



Australian Government

Australian Quarantine
and Inspection Service

AQIS fact sheet

Mosquito vectors— stop them getting a free ride

Mosquitoes are blood-sucking insects that are responsible for transmitting diseases such as Dengue fever, Yellow fever, Ross River virus, malaria and Japanese encephalitis. All of these diseases have the potential to cause ill health and even death.

What is the risk to Australia?

Exotic mosquitoes could introduce mosquito-borne diseases that are not present in Australia, or act as carriers of disease when infected travellers return from overseas.

International traffic through seaports poses a significant risk to Australia. The greatest risk comes from mosquitoes that lay eggs in receptacles, containers and other areas capable of holding fresh water. These types of mosquitoes are called 'container breeders' and include the Yellow fever mosquito and Asian tiger mosquito, which are the main carriers for Dengue fever.

Likely breeding sites on a vessel includes tyres used as on-board packing, machinery parts, fenders, tarps and covers, tanks and bunds and any other part of a vessel able to hold fresh water (such as pot plant bases, lids of paint tins and even steel ridges on the deck).

Cargo held on a wharf is also at risk when rainwater pools. Eggs of these mosquitoes can survive out of water for up to nine months. Because of this, water marks and areas where water had once pooled may still contain eggs, which can hatch when flooded with water again.

Many seaports around the world lack basic sanitation and those with receptacles such as drums, tyres, machinery, or other containers capable of holding water are considered high risk.

What to look for

- Pooling or standing water that has accumulated from rain
- Water marks indicating where water has pooled
- Areas where water can collect such as tyres, machinery parts, tarps and covers

AQIS requirements—what you need to do

- Ensure breeding sites do not exist on board vessels.
- Treat all standing water and water marks with chlorine and dispose of water if mosquito larvae are observed.
- Spray adult mosquitoes with a knock down insecticide.
- Report any sickness of passengers or crew to a quarantine officer when submitting the Quarantine Pre-Arrival Report for Vessels form (Pratique).

More information

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