



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Biosecurity Australia

Update to the Import Risk Analysis Handbook 2007

1 July 2009

Scope and Purpose

Biosecurity management is a complex and often difficult task involving coordination of governments, industry and the community in protecting the health of Australia's agriculture and environment. It is becoming even more complex through growing challenges such as climate change and increased globalisation.

To ensure Australia can continue to protect its agriculture and environment from exotic pests and diseases, the Australian Government commissioned a comprehensive, independent review of Australia's quarantine and biosecurity system, chaired by Roger Beale AO. The panel's report, *One Biosecurity: a working partnership*, and the government's preliminary response were released on 18 December 2008. In its preliminary response, the government agreed in-principle to the review panel's 84 recommendations.

Changes proposed by the panel are extensive and wide-ranging, and the government's response will take some time. A number of interim arrangements have been implemented in anticipation of longer term changes to Australia's biosecurity arrangements. As of 1 July 2009, those interim arrangements include consolidation of biosecurity functions within the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Department); and expanding the Eminent Scientists Group to include an eminent economist; and from mid-2009, appointment of a Biosecurity Advisory Council, replacing the Quarantine and Exports Advisory Council. Interim changes are outlined below.

Biosecurity Services Group

One Biosecurity: a working partnership recommended the consolidation of the Department's biosecurity activities into a new statutory authority. As an interim step, the current pre-border, border and post-border biosecurity functions of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry have been consolidated into a new business unit—the Biosecurity Services Group (BSG).

This group will deliver the functions of the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, Biosecurity Australia and parts of the Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health Division. The current Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service import clearance and export certification processes will not change. Biosecurity Australia will no longer be listed as a prescribed agency under the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* but it will continue to exist as an administrative unit within the BSG. Import risk analyses (IRAs) will continue to be conducted according to the current regulated IRA process.

Biosecurity Advisory Council

The Quarantine and Exports Advisory Council (QEAC) is being replaced by a Biosecurity Advisory Council that will advise the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on matters across the biosecurity continuum (pre-border, border and post-border), including the performance of agencies operating in the biosecurity field. The Council is expected to be in place mid-2009.

The independent Import Risk Analysis Appeals Panel (IRAAP) will continue to consider appeals submitted in response to provisional final IRA reports and will continue to operate as outlined in the *Import Risk Analysis Handbook 2007*. However, the Chairman of the IRAAP will be the Chairman of the Biosecurity Advisory Council and will nominate another Biosecurity Advisory Council member to serve on future IRAAPs.

Appeal periods that opened before the commencement of this update, or before the cessation of QEAC, will be considered under the existing QEAC membership arrangements for the IRAAP.

Eminent Scientists Group

The Eminent Scientists Group (ESG) plays an important role in providing external scrutiny of IRAs undertaken using the expanded process and will continue to operate as outlined in the *Import Risk Analysis Handbook 2007*. Consistent with recommendations from *One Biosecurity: a working partnership*, membership of the ESG will be enhanced—specifically to include an eminent economist, allow for associate members and move to a ministerial appointment process, following consultation with the states and territories.

To allow sufficient time to establish permanent arrangements and carry out a ministerial appointment process, from 1 July 2009, an eminent economist will be appointed to the ESG by the Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine to review revised draft IRA reports. The ESG will be required to ensure that all relevant matters relating to the likely economic consequences of a pest or disease incursion have been properly considered. The potential competitive economic impact of prospective imports on domestic industries is not within the scope of IRAs.

Import Market Access Advisory Group

The Import Market Access Advisory Group (IMAAG), responsible for assigning priority to import proposals and monitoring progress of Biosecurity Australia's work program, will continue to operate as outlined in the *Import Risk Analysis Handbook 2007*. However, membership of IMAAG will change slightly to reflect the consolidation of the department's biosecurity functions into the Biosecurity Services Group.

Commencement of update to Handbook

The aforementioned interim arrangements necessitate some changes to be made to the *Import Risk Analysis Handbook 2007*. As such, we are pleased to present the following update to the *Import Risk Analysis Handbook 2007* incorporating these interim arrangements.

The update commences on **1 July 2009**.



Dr Conall O'Connell
Secretary

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



Dr Colin Grant
Chief Executive
Biosecurity Australia

Update to the Import Risk Analysis Handbook 2007

General

- Replace all references to ‘Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health Division’ with ‘Biosecurity Services Group’; and ‘PIAPH’ with ‘BSG’
- Replace all references to ‘Quarantine and Exports Advisory Council’ with ‘Biosecurity Advisory Council’; and ‘QEAC’ with ‘BAC’
- Replace all references to the ‘Department of the Environment and Water Resources’ with the ‘Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts’; and ‘DEW’ with ‘DEWHA’

Page 9, Section 2.2.1

Replace second paragraph and dot points with

‘The Biosecurity Services Group (BSG) within the Department takes the lead in biosecurity and quarantine policy development and the establishment and implementation of risk management measures across the biosecurity continuum, and:

- **Pre-border** conducts, through Biosecurity Australia, risk analyses, including IRAs, and develops recommendations for biosecurity policy as well as providing quarantine policy advice to the Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine
- **At the border** develops, through the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, operational procedures, makes a range of quarantine decisions under the Act (including import permit decisions under delegation from the Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine) and delivers quarantine services
- **Post-border** coordinates pest and disease preparedness, emergency responses and liaison on inter- and intra-state quarantine arrangements for the Australian Government, in conjunction with Australia’s state and territory governments.’

Page 12, Section 3.2 (third paragraph, second sentence)

Replace ‘Annex 6’ with ‘Annex 7’

Page 13, Section 3.5 (first sentence)

Replace ‘agency’s’ with ‘unit’s’

Page 19, Section 5.8 (first paragraph)

Replace ‘scientific scrutiny’ with ‘scientific and economic scrutiny’

Page 19, Section 5.8 (second paragraph, first dot point)

Delete ‘and’

Page 19, Section 5.8 (second paragraph, after first dot point)

Insert new dot point

- ‘all relevant matters relating to the likely economic consequences of a pest or disease incursion have been properly considered and’

Page 37, Annex 4: Import Market Access Advisory Group (Membership)

Replace membership table with

‘Chairman: Deputy Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Members: Deputy Secretary, Biosecurity Services Group

Chief Executive, Biosecurity Australia, Biosecurity Services Group

Executive Manager, Animal Division, Biosecurity Services Group

Executive Manager, Plant Division, Biosecurity Services Group

Executive Manager, Trade and Market Access Division’

Page 38, Annex 5: Eminent Scientists Group (first sentence)

Replace ‘scientific scrutiny’ with ‘scientific and economic scrutiny’

Page 38, Annex 5: Eminent Scientists Group (second paragraph)

After point 1., insert new point

‘2. Review the revised draft IRA report prepared by Biosecurity Australia to ensure that all relevant matters relating to the likely economic consequences of a pest or disease incursion have been properly considered.’

Page 38, Annex 5: Eminent Scientists Group (second paragraph)

Replace existing dot point ‘2.’, with ‘3.’

Page 45, Annex 10: Contact information

Chief Executive

Replace facsimile with ‘+61 2 6272 5245’

Import Risk Analysis Appeals Panel

Replace facsimile with ‘+61 2 6272 3025’

Delete from Acronyms and definitions

Biosecurity Australia	a prescribed Agency, within the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, responsible for recommendations for the development of Australia’s biosecurity policy
PIAPH	Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health Division, Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Quarantine and Exports Advisory Council (QEAC)	a ministerially appointed council that advises the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine
quarantine continuum	the pre-border, border and post-border policies, arrangements and activities associated with quarantine and biosecurity
Secretary	the chief executive of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (The <i>Quarantine Act 1908</i> nominates the Secretary to the statutory position of Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine.)

Insert in Acronyms and definitions

Biosecurity Advisory Council (BAC)	a ministerially appointed council that advises the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on matters across the biosecurity continuum including the performance of agencies delivering biosecurity services
Biosecurity Australia (BA)	the unit, within the Biosecurity Services Group, responsible for recommendations for the development of Australia’s biosecurity policy
biosecurity continuum	the spectrum of Australia’s biosecurity activities pre-border, at the border and post-border, involving risk assessment, monitoring and surveillance and response
Biosecurity Services Group (BSG)	the group responsible for the delivery of biosecurity policy and quarantine services within the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Chief Executive	means the Chief Executive of Biosecurity Australia
Secretary	the chief executive of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry declared to be the Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine by subsection 9AA(1) of the <i>Quarantine Act 1908</i>