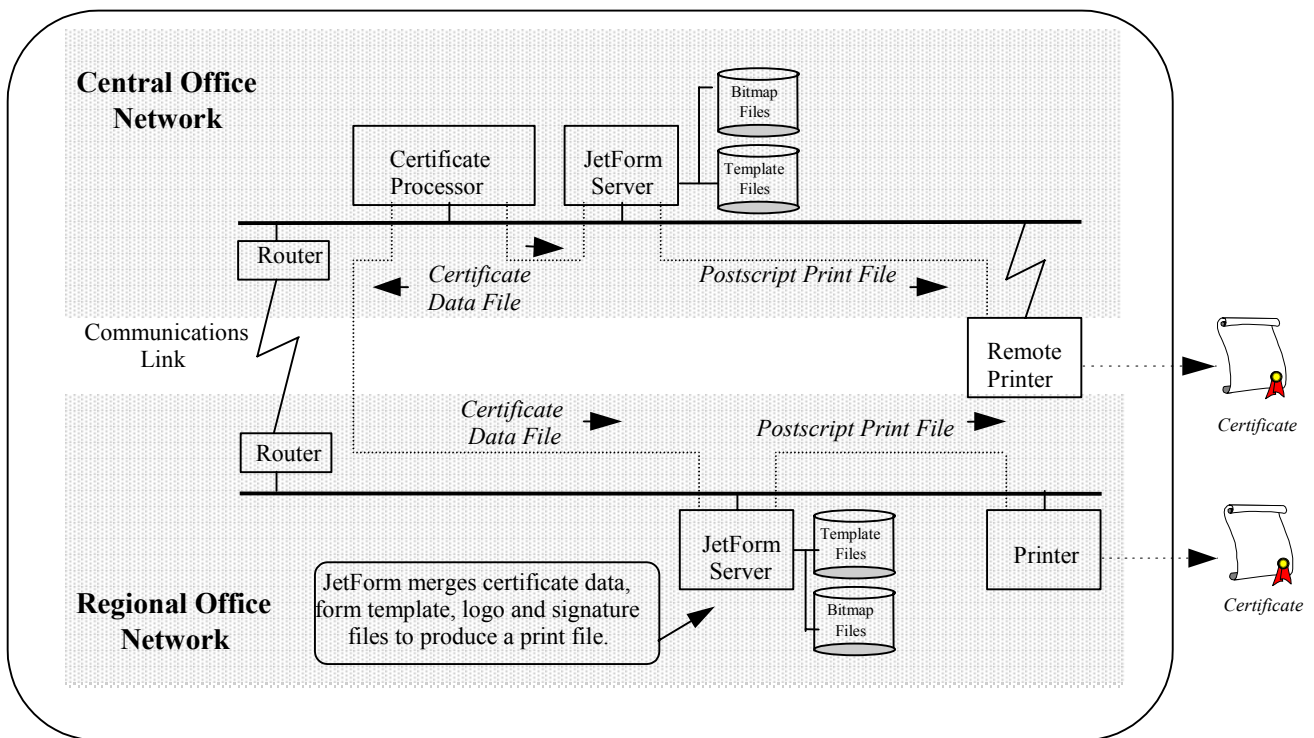
## 6.1 Paper Certificates

EXDOC constructs a data file for each certificate, and sends the data file to the nominated location for printing. Export documentation may be printed in AQIS Regional Offices or remotely printed in the exporter's office from AQIS Central Office Network through the carrier network.

In the nominated AQIS Office, a computer running the JetForm software package processes the data file. This package merges certificate data files containing variable data unique to each certificate with control files that describe the form template and files containing signatures and logos to produce the certificate. The net result is a postscript print file, which is sent to a certificate printer.

In the AQIS Regional Office the printed certificate is manually checked and impress sealed by the documentation clerk, all meat certificates and certain non-meat certificates must be printed in Regional Offices. All other non-meat certificates may be remotely printed. The remote print file contains the facsimile signature and seal necessary to complete certification.

**Figure 3. Export documentation printing environment.**



### 6.1.1 Facsimile Signatures

Depending on destination country requirements, certificates may contain an electronically inserted facsimile of an authorised officer's signature. The function to authorise the use of a signature is restricted to the most senior AQIS authorised officer (or his/her deputy), who each have an electronic copy of their signature on the JetForm servers.

Once the senior authorised officer has authorised the use of his/her signature, the relevant JetForm server retrieves the corresponding bitmap signature file for merging into all documents produced. The same signature is used until the authorising officer revokes its use. An electronic signature cannot be applied in situations where the authorising officer has not authorised its use.

AQIS allows the printing of export documentation remotely only if the importing country accepts the use of facsimile signatures.

### **6.1.2 Physical Security**

The JetForm servers, that hold the electronic signatures and the certificate templates, are placed in a locked computer room in each AQIS office to provide physical security.

The EXDOC printers used to produce the export documentation in AQIS Regional Offices are located in areas secure from the public, and are physically secured either in a locked room or a locked enclosure (such as a cage). Physical access to the printers is restricted to authorised officers and documentation staff in each Regional Office.

Where the export documentation is printed at a remote print site, the print file for each document is automatically erased by the accredited software package and a print confirmation message is forwarded to EXDOC.

## **6.2 Electronic Certification**

In 1991 AQIS, the NZ Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture agreed to work towards the development of a global electronic certificate that would be an alternative to the paper certification for animal, plant and fish commodities. The 'certificate', called SANCRT, was developed to UN EDIFACT standards and is available for use between Australia and its trading partners. All edible meat exports from Australia to Japan have been successfully covered by SANCRT since March 1998.

Australia has been actively promoting electronic certification by highlighting the quarantine, public health, food safety and trade facilitation benefits it offers. Electronic certification offers the potential for reduced costs but, more importantly, provides a level of security for traded agricultural product that is not available under the paper system. The focus on the security of agricultural trade has facilitated Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States to enter into an agreement for all trade in meat between the countries to be certified electronically by April 2003.

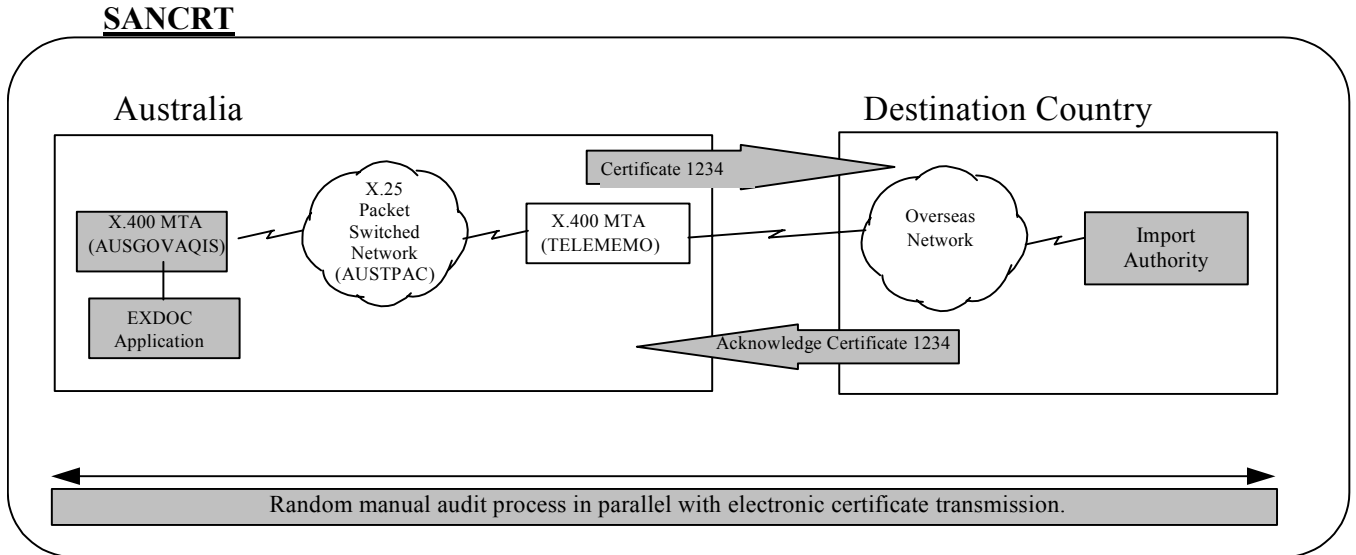
To date Australia has been encouraging up-take of the SANCRT messaging system through various groups within the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC), including the Agricultural and Technical Co-operation Working Group and its sub-committees. Similarly, New Zealand has been promoting an electronic system to its trading partners, although there are fundamental differences to the Australian SANCRT system.

Canada and the United States have echoed the feedback from other APEC countries that Australia and New Zealand should work together to develop a common messaging system, rather than importing authorities being forced to choose one over the other. As a result, Australia and New Zealand have agreed on a standardised electronic messaging system for meat, seafood, dairy, horticulture and grain certification.

The two countries have agreed that the preferred option in future (called E-cert) is for Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) certification to be transferred between government agencies using an agreed XML format. The certification data can be integrated into importing country electronic system. Further, countries will be able to access and process SPS certificates on-line via the Internet. Countries without automated import management systems will be able to adopt electronic certification by simply having access to the World Wide Web to view certificates. As countries do automate importing processes, they will be able to integrate a standard XML formatted message into electronic systems.

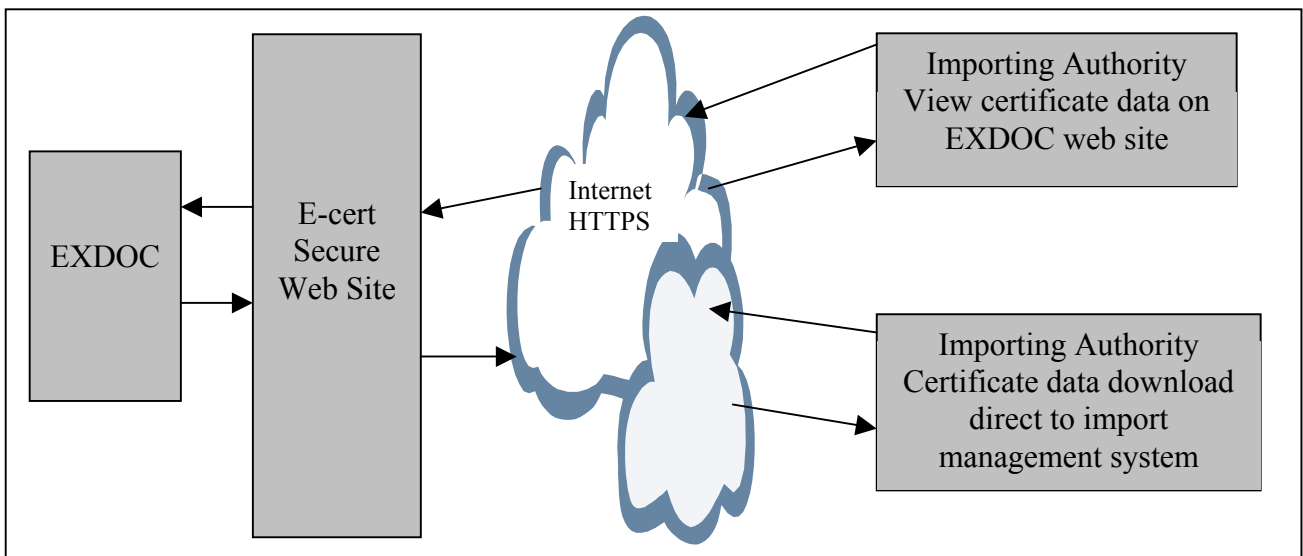
Australia has re-developed the existing SANCRT system to include the new E-cert functionality and to ensure consistency with the New Zealand E-cert system. Importantly, Australia will still maintain the ability to transmit SANCRT messages where this is the preferred format by importing authorities.

**Figure 5. The electronic certificate transmission environment.**



**E-cert**

Arrows indicate data flow



## 7. Audit Controls

EXDOC has an integrated audit trail sub-system, which provides a history of all activity in the RFP and health certificate processing environment. The sub-system records the details of all updates in the form of before and after images of modified data, as well as the user identifier of the user making the update and a timestamp of when the update was made.

When used in conjunction with status information held against each RFP and health certificate, the audit trail can be used to establish a complete history on an RFP from the time it was first submitted to the time the last health certificate for it was produced.

## 8. External User Identifiers

All external (non-AQIS) users, including exporters, establishments, and independent export facilitators such as customs agents, must be registered and be allocated an EDI User Identifier and an X.400 or Internet address before they can interact with EXDOC. Depending on roles in the commercial sector, they may also have additional identifiers.

### 1. EDI User Identifier

A numeric identifier, which uniquely identifies a user in EXDOC for messaging purposes.

### 2. X.400 Address or Internet Address

An electronic address, comprising elements such as carrier administrative domain, private administrative domain, and surname. In EXDOC, there is a one-to-one correspondence between the EDI User Identifier and the X.400 or Internet address. (An X.400 or Internet address is independent of EXDOC, and the user can use this address for any purpose.)

### 3. Exporter Number

Identifies the party as one eligible to export to overseas markets. Exporters may also need specific export licences; for example, an Export Licence Number is required to export red meat products.

### 4. Export Licence Number

Identifies the party as one eligible to export products coming under the jurisdiction of the Industry Authority. Livestock and Pastoral Division of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries – Australia (AFFA) maintain meat export statistics, and individual exporters are identified by their Export Licence Number. The Australian Dairy Corporation have a similar arrangement. At this stage fish, grain and horticulture exports do not require an export licence number.

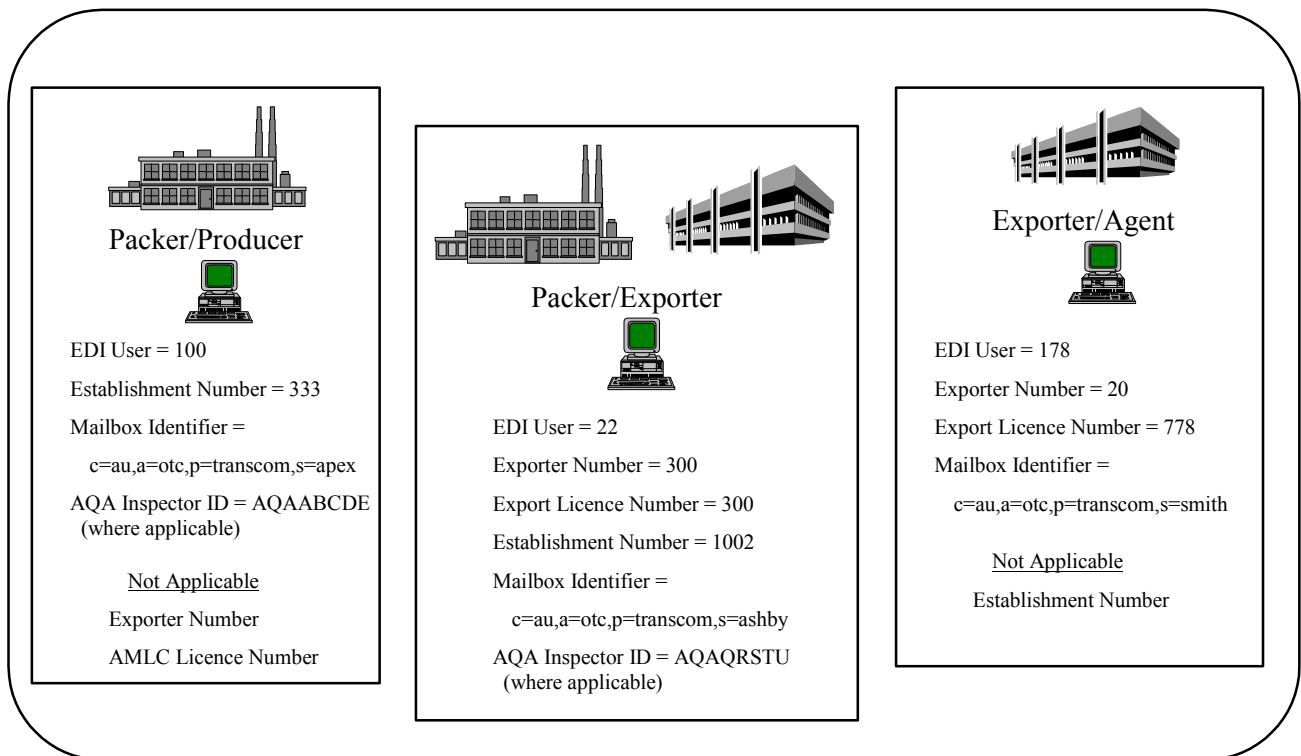
### 5. Establishment Number

Identifies the party as one eligible to produce product for export.

### 6. AQA Inspector Identifier

An alpha identifier, which uniquely identifies an inspector at an establishment with an AQIS approved AQA arrangement.

The most common roles found in the commercial sector are independent producer establishments (commonly known as packers), exporter packers and non-packer exporters (brokers).

**Figure 6. Examples of identifiers applicable to each role.**

## 9. Exporter Agents

One export can involve a number of parties from the time an order is first raised to the time the consignment is shipped. In the case of meat, export documentation might pass through slaughtering establishments, a packing establishment, a cold store, independent agents, and of course the exporter. Usually, processing establishments can describe product at the level required for inspection but do not know commercial details, while exporters generally only know the commercial side. In practice, then, it would be useful if exporters could initiate custom clearance and pass details onto processors who were able to update the RFP, get it authorised, and then pass it to the exporter for finalisation.

EXDOC recognises this situation through the SEW and the concept of *exporter agents*, or entities which may act on behalf of an exporter. With agents, each party in an export chain can have partial input to an RFP, and can then pass the RFP on to the next party in the chain when their input is finalised.

AQIS administers a formal registration process; controlling who may export and who may act as an agent. Normally, exporters request that all processing establishments and all other exporters registered to EXDOC can act on their behalf. This reflects the commercial reality that exporters source product from whichever establishments best suit their requirements at a given point in time, including those owned by competitor exporters.

Interaction between the parties outside of EXDOC determines which parties provide RFP details. If the exporter uses an agent, the exporter may never be involved in the RFP process. However, AQIS always holds the exporter responsible for the information that is supplied.

## 10. RFP Message Flow

An RFP is submitted after an exporter receives an order for product. The path an RFP follows depends on what information is known about the order at a given time, and also on when export documentation is required. The RFP status reflects where the RFP is on that path, and can change a number of times in the RFP life cycle.

### 10.1 Order ECN

Order RFPs are used when an order has been made on an exporter but only skeletal details exist for the consignment. EXDOC performs only limited validation on data in an Order RFP, and therefore this form of the RFP enables the exporter community to exchange order information through EXDOC without risk of rejection.

Under the Single Electronic Window, EXDOC will onforward to EXIT the relevant details for the exporter to obtain an Order ECN.

### 10.2 Lodgment

Formal Lodge RFPs are used when it is intended that an RFP undergo the full inspection and authorisation process. EXDOC examines the data that is submitted and determines what status should be assigned to the RFP (eg. INIT, FINL, INSP, HCRD or COMP - see description of status values below).

### 10.3 Amendment

Depending on status, exporters can update data in the RFP using the appropriate RFP transaction types. To minimise messaging costs, EXDOC supports two types of amendment transactions: a full amendment transaction which includes all amendable fields in an RFP; and a mini amendment transaction which includes only those fields likely to be amended following authorisation.

An RFP is not considered to be successfully lodged or amended until it is free of errors related to mandatory lodgment data. If a message has errors, it is rejected and an acknowledgment is sent back to the current RFP owner listing the errors detected. If the message is error free, EXDOC will update its database and send an acknowledgment (with the newly allocated RFP number if an initial lodgment).

AQIS Inspector or Documentation staff updates cause a replacement copy of the RFP (reissue) to be sent to the current RFP owner.

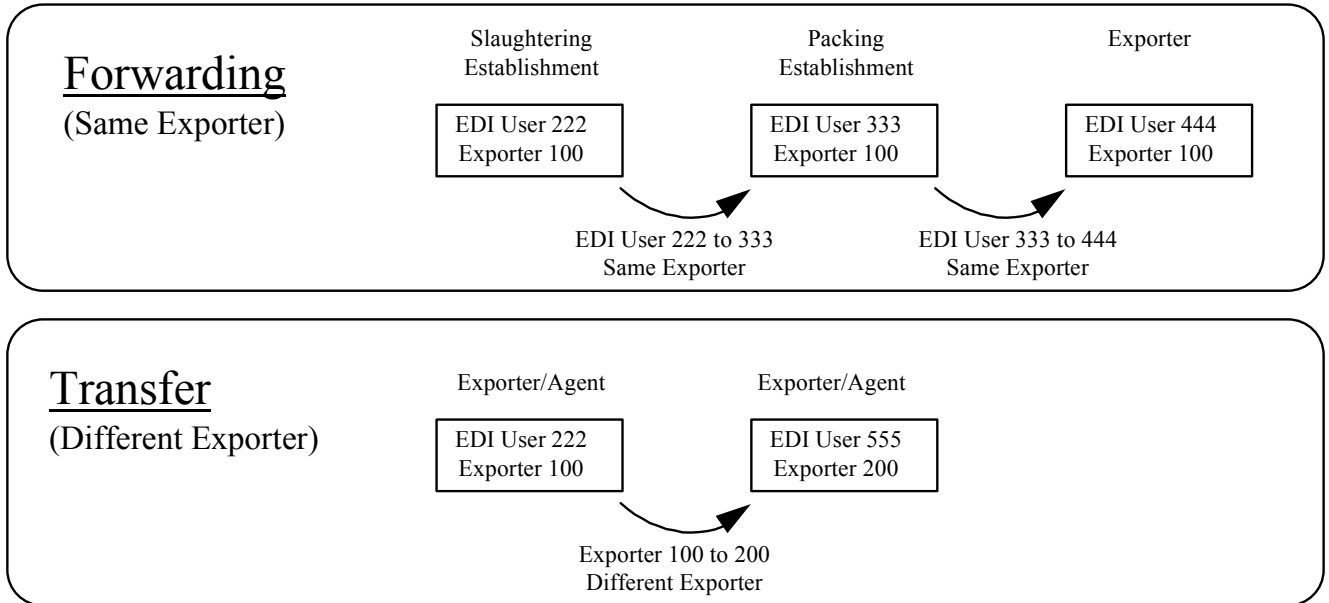
### 10.4 Forwards and Transfers

The passing of RFPs between an exporter and/or its agents is done using the *forwarding* mechanism. This enables each agent to pass the active copy of an RFP to any other agent registered to act on behalf of that same exporter. Only one user can 'own' an RFP at any point in time, and only the owner of the RFP can update it. (Note that ownership of the *RFP* is distinct from ownership of *product* described by the RFP ownership of product is not changed by forwarding.) An RFP can be forwarded any number of times between agents before it is finalised.

EXDOC also allows one exporter to *transfer* an RFP to another exporter. This changes ownership of product described on the RFP. AQIS requires that export documentation be produced in the name of the declaring exporter (owner of product at the time of certification). The transfer mechanism caters

for situations where product is on sold before export documentation is produced and the RFP is finalised.

**Figure 7. Example forwarding and transfer flows.**



### 10.5 RFP Transaction Types

The basic transaction types are those to lodge and amend. Other transaction types exist which, for example, enable exporters to delete RFPs, EXDOC to advise exporters of changes to RFPs, and so on. The full set of RFP transaction types (uniquely identified with a numeric RFP Reason Code) are:

RFP Reason Code	Transaction Type	Function
1	Delete	Delete an existing RFP.
4	Amend	Amend an existing RFP.
5	Mini Amend	Amend an existing RFP restricted to selected fields.
7	Copy Advice	Send a copy of the RFP as a result of a copy request.
11	RFP Ack	Send an acknowledgment to an exporter lodgment, amendment or deletion message, or in response to a failed message.
13	Lodge	Create a new RFP with RFP Status = INIT or better.
16	Order	Create or amend an RFP with RFP Status = ORDR.

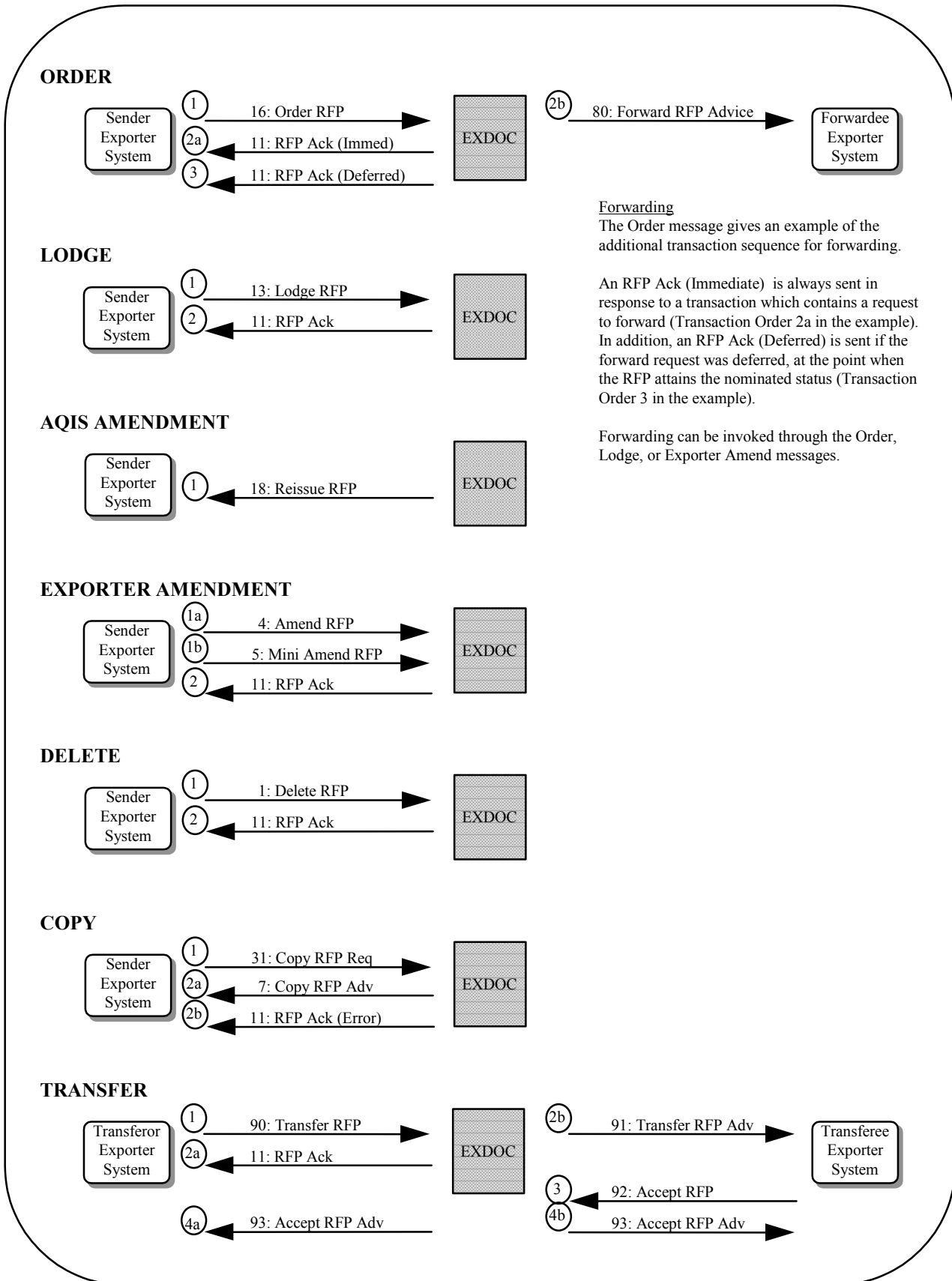
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18	Reissue	Send a copy of the RFP as a result of a non-exporter amendment.
31	Copy	Request a copy of the RFP.
80	Forward Advice	Advise the forwarder of an RFP.
90	Transfer	Request the transfer of an RFP from one exporter to another.
91	Transfer Advice	Advise the transferee of a request for transfer.
92	Accept	Accept a request for transfer.
93	Accept Advice	Advise the transferor and transferee of the result of a request for transfer.

Figure 8.

## Request For Permit Message Flow



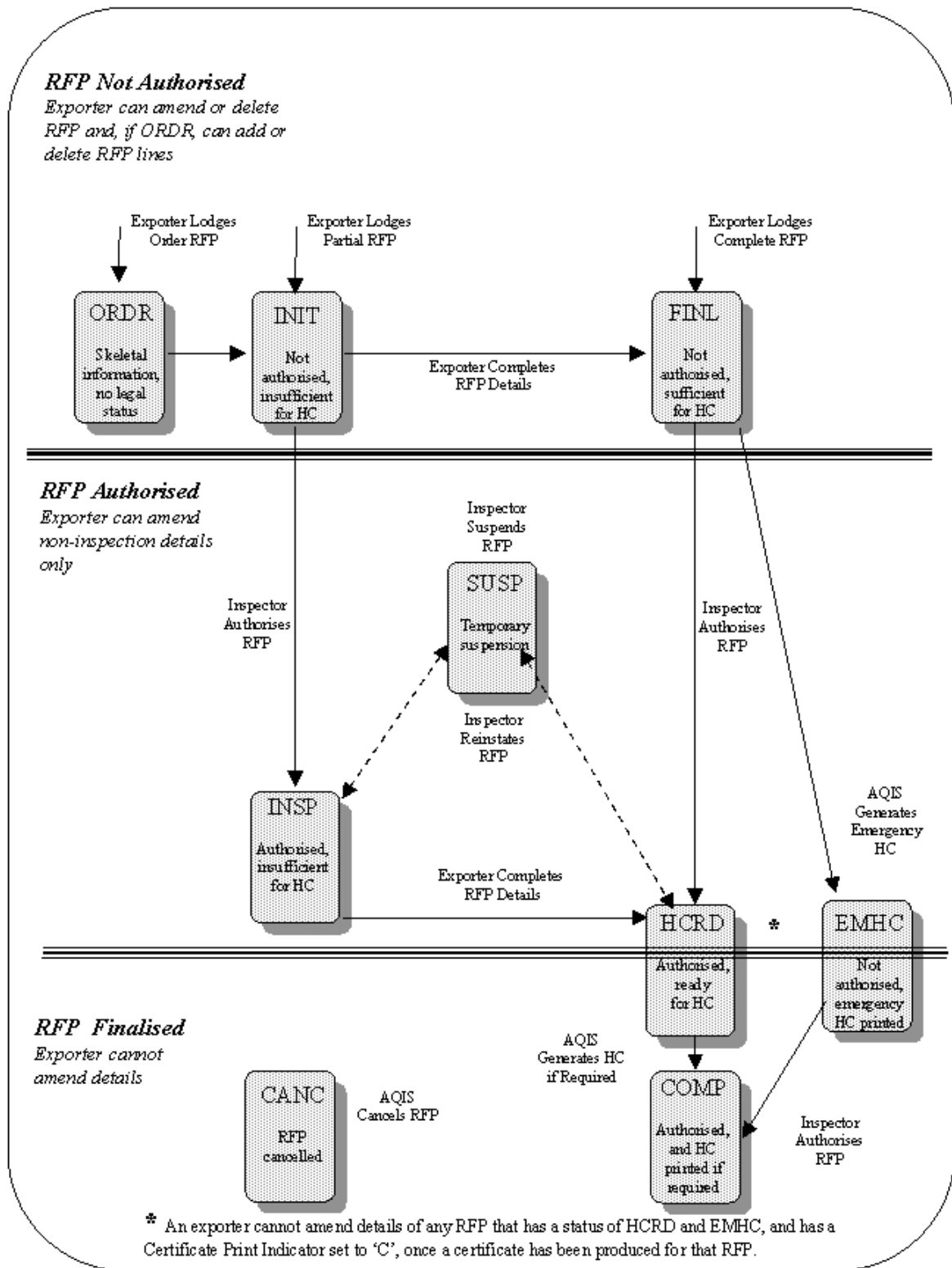
## 11. RFP Status Values

The ability to incrementally add data means an RFP may undergo a number of status changes, in particular with respect to status of inspection and production of export documentation. The possible RFP statuses and transition flows are illustrated in Figure 9.

ORDR	Order RFP. The Order RFP is used when information about a potential export order first becomes known but there is insufficient information to fully describe product. An RFP number is allocated which can be used by the Exporter System as the unique key to the Order in an exporter agent group.
INIT	Initial. The RFP has sufficient information to allow inspection but not to produce health certificates. It is not yet authorised.
FINL	Final. The RFP has sufficient information to allow inspection and to produce health certificates. It is not yet authorised.
INSP	Inspected and Authorised. The RFP has been inspected and authorised, but does not have sufficient information to produce export documentation.
HCRD	Health Certificate Ready. The RFP has been authorised and has sufficient information to produce export documentation.  Non-meat EXDOC allows exporters to print documentation covering part of the product contained in the RFP, with the remaining product to have documentation printed at a later date. This may occur when the status is HCRD, and the health certificate print indicator is set to C.
COMP	RFP Completed. The RFP has been authorised, and where export documentation is required they have been produced.
EMHC	Emergency Health Certificate Printed. The RFP has not been authorised, however AQIS has forced export documentation to be produced. Typically, this is done to facilitate exports when an Authorised Inspector is not able to access EXDOC to authorise product within time critical freight schedules.  Non-meat EXDOC allows AQIS to print documentation covering part of the product contained in the RFP, with the remaining product to have documentation printed at a later date. This may occur when the status is EMHC and the health certificate print indicator is set to C.
SUSP	Suspended. An AQIS Inspector has suspended the RFP. No updates are possible on the RFP, other than by the Authorised Inspector to revoke suspension.
CANC	Cancelled. AQIS has cancelled the RFP after attaining a status of INSP or better.

Figure 9.

## Request For Permit State Transition Diagram



## 12. RFP Life Cycle

There are many variations to the way an RFP can be processed through to finalisation. A typical life cycle is described below.

### 1. **Order with EXIT request**

The exporter receives an order from overseas and raises an Order RFP and also submits to EXIT an ECN request.

### 2. **Advise ECN**

A single message is sent to the exporter containing both the RFP number and the ECN.

### 3. **Forward to Packer**

The RFP and ECN are forwarded to the packer.

### 4. **Submit RFP Lodgement**

The packer then submits an RFP Lodge message. The RFP will include all details necessary for inspection, but typically not details for consignee and shipment.

### 5. **Acknowledge RFP Lodgement**

EXDOC validates the lodgement, allocates an RFP Number, and sends an acknowledgment message to the packer to advise the RFP Number that was allocated. The RFP then remains 'inactive' in EXDOC until product is inspected.

### 6. **Inspect and Authorise**

When the packer has filled the order, it requests AQIS inspection of product. The inspector at the establishment physically inspects product, logs on to EXDOC to retrieve the RFP, updates it with seals that have been applied to containers, and then authorises it. At this stage, an EPN is allocated.

### 7. **Advise EPN**

EXDOC sends an updated RFP (Reissue) message to the packer to advise the EPN that was allocated as the result of product authorisation.

### 8. **Forward Request**

Once the packer has the EPN and is satisfied that it is in a commercial position to release the RFP to the exporter (ie. has access to payment), it forwards the RFP to the exporter via an amendment message.

### 9. **Forward to Exporter**

EXDOC acknowledges the packer's request and forwards the RFP to the nominated exporter.

### 10. **Finalise RFP**

The exporter receives the RFP and updates it with any outstanding commercial details. Once the RFP is complete, this normally causes HCs to be automatically printed at the nominated Regional Office or remote site, although the exporter can manually control when this occurs if it wishes.

### 11. **Print Certificate**

The certificate is printed at the Regional Office or remote site and is held for collection by the exporter.

### 12. **Advise HC Number**

EXDOC sends an updated RFP (Reissue) message to the exporter to advise the HC Number that was allocated as the result of HC printing. At this point the RFP processing is complete.

Figure 10. Typical RFP Life Cycle

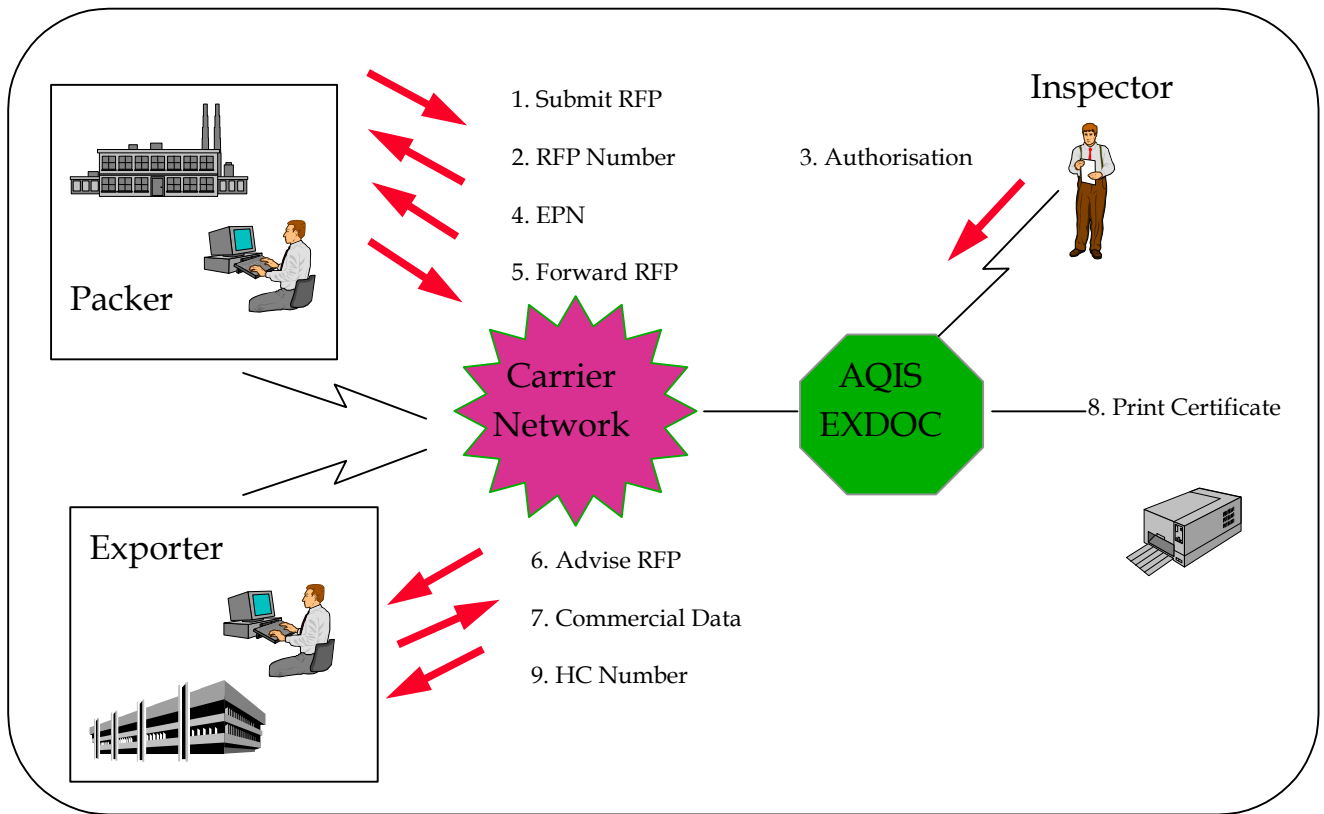
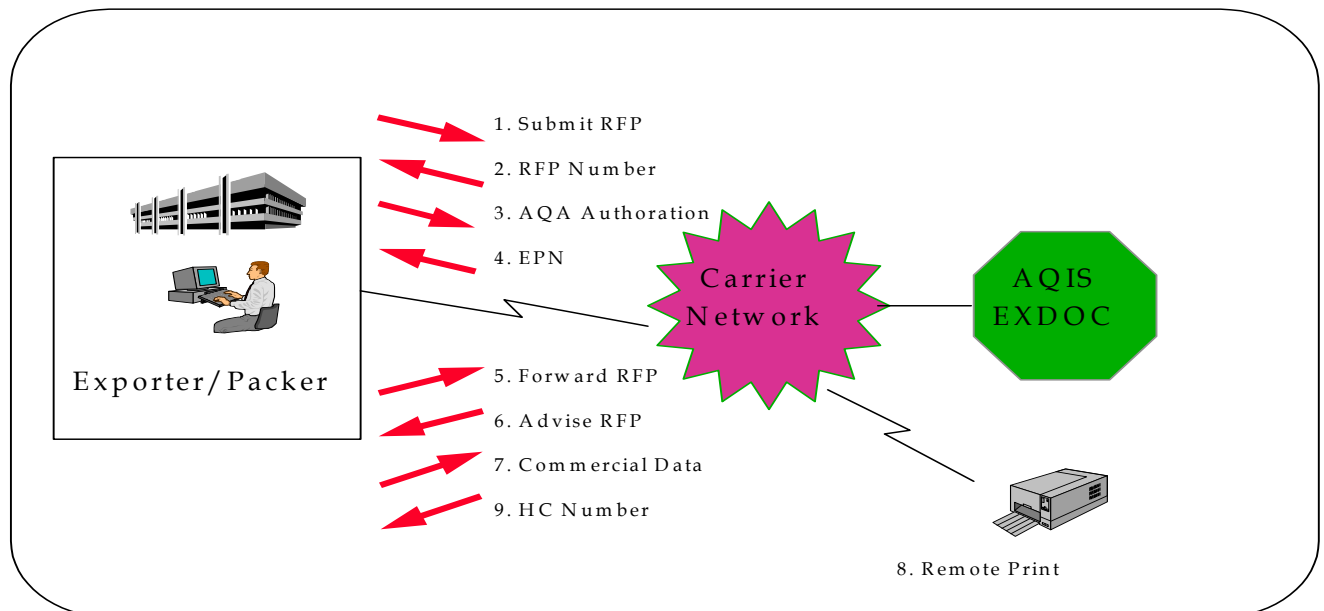


Figure 10. Typical RFP Life Cycle where Exporter/Packer are the same and on AQA arrangement.



## 13 Help Desk Support

The EXDOC Help-Desk provides system advice for ALL clients that are using EXDOC to provide certification for their exports. As well as advice on messaging and system performance, Help-Desk staff are able to provide detailed advice regarding problems encountered by clients during the creation and progression of Requests for Permits (RFPs). The Help-Desk provides support to EXDOC users 24hrs a day, 7 days a week. In office support is provided to clients between 7:30am and 6:00pm (Eastern Standard Time) Monday to Friday, support outside of these hours is provided by an on call officer.

The Help-Desk can be contacted using the following methods;

Clients requiring advice regarding **Fish, Dairy, Grain** or **Horticulture** RFPs should call **02 6272 4700**

Clients requiring advice regarding **Meat** RFPs should call **02 6272 4800**

Clients who wish to make a written request for assistance or advice should contact **02 6272 5773** for facsimile requests or [exdoc.helpdesk@aqis.gov.au](mailto:exdoc.helpdesk@aqis.gov.au) for email requests

### Out-of-hours support

Clients are reminded that the EXDOC Out-Of-Hours support is restricted to:

- AIRFREIGHTS departing between 6:00pm and 9:00am (Eastern Standard Time) Monday to Friday
- AIRFREIGHTS departing on a Saturday or Sunday. Support during these times is strictly limited to system advice or assistance with EXDOC messages.

Policy support cannot be provided by the out-of-hours officer and clients seeking this type of advice will need to contact the Help-Desk during regular business hours for referral to the relevant AQIS Commodity Program.

## Glossary

ACS	Australian Customs Service
AQIS	Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service
AFFA	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries - Australia - AQIS is formally a part of AFFA, which was previously known as the Department of Primary Industries and Energy (DPIE).
E-cert	Web based electronic certification
EDI	Electronic Data Interchange
EDIFACT	EDI for Administration, Commerce and Transport
EPN	Export Permit Number - the identifier of the permit issued by AQIS in response to an approved RFP
ER	Establishment Register - a separate AQIS system used to administer the registration of establishments
EXDOC	Export Documentation System
EXIT	Exports Intregation System - a system operated by the ACS to administer customs export clearance
HC	Health Certificate
RFP	Request for Permit - the message used by exporters to request an export permit from AQIS
RAS	Remote Access Server - a communications facility used by field inspection staff to access the AQIS network
SEW	Single Electronic Window
VAN	Value Added Network - a commercial entity providing communications facilities (alternative names include Carrier or EDI Service Provider)

## Appendix A Technical Architecture

The EXDOC system consists of a number of hardware and software components, which interact to enable the processing of EDI messages, online processing, and export documentation production. The major components are shown in Figure 11 and described below:

### 1. X.400 Gateway

Hosted on an NT machine. Its function is to relay messages between users external to AQIS (exporters and their agents, other Government agencies) and the EXDOC system.

### 2. EDI Splitter

Hosted on an NT machine. Receives incoming EDI messages, performs high level EDI validity checks on the messages, and then passes them on to the EXDOC Batch Processor.

### 3. EXDOC Batch Processor

Hosted on an NT machine. This system processes and responds to EDI messages passed to it by the EDI Splitter. Messages may be from/to exporters; overseas import authorities, the Australian Customs Service and statutory marketing authorities legally entitled to the data captured. EXDOC Batch actually comprises five distinct programs to open EDIFACT interchanges, validate RFPs, produce HC data files for printing, create EDIFACT interchanges for RFP acknowledgments and update message back to the exporter, and perform supporting file management.

### 4. Database Server

Hosted on a SUN Solaris Unix platform. Provides database access functions for the EXDOC Client application, EXDOC Batch Processor, and EXDOC Inspector system. The Database Server also hosts the ER system.

### 5. Remote Access Server

Hosted on an NT machine. Holds master copies of the EXDOC Client (Gupta) application for downloading to LAN-based user workstations.

### 6. JetForm Server

Hosted on an NT machine and currently co-located with the Report Server. Accepts health certificate data files (\*.dat) containing variable health certificate information sent by the EXDOC Batch Processor, merges these with form template files (\*.mdf) permanently held on the JetForm Server and produces health certificate postscript print files for printing at the region. A print server controls the actual certificate printing.

### 7. Report Server

Hosted on an NT machine and currently co-located with the JetForm Server. Processes report requests placed in the central database Report Queue by user workstations. Each report request defines parameters such as the report type and report selection criteria, which the Report Server uses to drive the extraction, formatting and printing of each report. The workstation client simply puts a record in the print queue for subsequent processing by the Report Server, thus releasing the workstation immediately back to the user for further tasks. The Report Server continuously checks the print queue for pending print jobs at a pre-determined frequency (normally set at every 30 seconds).

## 8. CO/RO Workstation

Hosted on an NT machine. These work-stations run the EXDOC Client.

## 9. Inspector Workstation

Hosted on an NT machine. Inspector machines are equipped with the EXDOC Inspector Client, a modem and the RAS Client to enable dial up connection to the EXDOC system.

## 10. Health Certificate Printer

Full duplex printers connected to the local JetForm Server. Usually, these printers are dedicated to the task of health certificate printing, and when this is the case, are permanently loaded with pre-printed health certificate stationary (blue with AQIS logo).

The standard AQIS NT Network provides connectivity between the EXDOC Database Server, CO/RO workstations, EDI Splitter, JetForm Servers, Print Servers, and printers.

## 11. Remote Print Function

Hosted on Jetform server. Processes printing requests placed in central database print queue by EXDOC batch processor. Produces health certificate postscript print files for printing at the remote location.

## 12. Remote Printer

HP Laser Jet 4 (or equivalent) with duplex printing capacity for Dairy certificates, PCL font and parallel/serial ports.

**Figure 11. EXDOC System Architecture**

