



Notice to Industry

10/2008-09

Background

AQIS and COMCARE have recently conducted an OH&S safety review of the External Container Inspection Regime (ECIR) inspection procedures around Australia following a number of near OH&S misses involving AQIS inspectors. Recommendations to minimise the safety risk to AQIS inspectors, primarily aimed at preventing trucks moving whilst inspections are in progress, have been issued that will result in changes to traffic management procedures for ECIR inspections.

What are the changes?

There are three primary measures aimed at preventing trucks moving while AQIS inspectors carry out ECIR tasks, or are still in the inspection bay:

1. Drivers are to hand over their delivery order documentation such as Gate Passes, Equipment Interchange Receipt etc. to the ECIR inspector, who will return it at the completion of the inspection. Drivers are advised that they cannot move until delivery documentation is handed back to them; or
2. AQIS controlled boom gates or similar devices are installed at the exit point of the ECIR inspection area which effectively prevent trucks from moving; or
3. Drivers are to engage the truck brakes and turn off the engine during ECIR inspection.

The above three primary measures were recommended as part of the AQIS / COMCARE review and AQIS will be enforcing one of these measures effective immediately.

AQIS appreciates that physical and operational arrangements vary between companies and locations and is prepared to consider any other OH&S measures provided they result in trucks not moving whilst ECIR inspections are in process or inspectors are within the parameters of the inspection bays. Any other suggested methods should, in the first instance, be discussed with the ECIR supervisor in your region.

AQIS is also mindful that industry may assist by increasing the awareness of truck drivers on OH&S requirements by providing them with relevant information on ECIR procedures.

Why have the changes been made?

These recommendations are the result of a recent COMCARE investigation, and minimise the risk of AQIS officers placing themselves in an unsafe situation as trucks exit the ECIR inspection area. AQIS has been in discussions with a number of container terminals and stevedores to discuss OH&S issues.

Further information

For information regarding the implementation of one of these options please contact the ECIR supervisor in your region.