



Australian Government

Australian Quarantine
and Inspection Service

The application for approval of a place for performance of quarantine

Frequently asked questions

Last updated August 2010

What is a Quarantine Approved Premises (QAP)?

A Quarantine Approved Premises (QAP) is a place that AQIS has approved for performing specific activities with specific imported items (goods, materials, equipment, plants, animals etc.) that have the potential to carry pests of quarantine concern. You should be aware that not all QAPs are approved for all purposes. For example, a nursery could be approved to import bulbs to grow for flowers, while a laboratory could be approved to import bacteria for scientific research.

When assessing whether premises can be approved as a QAP, AQIS takes into account the nature of the goods and the quarantine risks posed by them and specifies conditions that the QAP operator must meet to ensure the risks are minimised.

QAPs can be operated by individuals, companies, universities, research organisations and state or federal government agencies.

What class of QAP do I require?

AQIS has established QAP criteria for a range of imported goods subject to quarantine. These criteria are based on the types of goods being imported and the activities being undertaken in relation to these goods.

Please visit www.aqis.gov.au/qap for a full list of QAP classes.

How do I apply and what requirements need to be met?

AQIS approval is subject to the premises satisfying all the requirements set out in the criteria and any other conditions AQIS may set. The approval requirements will depend on the goods you intend to import and what you intend to do with them.

QAP operators will need to meet the QAP Conditions of Approval, undertake applicable training and meet the structural and procedural requirements as detailed in the applicable class criteria.

After the application form is submitted to AQIS, an initial audit is conducted to ensure that the applicable criteria have been met. AQIS then issues an invoice which must be paid before the premises can be approved as a QAP. A certificate will subsequently be posted to the QAP. If all certification requirements are met, AQIS will audit and assess the QAP within 90 days of receipt of application.

Can I become a QAP if I am located in a rural/fringe area?

AQIS places an increased emphasis on the risks associated with Quarantine Approved Premises (QAPs) located outside metropolitan areas. Fringe rural and rural environments are likely to be better suited to the establishment of exotic pests and diseases than metropolitan areas. This is due to a number of factors, including proximity to host plant and animal material or natural environments that are generally less prevalent in built up urban areas.

Additional risks may be associated with the transport of goods that are subject to quarantine to fringe rural and rural areas. Risks may include spillage, unauthorised management of quarantine material and the extended distance from quarantine personnel and facilities.

As a result, AQIS has additional assessment requirements that apply to premises seeking approval as a QAP in fringe rural and rural areas. For more information on the processes applicable to the assessment of applications

for approval of premises located in rural or fringe rural areas please refer to the Fringe Rural/Rural QAP Assessments web page: www.aqis.gov.au/qap/fringerural-rural

Is there training that I have to complete to become a QAP?

Yes, people are required to undertake some form of AQIS approved training prior to the QAP approval.

QAP Accredited Persons training is required for QAPs that:

- (a) Do not have a Compliance Agreement; and
- (b) Belong to one of the following QAP categories:
 - (i) Classes 1-9
 - (ii) Class 95

People who are handling goods of quarantine concern must have completed this training or be directly supervised by someone who has. QAP Accredited Persons training is available at www.iwgq.com.au.

QAP Class 1.1 and 1.3 require face to face training. For more information, please contact your Regional AQIS office.

What documents must be submitted?

In addition to your application, you may also be required to submit the following:

- A copy of your *Certificate of Registration of a Company* which is issued by the Australian Securities & Investment Commission (ASIC);
- A site map of your premises outlining the proposed quarantine area(s);
- Procedures for the handling of quarantine goods;
- Copies of certificates of completion for AQIS training;
- Latest pest control service report;
- Quarantine waste agreement and, where applicable, fumigation service agreement from an AQIS-approved provider; and
- Further documents to be submitted will depend on the class of your premises. Please refer to the relevant class criteria.

What is legal existence or legal entity?

Evidence of legal existence is used to ensure that premises are registered in the name of a legal entity. A legal entity is generally taken to mean an individual person or a group of persons, a registered partnership, or an Australian registered company that can be held legally accountable for the operations of the premises, including debts incurred. A legal entity can sue or be sued in their own name. The 'person' that we deal with and register must be an entity known to and recognised by the law.

What is a senior manager?

A 'senior manager' is someone who is assigned the responsibility of ensuring the effective operation of quarantine functions. He/she is authorised to be the signatory and representative of the company. If a quarantine breach occurs he/she may be liable.

What are the costs involved with being a QAP?

The annual QAP registration fee is applied to the 12 month 1 July – 30 June. For QAP applications made in the first half of the financial year (1 July to 31 December) the full fee will be charged. For new applications made on or after 1 January, a reduced fee is applied (note, the full fee is applied to renewals from the commencement of the next financial year).

In addition, audits are conducted twice a year and are charged at the AQIS fee-for-service out of office rates. The time required to conduct an audit will depend on the nature of the QAP's operations. However, QAP operators should be aware that audits will typically take about an hour.

The AQIS fees applicable to QAP-related activities can be located on the AQIS website at: www.daffa.gov.au/aqis/import/general-info/fees-charges/guidelines-import-clearance

How many times will I be audited?

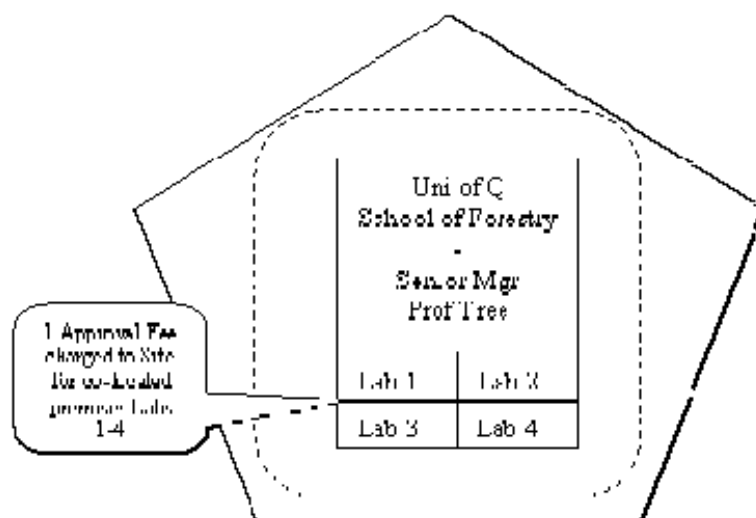
Most classes of QAPs are subject to a minimum of two audits a year. QAPs that fail to comply with AQIS's requirements can expect to receive more audits. Audits may be announced (conducted after an appointment is made) or unannounced (where a AQIS officer turns up unexpectedly).

What are the penalties for non-compliance?

Non-compliance with the approval criteria or any breach of the *Quarantine Act 1908* may result in approval of the premises being withdrawn or suspended and legal action instigated.

What is a co-located QAP?

Co-location is the approval of multiple QAPs under one parent QAP. Co-location can only be applied when all the QAPs are within one physical site are one legal entity (one ABN), and with one senior manager responsible for quarantine issues at all the QAPs concerned. Organisations such as universities may have numerous laboratories (eg over 30) located at one physical site. In the past, each of these individual laboratories, large and small would have incurred an annual approval fee. See below for an example of co-location.



Advantages of co-location

- Potential cost savings to your organisation with only one annual approval fee charged for QAPs which are co-located.
- Easy for AQIS to arrange the bi-annual inspections, as there is a single point of contact for the management of quarantine.

Disadvantages of co-location

- If one co-located premises incurs a non-conformity (due to a breach of AQIS requirements), this will affect all co-located premises, (e.g. if one QAP is suspended, all QAPs that are co-located with the non-conforming QAP are suspended).
- The Senior Manager is responsible for compliance with AQIS requirements across all co-located QAPs.

Note: The Senior Manager will be called to explain any non-compliance with AQIS requirements across all co-located QAPs.

If the Senior Manager or Accredited Contact Person leaves do I have to fill in the entire application?

No. The sections that are required to be filled in are listed at the top of the application form.

If I only want to change phone numbers or email address do I still need to fill out the entire application?

No. These details can be simply changed by sending an email or letter outlining these changes to an approved premises officer in your local AQIS regional office. A list of regional approved premises officers can be found at www.aqis.gov.au/qap.

Is my approval transferable?

This can only occur if the QAP approval is being transferred from one business name to another. QAP approval cannot be transferred from one location to another. If a QAP is moving to a new location it will be necessary to reapply. You will need to supply AQIS with formal notification and ensure a new application form (*Application for Approval of a Place for Performance of Quarantine*) is filled out by the company/individual that approval is being transferred to.

Is there a difference between renewing my QAP approval and my Compliance Agreement (CA)?

Yes. They are two separate arrangements under different sections of the *Quarantine Act 1908*. Some QAPs will also operate under a CA.

How big does the quarantine area have to be?

The quarantine area within any QAP must be commensurate with the proposed quantity of goods being held. That is, a QAP should ensure that the quarantine area is large enough to store the maximum amount of goods likely to be held in quarantine at any time.

What is quarantine waste?

Quarantine waste is considered to be material of quarantine concern that does not form part of the documented consignment (e.g. soil, seeds, plant and animal contamination, residue from wash bay facilities and soil traps, and sweepings from dunnage areas) as well as any spilled goods that are of quarantine concern. Quarantine waste may also be a by-product from the processing of quarantine material.

Quarantine waste can introduce exotic pests and diseases. For this reason, quarantine waste must NEVER be placed into an ordinary rubbish disposal facility.

All waste accumulated in the quarantine waste bin or removed from wash bay facilities, including residue from soil traps, must be:

- Transported by an AQIS-approved waste transporter or under AQIS supervision; and
- Treated/disposed of by an AQIS-approved waste disposal facility in a manner approved by AQIS.

How can I find out more about import conditions?

For all import conditions please refer to the AQIS web page www.aqis.gov.au/icon

Or, contact your local AQIS office on 1800 020 504 (free call from within Australia).

Who can I contact to get additional help?

If you require additional assistance, please contact your local AQIS office on 1800 020 504 (free call from within Australia).

You can also contact the Approved Premises Officer in your state directly. The contact names and numbers are available at www.aqis.gov.au/gap under 'Quarantine Approved Premises regional officer contacts'.