

Letter as sent to stakeholders on 24 August 1999

99/1823 & 99/184

Dear Stakeholder

**IMPORT RISK ANALYSES ON CONIFEROUS SAWN TIMBER AND LOGS  
FROM NORTH AMERICA AND WOOD PACKAGING MATERIALS FROM  
ASIA**

In our letter of 21 June 1999 we advised you that the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) has established a need to conduct reviews of quarantine requirements for the import of:

- a) coniferous sawn timber and logs from North America, and
- b) wood packing materials entering Australia from Asia (including any associated with imported commodities).

The purpose of this letter is to notify stakeholders that import risk analysis (IRA) processes have been initiated for both commodities as a matter of priority and to invite you to comment on the proposed approach to the risk analyses.

AQIS considers that the risk analyses on the importation of coniferous sawn timber and logs from North America and wood packaging material from Asia should both be undertaken using the non-routine IRA process outlined in the *AQIS Import Risk Analysis Process Handbook*. This is based on the consideration that the analyses are expected to be large and technically complex and will require the evaluation of potentially significant quarantine risks that have not previously been studied by AQIS.

We estimate that the IRA processes for these commodities will take approximately 15 months from commencement to completion using the non-routine process. If there are no unanticipated delays, we would expect the Issues Papers to be released in December 1999.

You are invited to comment on the proposal to conduct the IRAs using the non-routine process. Your comments will be taken into consideration by AQIS in finalising its position on the type of process to be followed. AQIS will accept written submissions on this issue until the close of business on Thursday 23 September 1999.

Responses should be forwarded to:  
Import Risk Analysis Secretariat  
Plant Quarantine Policy Branch  
Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service  
GPO Box 858  
CANBERRA ACT 2601  
Tel: (02) 6272 5094  
Fax: (02) 6272 3307

Subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1988*, all submissions received with respect to the review will be publicly available and be listed or referred to in papers or reports prepared in the review. If a request for anonymity does not accompany a submission, the respondent will be taken to have consented to the disclosure of his or her identity for the purposes of the *Privacy Act*. The contents of a submission will not be treated as confidential unless they are marked 'confidential' and they are capable of being classified as such in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act*. The AQIS import risk analysis process, as documented in the *AQIS Import Risk Analysis Process Handbook*, does not provide for extensions to the formal consultation stages.

If you wish to suggest inclusion of an additional stakeholder in our distribution lists for these IRAs, or if you wish to be removed from the distribution list, please provide details to the IRA Secretariat at the above address. Information on all IRAs being conducted by the Plant Quarantine Policy Branch is available on the Departmental website.

We look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely

Digby Gascoine  
Director Policy and International Division  
24 August 1999