



Version 5

## Australian Export Meat Inspection System (AEMIS) information package

The Australian Export Meat Inspection System (AEMIS) is an integrated set of controls specified and verified by Government that ensures the safety, suitability and integrity of Australian meat and meat products destined for domestic and export markets. Underpinning AEMIS are performance standards which are continually monitored and verified. Information is captured in a national database that is then analysed and reported in as close to real time as practicable.

An Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) veterinarian is primarily responsible for ante mortem inspection and verification of post-mortem inspection and processor hygiene practices. The FSMA will assist the veterinarian in performing verification activities. An additional roving FSMA will be available for facilities with a larger verification workload.

Post-mortem inspection is delivered either by AQIS officials called Food Safety Meat Assessors (FSMAs) or AQIS Authorised Officers (AAOs) who are legally bound to AQIS to perform inspections in accordance with a detailed set of AQIS controlled instructions. FSMAs and AAOs are subject to ongoing performance verification against national performance standards and the results are recorded in a national database. Where AAOs perform primary inspection all carcasses are subject to assessment by FSMA.

The Australian Standard requires that a suitably qualified meat safety inspector performs post-mortem inspection and make dispositions on each carcass and its carcass parts. Under AEMIS meat safety inspectors must have a Certificate III in Meat Processing (Meat Safety) MTM30307 and attain a MTM 40207 Certificate IV Meat Processing (Meat Safety) within 12 months of authorisation or hold an equivalent qualification. Where an establishment elects to utilise AQIS Authorised Officers (AAOs) for post-mortem inspection, it is responsible for the provision of suitably qualified, trained and authorised officers.

Establishments may choose to utilise staff in a training capacity prior to becoming an AAO. If this is the case, an individual may gain practical experience in the AAO role on the chain providing the following is in place:

- there is an AAO at each existing inspection point undertaking inspection and disposition of all carcass and carcass parts and
- the trainee AAO is under the direct supervision of that AAO and is not making a disposition on carcass and carcass parts and
- all inspection and decisions pertaining to the inspection process on carcass and carcass parts are made by the AAO, or by AQIS if/as required.

Processors continue to be responsible for the hygienic operations of their facilities. Their ability to do this is verified through assessment against a national set of performance standards with the results being recorded in a national database.



## Transition issues

The following elements need to be developed prior to transitioning to AEMIS.

### 1. AQIS Authorised Officers

#### 1.1 Application form

An application form to be an AAO must be completed and submitted:

- Version 2.6 of this form should be used.
- A number of documents need to be attached to the application form.
- To assist in completion of the form refer to the document [Information about the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service Authorised Officer Application Process](#).

#### 1.2 Qualifications

Refer to section 3 of the document, Information about the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service Authorised Officer Application Process, for details of qualifications which will be accepted by AQIS.

#### 1.3 Deed of Obligation

An AAO Deed of Obligation must be signed by the applicant and returned to AQIS. This deed includes a requirement that AAOs comply with the Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct. Applicants should only sign the deed after it has been explained to them by AQIS regional staff.

#### 1.4 Australian Federal Police National Police Check

An Australian Federal Police National Police Check is required. Refer to Point 7 of the Information about the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service Authorised Officer Application Process document for details of how this check can be obtained.

#### 1.5 Instructional Material (post-mortem)

AQIS Standard Operating Procedures and AQIS Work Instructions for the conduct of post-mortem inspection must be followed. This Instructional Material is available from the establishment OPV or AQIS regional staff.

#### 1.6 Information and training sessions

All applicants must attend AAO training before they will be appointed as an AAO. Training will be provided by Registered Training Organisations for all aspects of AAO responsibilities other than the Deed of Obligation. Information and training about the deed will be provided by AQIS regional staff.

#### 1.7 Numbers required

The number of AAOs required on any single shift needs to be sufficient to ensure that the **post-mortem** inspection performance standards are met. It is an establishment responsibility to have enough AAOs available to cover all forms of leave, absenteeism and training.

#### 1.8 Identification

AAOs are required to wear a uniform with white shirt, trousers and coat (where applicable). The uniform includes boots and white head covering which comply with the establishment's



hygiene and occupational health and safety policies and an apron where required. All shirts and coats must be identified with the words AQIS Authorised Officer in red lettering embroidered or otherwise permanently applied to the clothing on one breast so that it will be visible even if an apron is worn. The uniform must be worn while official inspection is being performed. When an AAO is not performing official post-mortem inspection procedures the uniform must not be worn.

AAOs will be issued with an identification card which must be readily available on AQIS' request.

## **1.9 Occupational Health and Safety**

The AAO will conform to any OH&S procedure required by the establishment. Whether or not protective equipment interferes with inspection will be determined by compliance with the post-mortem inspection performance standards.

## **2. Approved arrangement**

### **2.1 Relationship with the Establishment**

The establishment's approved arrangement must specify that:

- a The AAO is responsible to AQIS for the performance of their official function.
- b Establishment staff will support and / or not interfere with the AAO in the performance of their official function.
- c The establishment will not compromise or be perceived to compromise the duties of the AAO while performing official functions.

### **2.2 Other activities**

AAOs may perform other work along with post-mortem inspection as long as the duties associated with the official function take priority over this other work and the post-mortem inspection performance standards are met. The establishment's work instruction related to this additional work must be approved by AQIS within the approved arrangement.

## **3. Post-mortem verification**

### **3.1 Product and procedure**

The verification of post-mortem inspection is conducted by an AQIS veterinarian who may be assisted by a FSMA against post-mortem inspection performance standards. Verification assesses both inspection procedures and inspected product in a defined, random sample of production. These documents define non-compliance and outline action taken where non-compliance is detected.



### 3.2 Carcase-by-carcase assessment

An AQIS Food Safety Meat Assessor (FSMA) will assess every carcase for presence of food safety pathology and obvious contamination with faeces, ingesta or milk. The FSMA will be located after trimming but before final carcase wash. Up to 20 per cent of carcasses may be assessed between the carcase assessment station and the carcase inspection point.

Establishments need to consider how they will deal with carcasses found to have defects. The Work Instruction requires stopping the chain to trim contamination or for the On Plant Vet (OPV) to determine whether the carcase has food safety pathology. An additional retain rail adjacent to the FSMA performing carcase by carcase assessment may be a way of managing these defects.

### 3.3 Carcase assessment stations

The station for 'carcase-by-carcase' assessment must meet the requirements for an inspection station. Although the expectation for carcase assessment doesn't require that the full surface of each carcase is closely observed on fast moving beef chains, a rise and fall platform or multi height platform may be required. This will allow for variations in stock sizes and to concentrate on specific areas of the carcase when process deficiencies have been identified.

Facilities need to be provided for the FSMA which include:

- adequate space to perform the carcase assessment
- Minimum of 600 lux lighting on all surfaces of the carcase that is to be assessed
- A stand that enables the FSMA to see the mid level of the carcase at eye level (as this is not a detailed inspection process, from this stand the FSMA should be able to see the rump on large carcasses as the side is turned and also see the fore quarter)
  - The stand may be used by the MHA personnel of the establishment after negotiation and agreement with the AQIS team on plant.
  - If the Meat Hygiene Assessment (MHA) is to be undertaken while AQIS staff member is on the stand this can only be done when it is safe to do so.
- Hand wash facilities.
- A sterilizer unit to facilitate hygienic trimming of pathology, faeces and ingesta by a establishment trimmer to remove the offending material from the carcase.
- A chain stop button. The FSMA should not be using a knife hence when an issue such as pathology or faeces is identified then it is up to the establishment to have it corrected.
- A clipboard/lectern (the FSMA would be capturing data and would therefore require somewhere to place the data sheets to write on – there may also need to be some hooks for storage of ECA 4 tags etc). The final approval of the facility may require an OH&S assessment. This may be decided by the Area Technical Manager (ATM) after an establishment inspection, or by the FSMA after commencing use of the inspection stand.

## 4. AQIS on plant facilities

### 4.1 Amenities

AQIS requires sufficient amenities to comply with Schedule 3 of the Export Control (Meat and Meat Product) Orders. Further guidance can be found in the [Construction and Equipment Guidelines for Export Meat Establishments](#).



## **5. National data capture**

### **5.1 Audit management system**

A new information management system will be replacing the National Establishment Verification System data base. It will capture all verification information recorded by AQIS on plant and streamline entry of establishment Key Performance Indicator (KPI) data. Further information will be provided when this system is implemented.

### **5.2 Product Hygiene Index and other KPIs**

Processors must continue to submit KPI data to AQIS to allow analysis and reporting of KPI data and calculation of the Product Hygiene Index.

### **5.3 Verification work load**

The various AQIS verification tasks currently being undertaken have been reviewed. Some have been removed whilst others (such as post-mortem verification) have been added. Tasks that have been removed include 'check the checker' for product and processing on the slaughter floor, offal room, boning room, and load-out/in. 'Check the checker' for the various microbiological sampling programs and for carton meat assessment has been retained. The OPV Form 2 audits have been reduced to every second month and in those audits only major approved arrangement items are being audited i.e. animal welfare, structure and equipment, quality systems, product integrity, market access requirements and good hygienic practice.

### **5.4 Plant implementation timetable/checklist**

Please find attached a timetable/checklist (Attachment 1) of issues to be addressed prior to transitioning. It is intended to assist both the establishment and AQIS with planning for this transition. If it has not already been done, the checklist needs to be completed as accurately as possible then returned to AQIS regional staff to allow resourcing issues to be identified and planned for.



## Attachment 1:

# Australian Export Meat Inspection System (AEMIS) Implementation Timetable/Checklist for establishments using AAOs

Establishment Name: .....

Establishment Number: .....

Date of form completion: .....

Item	Mandatory	Proposed Completion Date
Approved arrangement additional clauses	Y	
Approved arrangement additional tasks	Optional	
AAO Application form(s) and associated documents	Y	
Uniforms	Y	
AAO training (Registered Training Organisations)	Y	
AAO information about Deed of Obligations (AQIS)		
PHI data submission: current version	Y	
PHI data submission: carton testing	Y (6 months)	
Amenities (if the occupier wishes to reclaim space)	Optional	
Assessment stand/area	Y	

AAO Qualifications	Mandatory	Proposed Completion Date
Total number of AAOs required for plant		
Number enrolled in certificate 3		
Number of certificate 3		
Number of certificate 3 enrolled in certificate 4		
Number of certificate 4		
Number sought externally		