



Australian Government

**Australian Quarantine
and Inspection Service**

Operator Guidelines for Vessels 25 metres and greater arriving in Australia

Version 1.2



Table of Contents

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Contact Details](#)
3. [Approval for Vessels to Enter Australia](#)
4. [Quarantine Pre-Arrival Reporting \(QPAR\)](#)
5. [Additional Requirements for Cruise and Naval Vessels](#)
6. [Additional Requirements for Livestock Vessels](#)
7. [Human Health](#)
8. [Pratique](#)
9. [What to expect during an inspection](#)
10. [Ship Sanitation Certification](#)
11. [Ballast Water Management](#)
12. [Quarantine Waste](#)
13. [Landing Animals, Plants or Other Goods at a Non Declared Port](#)
14. [Useful Contacts](#)



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Version Control

Updates will occur automatically on the [AQIS](#) website and this page will summarise the amendments as they occur. The specific sections updated are described in the revision table below:

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change	Section
1.0	17/12/08	Ben White	Development of Guidelines	Seaports Program
1.1	13/05/09	Ben White	Seaports Regional Consultation	Seaports Program
1.2	3/06/09	Ben White	Industry Consultation	Distributed through Llew Russel (AICCC)



1. Introduction

This document is a guide for agents and vessel operators intending to land in Australia. The information contained herein outlines the AQIS requirements for vessel clearance in accordance with Australian Government legislation, namely:

- [Quarantine Act 1908](#)
- [Quarantine Regulations 2000](#)
- [Quarantine Proclamation 1998](#)
- [Quarantine \(Christmas Island\) Proclamation 2004](#)
- [Quarantine \(Cocos Island\) Proclamation 2004](#)
- [Quarantine Service Fees Determination 2005](#)

AQIS is part of [DAFF](#) and plays an essential role in maintaining Australia's animal, plant and human health status.

Quarantine controls at Australia's borders are governed by the *Quarantine Act 1908*. These controls aim to minimise the risk associated with the introduction of exotic pests and diseases entering Australia and help protect our agriculture export industries as well as our environment, tourism industries and lifestyle.

AQIS administers human quarantine functions on behalf of the [Department of Health and Ageing \(DoHA\)](#) including the screening of arriving passengers for human quarantinable diseases, surveillance activities relating to Ship Sanitation Certification (SSC) and vector monitoring.

The AQIS Seaports Program is responsible for the quarantine clearance of all incoming international vessels, vessel waste, cargo, crew and their accompanied goods.

2. AQIS Contact Details

Please visit the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) website www.aqis.gov.au for further information or contact the AQIS Seaports Program's [national or regional offices](#).



3. Approval for Vessels to Enter Australia

3.1 Proclaimed First Ports of Entry

The *Quarantine Act 1908* requires overseas vessels to only enter Australia at a first port of entry (section 20).

Australian First Ports that have been proclaimed are listed in the [Quarantine Proclamation 1998](#).

A master of a vessel is guilty of an offence under the Quarantine Act 1908 if they permit a vessel to be moored, anchored or otherwise secured anywhere other than a first port of entry, unless written permission is provided.

3.2 Permission to enter a place other than a first port of entry

Under section 20AA of the *Quarantine Act 1908*, the Minister (or a delegate) may give permission for a vessel to be brought to a place other than a proclaimed first port of entry (non-proclaimed) into Australia subject to specified conditions.

Vessels that intend to enter an Australian non-proclaimed port as their first port of call or subsequent port of call, must apply for permission to enter that port by completing the [Application for permission to enter an Australian non-proclaimed first port of entry and/or subsequent port of call](#) form, and submit it to AQIS at least 10 days before the intended date of arrival. Further information is available in the [Guidelines to entering a non-proclaimed port](#).



4. Quarantine Pre-arrival Reporting Requirements

Under section 27A of the *Quarantine Act 1908* masters of vessels (other than aircraft) are required to report prescribed information on the [Quarantine Pre-Arrival Report \(QPAR\) for vessels](#) 96 – 12 hours before the estimated time of arrival at an Australian Port. The QPAR provides important information to AQIS so that a quarantine risk assessment of the vessel can be conducted prior to arrival. If the information changes, after it is given, an update of the changes must be provided again as soon as possible. *

Information on how to complete the QPAR is provided in the [Guide to Completing the Quarantine Pre-Arrival Report Form for Vessel Clearance](#)

Prescribed information, listed in regulation 10 of the [Quarantine Regulations 2000](#) that a master of a vessel must answer includes:

- Vessel particulars such as name, identifiers, agent and voyage-related details;
- Health questions highlighting illness and/or death of persons on board the vessel;
- Whether or not there is a valid Ship Sanitation Certificate (SSC);**
- Proposed crew and passenger movements;
- Details of animals onboard;
- Ballast water management information;
- Pest and disease (e.g. Asian gypsy moth, bees); and
- Previous cargoes of grain, meal or livestock.

* Please note that failure to comply with a requirement to report under section 27A or giving false or misleading information is an offence under the Act. A master of a vessel may also be asked by a Quarantine Officer to answer questions about the above prescribed matters.

** More information on the SSC can be found in [section 10](#) of this document.



5. Additional Requirements for Cruise and Naval Vessels

In addition to the QPAR, cruise and naval vessels are required to fill out and submit the [Additional QPAR for Cruise Liners and Navy Vessels - Berthing Details](#) 96-12 hours prior to the intended arrival time at subsequent ports of call.

Where a vessel is visiting non-proclaimed port/s the vessel's Agent should be consulted to determine and report to the responsible AQIS regional office/s for those ports. More information on entry to an [Australian non-proclaimed port](#) can be found in [section 3.2](#) of this document.

Cruise and Naval vessels are also required to fill out the [AQIS Vessel Live Plants log](#) if live plants are present onboard. This is to be submitted upon inspection.

Full details of the quarantine requirements of cruise vessels are available in the [Australian Quarantine Requirements - Guidelines for Cruise Vessel Agents / Operators](#). AQIS has produced a fact sheet specifically for the cruise vessel industry, entitled: [Cruising through Quarantine](#). This fact sheet provides information for disembarking and day-tripping passengers. A copy of this brochure should be placed in each cabin and made available to passengers prior to disembarking at a port.

Vessels that intend to enter an Australian non-proclaimed port* must apply for permission under section 20AA of the *Quarantine Act 1908*.

On 31 October 2003, AQIS introduced Quarantine Infringement Notices (QINs) for disembarking crew and passengers. Further information is available in [Advice to Agents—Quarantine Infringement Notices](#).

For information on human quarantine requirements [see section 7](#) of this document.

6. Additional Requirements for Livestock Vessels

In addition to the QPAR, AQIS imposes additional inspections and reporting requirements on all livestock vessels entering Australian ports and waters. Before entering Australian waters, every livestock vessel must be thoroughly cleaned. Cleaning details are to be reported on the [Statement by Master of Livestock Vessel Form](#) and submitted to AQIS with the [QPAR](#) 96-12 hours prior to the estimated time of arrival at an Australian port.

AQIS has developed the [Masters Information Sheet](#) to assist livestock vessel masters complete the [Statement by Master of Livestock Vessel Form](#).

For information on [Livestock Export Standards](#) please visit:
<http://www.daff.gov.au/livestockexportstandards>



7. Human Health

The *Quarantine Act 1908* requires the master of a vessel to immediately notify a Quarantine Officer if a person onboard displays a prescribed symptom;* or a prescribed or infectious disease breaks out onboard the vessel prior to arrival and for the duration of time in Australian waters. The obligation also applies if the master believes or suspects that a quarantinable disease has broken out or a quarantinable pest is onboard.

Once an illness has been reported, a Quarantine Officer will ask a series of questions to identify if the illness is of quarantinable concern.

* Prescribed symptoms are listed in regulation 6(1) of the [Quarantine Regulations 2000](#). Further information about prescribed symptoms is available on the [AQIS](#) website: '[Reporting an Illness: Important Quarantine Information for International Ship and Air Crew brochure](#)'. Please refer to the [DoHA](#) website to order copies of the brochure for your vessel.

Failure to comply with a requirement to report a prescribed symptom or disease is an offence.

8 Pratique

Pratique, in practice, is the permission granted by AQIS for a vessel arriving in Australia to disembark passengers, crew or cargo (noting that the vessel itself and some persons or goods may continue to remain under Quarantine control).

Once AQIS has assessed the QPAR an Approval to Berth (ATB) may be issued that will set out imposed conditions.

If a request for pratique is refused, the master of the vessel must fly the quarantine signal (yellow flag or quarantine lights if at night). Under no circumstances are any persons permitted to leave the vessel, nor is any person permitted to board the vessel without permission of a Quarantine Officer.

Failure by a master of an overseas vessel to fulfil pratique requirements is a breach of the *Quarantine Act 1908*.

Note: cargo remains subject to quarantine after it is landed and it must only be landed and moved in accordance with sections 44A and 44B the *Quarantine Act 1908*.



9. What to expect during an inspection

Upon arrival at an Australian Port an inspection of your vessel may be conducted. This involves a Quarantine Officer boarding the vessel to review relevant paperwork and to conduct a physical inspection of all accessible areas.

9.1 Interview with the master

The interview with the Master provides the Quarantine Officer with the opportunity to verify all relevant documentation including the information provided on the QPAR. It also provides the Master with the opportunity to verbally declare anything that may have changed.

The Quarantine Officer will check that the relevant documentation is consistent with the information on the QPAR, has been issued by an appropriate authority and has not been amended in anyway.

The Quarantine Officer will also request that they be escorted around the vessel by a member of the crew to undertake a physical inspection.

9.2 Vessel Inspection

Inspections may relate to ill travellers, waste management, provision areas, dry stores, galleys, live plants on board, crew quarters, biological material, ballast water, quarantinable material, animals on board and the presence of insects and rodents.

Where an inspection does not meet AQIS's standards additional directions or corrective actions will be issued.

9.3 Post Inspection Interview with the master

Once the Quarantine Officer has completed the inspection a post inspection interview is conducted with the master to discuss any quarantine issues identified in the vessel inspection. This includes whether the vessel passed or failed the inspection.

Further information on what to expect is covered throughout this document.

9.4 Surveillance

All international vessels may be subject to surveillance inspections on succeeding days at the first port of arrival and subsequent port/s of call to ensure continued compliance with all quarantine directions.

9.5 Vessels intending to stay for extended periods of time

Vessels intending to stay in Australian waters for an extended period of time can be released from quarantine. These vessels must be cleared of all quarantine risk material, issued a Release from Quarantine and granted pratique. Coastal status permits unrestricted movement of the vessel between all Australian ports and movement of crew and passengers on and off the vessel.



Risk material may include, but is not limited to, stores waste, personal affects. Removal or treatment of these risk materials will need to be conducted as well as cleaning and disinfection of the cold storage and freezer areas.

Landed Goods (other than cargo)

Under section 44B of the [Quarantine Act 1908](#) a request to remove goods (other than cargo) from a vessel may be granted upon application to AQIS on the [Section 44](#) form.

Quarantine Officer's may allow some goods to be removed without inspection however appropriate surveillance measures may be undertaken. Depending upon the volume and type of goods to be landed, an Quarantine Officer may be dedicated to this role for a considerable period of time whilst the vessel is in port.

9.4 Fees and Charges

All vessels that enter Australia are subject to fees as outlined in the AQIS Fees and Charging Guidelines.

For further information on fees and charging please visit: www.aqis.gov.au



10. Ship Sanitation Certification Scheme

The Ship Sanitation Control Exemption Certificate / Ship Sanitation Control Certificate are issued in accordance with [Article 39 of the International Health Regulations \(2005\) \(IHR\)](#) and replaces the Deratting Certificate from the 1969 iteration of the IHR.

The Ship Sanitation Certification (SSC) regime is aimed at controlling the international spread of human diseases by controlling any vectors of these diseases that could potentially be carried on a ship. This is achieved by inspecting for and controlling animal vectors (rodents and mosquitoes), preventing the discharge of untreated ballast water, checking certification of potable water and sewage, and quarantine measures for human carriers of disease. AQIS administers SSC requirements on behalf of [DoHA](#).

10.1 Validity of Ship Sanitation Certificates

Certificates are valid for a period of six months from the date of issue. This period may be extended by one month if the inspection or control measures required cannot be accomplished at the port.

Nothing in the certificate shall prevent or prejudice further ship inspection by competent authorities of any country, including Australia.

10.2 Ship Sanitation Control Exemption Certificate

A Ship Sanitation Control Exemption Certificate is issued when, at the time of inspection, there are no signs of vectors (rodents and mosquitoes), reservoirs, there are no ill humans on board and subsequently no measures are required to control vectors and relevant certification of ship facilities is valid and/or in order.

10.3 Ship Sanitation Control Certificate

A Ship Sanitation Control Certificate is issued when, at the time of inspection, there are signs or evidence of vectors, and subsequent measures are applied to control vectors; or relevant certification of ship facilities is invalid, out of date and/or out of order.

10.4 International Sewage Pollution Prevention

As of 27 September 2008 all international ships are required to carry an International Sewage Pollution Prevention (ISPP) Certificate under the requirement of the *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships* (MARPOL) Annex IV. The ISPP certificate certifies that the sewage systems on board an international ship are in compliance with MARPOL requirements.

Ships have slightly different eligibility requirements for ISPP certificates than for Ship Sanitation Certificates. ISPP certificate are issued to ships:

- Greater than 400 gross tonnes; or
- Certified to carry more than 15 persons



Note: Customs and Military vessels are not bound by the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) or The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) conventions.

11. Ballast Water

AQIS is the lead agency for the management of ballast water taken up overseas with the intention of discharge within an Australian port. Part of AQIS's charter is to ensure that foreign ballast water has been managed in accordance with the [Australian Ballast Water Management Requirements](#) before permitting its discharge inside Australia's territorial sea (12 nautical limit applies).

Any ballast water that has been exchanged at sea, by an approved method, is deemed to be acceptable for discharge in Australian ports / waters.

Vessels must retain all ballast water records in the [AQIS Ballast Water Management Summary Sheet](#) and any relevant vessel logbooks, and make these available to Quarantine Officer's on request. Refer to the [Guide to AQIS Ballast Water Reporting Forms](#) for information on completing the AQIS Ballast Water Management Summary sheet.

Australian ballast water management requirements are consistent with [International Maritime Organisation \(IMO\)](#) guidelines for minimising the risk of translocation of harmful aquatic species in ships' ballast water. Safety of vessels and crews is of paramount importance. Vessels undertaking ballast water management to comply with Australian requirements should do so in accordance with the IMO guidelines and the [Mariners' Guide to Ballast Regulations in Australia](#).



12. Quarantine Waste

Quarantine waste may remain onboard a vessel in circumstances where a Quarantine Officer is satisfied that the waste is being managed in a sanitary manner.

All cabin, galley and hold waste onboard the vessel that is intended to be discharged must be collected, transported, stored and/or treated by an approved service provider signed onto an AQIS compliance agreement or under AQIS supervision on a [Fee for Service](#) basis in line with the *Quarantine Fees Determination 2005*.

The definition Quarantine Waste from the [Quarantine Regulations 2000](#) includes:

- Material used to pack or stabilise cargo (dunnage);
 - Galley and food waste;
 - Human animal or plant waste; and
 - Refuse or sweepings from holds or decks of vessels or installation.
- For operational purposes the following are also considered to be quarantine waste and shall be treated as such:
- Any other waste or other material, which comes into contact with quarantine waste;
 - Contents of AQIS amnesty bins;
 - Any goods surrendered to an AQIS officer;
 - Articles seized by AQIS which are not collected by clients; and
 - Any other import that will not be used in the manner for which it was imported and is to be destroyed.

While in port, all vessel waste on deck must be secured so that it is inaccessible to birds or animals i.e. bagged and in lidded deck bins.

No plant or animal material is to be taken off the vessel without prior permission from AQIS.

Ship's masters should determine the procedures on arrival at port from their agent.

For more information on approved service providers contact your closest AQIS [regional office](#) ask for the compliance agreement team or contact the Seaports Program [national office](#) for any other queries.

Waste is one of the prescribed matters that a Quarantine Officer can ask a master to answer questions about (section 28 and regulation 18).

Under the *Quarantine Act 1908*, waste is treated as a type of goods and may only be landed at a port that is proclaimed for the landing of waste.



13. Landing Animals, Plants or Other Goods at a Non-declared Port

In addition to ensuring that the intended port of *entry* is a proclaimed first port, vessel masters, owners and agents must also ensure that the intended port of *landing* is a declared port for the landing of the particular animals, plants or other goods.

First ports of entry and landing places are listed in the [Quarantine Proclamation 1998](#).

If an overseas vessel wishes to land animals, plants or other goods at a place that is not a declared port, the master, owner or agent of the vessel must apply for permission to land the goods.

Applications for permission to land animals, plants or other goods at a non-declared port must be faxed or emailed to the AQIS Sea Cargo Unit at least 10 working days prior to arrival. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the goods being cleared by quarantine. During this delay, the goods may be required to either remain on the vessel or be held in a Quarantine Approved Premises (QAP) storage area.

In the event that 20D Permission can not be granted, the master, owner or agent of the vessel should consider alternative arrangements, such as:

1. Quarantine clearance of the goods at a declared port, prior to moving them to the non-declared port; or
2. Quarantine bonding of the goods on board the vessel in circumstances where:
 - a. the vessel will be returning overseas; or
 - b. the final destination of the goods is a declared port.

For a copy of the 20D Application Form visit:

<http://www.daff.gov.au/aqis/avm/vessels/landing-at-non-declared-port>

AQIS Sea Cargo Unit

Phone: 02 6272 3390

Fax: 02 6272 4874

Email: [AQIS Sea Cargo Unit](#)



14. Useful Contacts

Australian Customs Service

The Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (Customs) manages the security and integrity of Australia's borders.

For further information on Customs requirements please contact:

Customs National Information Line
phone: 1300 363 263 or +61 2 6275 6666 (outside Australia)
website <http://www.customs.gov.au/>
email: information@customs.gov.au

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship maintains the Movement Alert List and enforces Australia's visa regime.

For further information on the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's requirements please contact 131 881 or if you are outside Australia and wish to make an enquiry please contact your nearest Overseas Office website: www.immi.gov.au/sea/enquiries/

Australian Maritime Safety Authority

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) is responsible for the enforcement of environmental and safety standards for ships in Commonwealth jurisdiction. Their role includes protection of the marine environment from pollution from ships and other environmental damage caused by shipping.

For further information on AMSA please contact:
Phone: 1800 641 762 (within Australia) or +61 2 62795000 (outside of Australia)
For more information or to contact AMSA please ring 02 6279 5000 or visit their website on www.amsa.gov.au.