



Australian Government

Australian Quarantine
and Inspection Service

AQIS

Guidelines for Airline & Aircraft Operators Arriving in Australia

Version 1.7



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1. Contact Details

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

2. Disclaimer

- The requirements in this document are subject to change and it is the responsibility of the user to check they have the latest version and to ensure compliance with the legislation. See www.aqis.gov.au for the latest version.
- The requirements contained in this document are those of AQIS only and do not include the requirements of any other Australian Government agency.
- Links to other websites are provided for the user's convenience and do not constitute endorsement of all material at those sites, or any associated organisations, products or services.
- If you use automatic language translation services in connection with this document, you do so at your own risk.
- AQIS may revise this Disclaimer at any time by updating this posting.
- In addition please refer to Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's general [Disclaimer](#).

3. 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
1.1	April 08	Aimie Wilkinson/Heather Rockwell	First Draft	All
1.2	May 08	DAFF Corporate Legal Unit	CLU clearance	All
1.3	July 08	Aimie Wilkinson/Heather Rockwell	20D URL amendment	7.3
1.4	Jan 09	Aimie Wilkinson	Amended the Been Away? Feel Ok? pamphlet ordering process	8.1
1.5	Nov 10	Passengers Program	Amend the in-flight languages	8.1
1.6	Jan 11	Heather Rockwell	Amended Approval to Land Aircraft in Australia section	7
1.7	Aug 11	Heather Rockwell	Amended Pre-arrival Reporting Requirements section	5



4. Introduction

This document provides a basic guide to airlines and aircraft operators who intend to fly into Australia. The information contained herein outlines the [Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service](#) (AQIS) requirements for aircraft 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 the Australian Government [Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry](#) and plays an essential role in maintaining Australia's animal, plant and human health status.

AQIS is Australia's first line of defence, reducing the risk to our agriculture industries and environment against exotic pests and diseases. Quarantine controls at Australia's borders are governed by the *Quarantine Act 1908*. These controls aim to minimise the risk 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 aircraft disinsection and vector monitoring.

The AQIS Passengers Program is responsible for the quarantine clearance of all incoming international aircraft, aircraft waste, cargo, passengers and their accompanied baggage.



5. Pre-arrival Reporting Requirements

Under section 27B of the *Quarantine Act 1908* commanders of aircraft are required to report prescribed information before landing, as close to top of descent as is operationally practicable, but in any case at least 30 minutes before the aircraft is on chocks (at a complete standstill) or at any other time notified to the commander of the aircraft by an AQIS officer. A commander may issue the report by radio communication or telecommunication.*

Prescribed information, listed in regulation 12 of the *Quarantine Regulations 2000*, includes:

1. for non-scheduled flights**, the identity of the aircraft, port of arrival and estimated time of arrival;
2. where any person onboard the aircraft has died during the flight or is found to be suffering from an illness;
3. where any person onboard the aircraft presented with a prescribed symptom*** during the flight;
4. where any live animals are onboard the aircraft;
5. where any animal has died onboard the aircraft during the flight; or
6. where the arrangements for disinsection**** of the aircraft have not been undertaken in accordance with AQIS requirements.

In the event that any of the above has occurred a commander of an aircraft must ensure his or her Ground Handling Agent or the Air Controller at the relevant airport contacts AQIS prior to the aircraft's arrival. A commander of an aircraft must also report any changes to the above information.

The *Quarantine Act 1908* also requires the master of a vessel that is not performing quarantine to immediately notify an AQIS officer if a prescribed symptom*** presents or a prescribed or infectious disease breaks out onboard. The obligation also applies if the master believes, suspects or has reason to believe or suspect that a quarantinable disease has broken out or a quarantinable pest is onboard (section 22).

* Please note that failure to comply with a requirement to report under section 27B, or giving false or misleading information is an offence under the Act. A commander of an aircraft may also be asked by an AQIS officer to answer questions about the above prescribed matters.

** Non-scheduled flight, of an aircraft, has the meaning given by the *Air Navigation Act 1920*.

*** Prescribed symptoms are listed in regulation 6(1) of the *Quarantine Regulations 2000*. Further information about prescribed symptoms is contained in the "Fact Sheet: Reporting an Illness or Death". A copy of the "Fact Sheet: Reporting an Illness or Death" is available on the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing website via <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-quarantine-factsheet>.

**** More information on disinsection can be found in [section 9](#) of this document.



6. Pratique

Pratique, in practice, is a kind of permission given to an aircraft arriving in Australia to disembark passengers, crew or cargo* after determining it is free from any illness, death, biological material or vectors of quarantine concern.

Aircraft entering Australia are currently operating under a system of automatic pratique, which means pratique is automatically granted at the time an aircraft arrives.

However, automatic pratique does not apply, and is taken never to have applied, under the following situations:

1. the commander of the aircraft has given prescribed information (listed in [section 5](#) of this document) to an AQIS officer – this means that automatic pratique will not apply to non-scheduled flights; or
2. the commander of the aircraft has notified an AQIS officer under section 22 about the presence of a prescribed symptom, or the breaking out of a prescribed or infectious disease onboard the aircraft (also listed in [section 5](#) of this document); or
3. the Director of Human Quarantine has given a direction, before the aircraft arrives, that pratique is not taken to have been granted;** or
4. an AQIS officer advises the commander of the aircraft, before or after the aircraft arrives, that he or she is not satisfied that the aircraft is free from infection.

AQIS officers will meet all aircraft when pratique is not automatically granted. All passengers and crew must remain onboard until pratique is granted by AQIS or unless authorised by an AQIS officer. Failure by a commander of an international aircraft to fulfil pratique requirements is a breach of the *Quarantine Act 1908*.

* Note that cargo will still be 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*.

** The *Quarantine Regulations 2000* prescribe the circumstances in which a Director of Quarantine can give a direction that pratique is taken not to have been granted, and also prescribe the conditions that a Director of Quarantine must take into account.



7. Approval to Land Aircraft in Australia

7.1 Proclaimed First Ports of Entry and Landing Places

The *Quarantine Act 1908* (the Act) requires:

- overseas aircraft to land at proclaimed first ports of entry (section 20); and
- overseas aircraft to land at proclaimed landing places (section 20A).

Please note that it is an offence for the master of an aircraft (section 20) or the commander of an aircraft (section 20A) to land aircraft in contravention of these sections.

First ports and landing places that have been proclaimed are listed in section 9 of the *Quarantine Proclamation 1998* (the Proclamation).

7.1.1 Proclaimed First Ports of Entry and Landing Places Permanently Staffed by AQIS

The following 'proclaimed first ports of entry and landing places' are permanently staffed by AQIS:

- Adelaide Airport
- Brisbane Airport
- Cairns Airport
- Darwin Airport
- Gold Coast Airport
- Melbourne Tullamarine Airport
- Perth Airport
- Sydney Kingsford-Smith Airport

7.1.2 Proclaimed First Ports of Entry and Landing Places Not Permanently Staffed by AQIS

Australian airports that are proclaimed first ports of entry and landing places that are not permanently staffed by AQIS are serviced for international arrivals under a request for service arrangement.

The National Passenger Processing Committee (NPPC) co-ordinates the exercise of various statutory controls and responsibilities carried out at airports. One of the NPPC's functions is to review approval from aircraft/pilots arriving or departing from non-international and/or non-designated airports where there is no permanent Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) presence.

Aircraft operators/pilots should refer to the following document to identify if NPPC approval is required for the airport they wish to arrive at (NB: if the airport you wish to arrive at is not on the attached list NPPC approval is required).

[NPPC Airport Arrival Guide](#)

If NPPC approval is required aircraft operators/pilots must provide a written request for NPPC approval to Customs and Border Protection at least ten (10) business days prior to the flight.

[NPPC Application form](#)



NPPC requests can be submitted by mail, fax or email to:

The Chairman
National Passenger Processing Committee
Passenger Operations Branch
Australian Customs and Border Protection Service
5 Constitution Ave
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601
Fax: 61 2 6275 6989
Email: cfapplic@customs.gov.au

For non-scheduled flight arrivals at proclaimed first ports of entry and landing places where NPPC approval is not required, notification of prescribed information is still required under the *Quarantine Act 1908* (see [section 5](#) in this document). There will be other Government agencies that need to be notified of your arrival as well. It is the responsibility of your Ground Handling Agent to contact the closest [AQIS regional office](#) to make arrangements for an aircraft's arrival.

7.2 Aircraft Arriving into Non-Proclaimed First Ports of Entry and Landing Places

Under section 20AA of the *Quarantine Act 1908*, the Minister (or a delegate) may give permission upon receipt of an application in writing for the entry of:

- an overseas aircraft at a port that has not been proclaimed to be a first port of entry; or
- an overseas aircraft at a landing place that has not been proclaimed.

Australian airports that are not proclaimed first ports of entry and landing places are serviced for international arrivals under a request for service arrangement.

Aircraft operators/pilots should refer to the following document to identify if NPPC approval is required for the airport they wish to arrive at (NB: if the airport you wish to arrive at is not on the attached list NPPC approval is required).

[NPPC Airport Arrival Guide](#)

If NPPC approval is required aircraft operators/pilots must provide a written request for NPPC approval to Customs and Border Protection at least ten (10) business days prior to the flight.

[NPPC Application form](#)

Requests can be submitted by mail, fax or email to:

The Chairman
National Passenger Processing Committee
Passenger Operations Branch
Australian Customs and Border Protection Service
5 Constitution Ave
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601
Fax: 61 2 6275 6989
Email: cfapplic@customs.gov.au



If NPPC approval is not required, a written application must be submitted to the AQIS Passengers Program [national office](#) at least five working days prior to arrival. Failure to do so may prevent a permission being granted, and result in the aircraft needing to land at a Proclaimed First Port of Entry and Landing Place Permanently Staffed by AQIS (see [section 7.1.1](#) in this document). The 20AA application form is available to download via the [AQIS](#) website. There will be other Government agencies that need to be notified of your arrival as well.

7.3 Aircraft Carrying Cargo (Animals, Plants or Other Goods)

The Act requires that imported animals, plants or other goods may only be landed at a port declared by the Proclamation to be a port at which they may be landed unless a Director of Quarantine gives written permission (section 20D).

For the landing of imported animals, plants or other goods at a port/landing place for which they are not currently declared by Proclamation, a written application must be submitted to a Director of Quarantine. Applications must be faxed or emailed to [AQIS Sea Cargo Unit](#) at least ten working days prior to arrival. Failure to do so may prevent a permission being granted, and result in a delay in the goods being cleared by quarantine or the commission of an offence if imported animals, plants or goods are landed without permission. During this delay, the goods may be required to either remain on the vessel or be held in a Quarantine Approved Premises storage area. The 20D application form is available to download via the [AQIS](#) website.

In the event that 20D permission cannot be or is not 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 onboard the vessel in circumstances where:
 - a. the vessel will be returning overseas; or
 - b. the final destination of the goods is a declared port.



8. Quarantine In-flight Announcement

8.1 Flights from all Countries

Section 74AA of the *Quarantine Act 1908* states:

The master of the vessel shall give notice, or cause notice to be given, to all persons travelling on the vessel (including members of the crew) of the quarantine measures required under the laws of the Commonwealth, being notice the content and form of which have been approved by the Director of Human Quarantine and the Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine.

It should be noted that for the purpose of quarantine legislation, the term 'vessel' means aircraft or ship.

Fines of up to \$5,500 may apply to the commander of the aircraft for failing to deliver (or ensuring it is delivered) an approved quarantine in-flight announcement.

The in-flight announcement should be aired on all international flights prior to arrival in Australia. A video/DVD is available free of charge, in any nominated format and in any language your airline requires. If you have any questions or would like to order a copy of the video/DVD, please contact the Passengers Program [national office](#).

In the event that the video/DVD cannot be shown, airlines need to ensure that their crew make a verbal announcement on flights to Australia. The approved verbal announcement script is as follows and unauthorised editing is prohibited:

"This is an important Quarantine announcement from the Australian Government.

Australia has strict quarantine controls, backed up by strong penalties for breaking the law, to help minimise the risk to Australia's unique environment, important agricultural industries and human health caused by the introduction of pests and diseases from overseas.

To fulfil Australian Quarantine regulations, you must declare everything you can eat and all other plant or animal material on your Incoming Passenger Card.

This includes all fruit, meat and dairy products, fish and seafood, edible packaged and processed goods; and plant cuttings, seeds, and souvenirs made with wood, plant or animal products such as hides, bones and shells. Otherwise, you should dispose of these items in the Quarantine bins located in the arrival area. Anything edible supplied to you onboard must be left behind.

There is also important human health information in the 'Been Away? Feel Ok?' pamphlet. Please take the time to read this information as it refers to your health. If you have not received one of these pamphlets, please ask a member of the crew. Australian quarantine laws require that a senior officer of an aircraft reports certain ill passengers or crew members to a Quarantine officer prior to arrival in Australia. If you are feeling unwell you should bring this to the attention of a crew member.

Please take particular care in completing your Incoming Passenger Card. It is a legal document, and false declarations may result in on-the-spot fines or prosecution.

On arrival your baggage may be x-rayed, inspected or checked by a detector dog team."



A translated version of the verbal announcement is available in the following languages:

- Arabic
- Cantonese
- French
- German
- Hindi
- Indonesian
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Mandarin
- Simplified Chinese
- Spanish
- Thai
- Traditional Chinese
- Vietnamese

Please contact the Passengers Program [national office](#) if a translated version is required.

A copy of the 'Been Away? Feel Ok?' pamphlet is available on the [DoHA](#) website; copies are also available in all international airport terminals.

8.2 Flights from New Zealand

An additional in-flight quarantine announcement (verbal only), is required to be provided to passengers and crew, under section 74AA of the *Quarantine Act 1908*, on all flights from New Zealand to Australia. The additional in-flight announcement will support the new Incoming Passenger Card, Form 15NZ, that is used on flights from New Zealand only, requiring passengers to declare items that may have been exposed to freshwater lakes and streams overseas, being a likely source of the significant aquatic pest – Didymo alga (*Didymosphenia geminata*).

It is important to note that this is an additional verbal in-flight announcement that is to be provided in conjunction with the current approved quarantine in-flight video/announcement. Importantly, this announcement does not replace, nor does the legal instrument revoke, the requirement for the master of the aircraft to cause the current approved notice (quarantine in-flight video/announcement) to be given.

The approved verbal announcement script is as follows and unauthorised editing is prohibited:

“This is an important Quarantine announcement from the Australian Government for passengers arriving on flights from New Zealand.

To help minimise the risk to Australia’s unique environment caused by the introduction of freshwater pests from overseas such as Didymo algae, you must declare, on your Incoming Passenger Card, all items which may have been in contact with freshwater streams, lakes and waterways including; sporting, recreational or fishing equipment – such as fishing rods and nets, waders, watercraft, lifejackets, wetsuits, hiking boots or similar items.

Ensure that you present these items to a Quarantine officer for inspection after you have collected your baggage.

Please take particular care in completing your Incoming Passenger Card. It is a legal document, and false declarations may result in on-the-spot fines or prosecution.”



9. Aircraft Disinsection

Regulation 23 of the *Australian Quarantine Regulations 2000* states:

*The commander of an overseas aircraft (or, if the commander is not the operator of the aircraft, the operator of the aircraft) must make arrangements for the disinsection of the aircraft in a manner, and within a time, approved by a Director of Quarantine.**

The [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) defines 'disinsection' as 'the procedure whereby health measures are taken to control or kill the insect vectors, of human diseases present in baggage, cargo, containers, conveyances, goods and postal parcels'. For example, insect vectors include mosquitos. AQIS administers disinsection requirements on behalf of [DoHA](#).

International aircraft are disinsected to help protect Australia from a range of vectors of human diseases and pests of animals and plants. AQIS and the [Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry Biosecurity New Zealand \(MAFBNZ\)](#) jointly developed the [AQIS/MAFBNZ Schedule of Aircraft Disinsection Procedures](#) which details aircraft disinsection requirements based on the [WHO's](#) recommendations.

To assist airlines with differing operational requirements, several options for achieving effective disinsection for cabins and holds are available:

- Residual (conducted in the absence of passengers)
- Pre-embarkation (conducted in the absence of passengers)
- Pre-flight and Top of Descent (conducted in the presence of passengers)
- On-arrival (conducted in the presence of passengers)

Please refer to the [AQIS/MQS Schedule of Aircraft Disinsection Procedures](#) on the AQIS website for more information on disinsection.

Approval to perform some methods of disinsection is dependant on airlines entering into an arrangement with either AQIS or MAFBNZ. The arrangement outlines the application of a particular set of procedures and the supervision, monitoring and testing of the airlines compliance with those procedures. If an airline or airline operator has not satisfactorily negotiated an arrangement with either AQIS or MAFBNZ, then the on-arrival disinsection method will be undertaken on a [Fee for Service](#) basis in line with the *Quarantine Fees Determination 2005*.

Airlines must contact either the Passengers Program [national office](#) or [MAFBNZ](#) for further details on these arrangements.

* Please note that failure to comply with regulation 23 is an offence, attracting a fine of up to \$5,500.



10. Quarantine Waste

All cabin, galley and hold waste onboard the aircraft must be collected, transported, stored and/or treated by approved service providers signed onto AQIS compliance agreements or under AQIS supervision on a [Fee for Service](#) basis in line with the *Quarantine Fees Determination 2005*.*

Quarantine waste may be derived from:

- waste, sweepings, organic galley and accommodation refuse from aircraft;
- refuse or sweepings from the holds of aircraft;
- unconsumed prepared meals and other partly consumed food;
- any non-washable items, other waste or materials which may have come into contact with quarantine waste;
- animal and plant materials (including floral arrangements and animal or plant waste); or
- materials used to pack and stabilise imported goods.

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

- * 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 (see [section 7.3](#) in this document).

The *Quarantine Regulations 2000* also require masters of vessels to take reasonable measures to prevent any person from removing or discharging waste without the master's permission (see regulation 26).

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