



Department of  
**AGRICULTURE  
FISHERIES &  
FORESTRY -  
AUSTRALIA**



7 February 2001

## **ANIMAL BIOSECURITY POLICY MEMORANDUM 2001/06**

### **UNCOOKED (GREEN PRAWNS): TIGHTER IMPORT CONDITIONS**

This Animal Biosecurity Policy Memorandum (ABPM) advises stakeholders that controls on the importation of uncooked prawns have been further tightened pending finalisation of the import risk analysis.

Further to interim conditions for uncooked (green) prawns announced under cover of ABPM 2000/057 of 14 December 2000, additional measures were introduced on 5 February 2001. These measures follow on from an incident in Darwin where imported prawns were used as feed in aquaculture ponds and tanks late last year and which may have resulted in the transmission of White Spot Syndrome Virus (WSSV). Prawns and mud crabs at the facility had been fed with frozen uncooked prawns that are now known to have been imported from Southeast Asia. All suspect prawns and crabs were destroyed and the facilities disinfected prior to re-stocking.

The tighter controls are being introduced to avoid a recurrence of this incident and to protect Australia's valuable aquaculture industries and environment. The controls include:

- testing of whole and unpeeled, headless green prawns from countries or zones unable to demonstrate freedom from WSSV. This will require the prawns to enter a quarantine cold storage facility in Australia where samples will be tested. Shipments that are positive will either be destroyed or re-exported
- development of an education campaign together with States and Territories for bait wholesalers, recreational fishermen and restaurants
- development of codes of practice with industry for importers and domestic producers of prawns in the handling of waste
- working with States and Territories towards imposing post-entry controls to prevent diversion of imported prawns for bait

The new measures will be phased in over the next few weeks.

The risk analysis panel conducting the import risk analysis of prawns and prawn products met on 16 January 2001 and reviewed the 17 submissions received on the draft IRA report and decided on a work program to finalise the IRA. The panel's considerations also took account of the Darwin incident.

The panel agreed on a number of recommendations to support its work, including examination of the use of green prawns as bait, a widening of the nation-wide WSSV survey to confirm Australia's free status (agreed to by the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animals Diseases (CCEAD) in December 2000),

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further investigation of any links between WSSV and drops in catches and a review of State legislation and licensing arrangements for the bait industry.

For further information please contact the officers whose details appear below.

I would be grateful if you would pass details of this notice to other interested parties, who should advise Biosecurity Australia if they wish to be included in future communications on this matter.

Confidentiality

Respondents are advised that, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1988*, all submissions received in response to Animal Biosecurity Policy Memoranda will be publicly available and may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports prepared on the subject matter of the Memoranda.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reveal the identity of a respondent unless a request for anonymity accompanies the submission. Where a request for anonymity does not accompany the submission the respondent will be taken to have consented to the disclosure of his or her identity for the purposes of Information Privacy Principle 11 of the Privacy Act.

The contents of the 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.

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