



AFAS News

Australian Fumigation Accreditation Scheme



December 2007

THE AFAS TEAM

It has been an exciting and busy year for the AFAS team during 2007. Highlights included the inaugural AFAS Symposium, the signing of Papua New Guinea (PNG) onto AFAS and the various Joint System Reviews carried out with AFAS partners.

The AFAS team has also said goodbye to some team members this year. Fiona Mavis, Malika Bouhafs, Justin Murray and Ryhll Vallis have moved on to pursue various careers.

As a result, we are happy to introduce Nathan Reid, Isabella Johnston, Cassie McPhee, David Pisk, Vera Villinger and Diane Williams, who will be joining the AFAS team and look forward to working with you.

All of us here in Canberra will be celebrating the Christmas holiday from 25 December 2007 till 2 January 2008, during which time our office will be closed.

We wish you Season's Greetings and a Happy New Year! We look forward to continuing to work with you on AFAS in 2008.

David Cox

Manager – Offshore Development Unit (ODU)
Import Clearance
Cargo Management and Shipping.

Team Member Profile



Name: Isabella Johnston

Qualifications: Master of International Communication; Bachelor of Arts in English language and literature
Previous Occupations: Travel consultant/ project manager /training facilitator/ audio-visual consultant (video editor)
Hobbies: Politics and music
Role in ODU: National contact for failed fumigation co-coordinators/ Manager of offshore treatment providers lists/ Manager of potential failed fumigation incidents.

Quarantine Regulators Seminar 2008: “Toward Implementing Harmonised Arrangements for Ensuring Effective Quarantine Treatments”

The AFAS team is currently organising the inaugural Quarantine Regulators Seminar which will be held in Brisbane, Australia, 4-6 March 2008.

Partly funded by APEC and co-sponsored by Thailand, the Quarantine Regulators Seminar will bring together government quarantine regulators to discuss the effective implementation of quarantine management systems. The meeting will focus on how the AFAS methodology can be adapted to other quarantine treatments to successfully implement new treatment management systems.

The meeting will also seek opportunities to discuss and progress issues and recommendations raised at the 2007 AFAS Symposium in Jakarta, Indonesia, including:

- Moving towards bilateral and multilateral agreements;
- The development of agreements regulating other treatments using AFAS methodology, in particular, heat treatment;
- Support for the International Plant Protection Convention proposal of the adoption of AFAS as an international Standard;



- The development of a central international database for quarantine fumigation records.

Following the two days of seminar talks, a field trip on 6 March 2008 is planned, to offer delegates the opportunity to view AQIS's import clearance practices.

Representatives from APEC economy quarantine agencies will be invited to attend along with quarantine agencies currently involved with AFAS and agencies interested in participation in the future. This government only forum is expected to be followed by a government and industry forum in 2009.

For further information please contact the AFAS team by emailing afas@aqis.gov.au.

**AFAS – Malaysia and Thailand
Joint Systems Reviews 2007**

The second Malaysian AFAS (MAFAS) and Thailand AFAS (TAFAS) Joint Systems Reviews (JSR) were conducted from 3 – 8 September and 1 – 5 October 2007 respectively.

The MAFAS JSR audit team comprised Daryl Crapp (AQIS), Geoff Russell (fumigation specialist) and Malaysian Crop Protection and Plant Quarantine officers. Seven AFAS registered companies located in Palau Penang (Penang), Kuala Lumpur/Nilai (Selangor) and Kuching (Sarawak) were audited.



Geoff Russell observing fumigation as part of the MAFAS JSR.

For the TAFAS JSR, Daryl Crapp, Nathan Reid (AQIS), John Field (fumigation specialist) and Thai Department of Agriculture officers combined to make up the audit team. Nine AFAS registered

companies located in and around Bangkok were audited.



Thailand AFAS Joint Systems Review team.

The audit teams noted an improvement in fumigation practice since the last JSR held in 2006 in both countries. Some technical problems and documentation issues were identified. Appropriate remedial action has been recommended. Overall, the audit teams were very impressed with the enthusiastic attitude of the fumigators and quarantine officials and their commitment to improving practices and addressing problems

The audit report and recommendations for each country have been sent to their respective quarantine agencies for consideration. AQIS wishes to thank the Malaysian and Thai quarantine officials involved and looks forward to working with them in the future.

**Papua New Guinea (PNG) AFAS
Implementation Progressing Well**

A group of Papua New Guinea (PNG) fumigators and National Agricultural Quarantine and Inspection Authority (NAQIA) officers have completed training in methyl bromide fumigation using the new AFAS training package. Competency assessments were undertaken immediately after the training and 31 PNG fumigators and quarantine officers are now AFAS accredited.

Four NAQIA officers were selected to become the AFAS training team for PNG. In October 2007, these four officers attended the new AFAS Train-The-Trainer training, which provides skills in classroom and practical training delivery,



communication, presentation and competency based assessment.



AFAS fumigation trainees and trainers, Lae, Papua New Guinea, July 2007



AFAS Train-The-Trainer Candidates Monica Kapram, Graham Roni and John Susub with AFAS trainer Mark Sheppard, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, October 2007

The AFAS training team looks forward to returning to PNG early next year to deliver audit training to NAQIA officers in preparation for the audits to identify fumigation companies to be registered under AFAS PNG.

Annual International Research Conference on Methyl Bromide Alternatives and Emissions Reductions (29 October – 1 November 2007)

Held in San Diego and attended by 300 delegates from The Americas, Europe, Africa and Australia, the conference viewed and discussed papers on methyl bromide reduction and alternatives. Unfortunately there were no representatives from Asia.

Representatives from research organisations, chemical and equipment companies, farmers and policy makers and regulators considered some important developments in the areas of pre and post harvest fumigation.

Of particular interest to AFAS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Authority (USEPA) is currently reviewing methyl bromide, ethylene oxide, propylene oxide and inorganic sulfites. They will review sulfuryl sulphide and aluminium and magnesium phosphides at a later date.

The USEPA are considering the introduction of buffer zones (safety areas) ranging from 8m to 153m depending on the rate, size of the treated area, the application method and emission control (mitigation) measures (such as recapture).

These measures if adopted, would hasten a move to methyl bromide recapture.

Of the alternatives to Methyl Bromide, the most significant at this stage appear to be:

- *Sulfuryl fluoride* (Profume® used in conjunction with Fumiguide™)
- *Phosphine* (ECO₂fume (98:2 CO₂:PH₃) and VaporPH₃OS (98:2 PH₃: PIC)); and
- *Ozonation*.

AQIS presented a paper on improving the effective use of methyl bromide through AFAS. There was significant interest from various regions in the world and this may lead to further expansion of the AFAS program outside of Asia.

The proceedings are posted on the MBOA web site <http://mbao.org/>.

PowerPoint presentations can be accessed at <http://mbao.org/2007/0006-07ConfProgram.doc> and then follow the links.

During the conference there was also a meeting to discuss assistance for developing countries adopting alternatives.

The next meeting will be held in Florida in 2008. We hope to see you all there.

AFAS Updates

AFAS – Philippines

AQIS is continuing to work with the Philippines on finalising the delivery of Train-The-Trainer training to selected BPI officers and industry representatives. This training is scheduled to take place in the Philippines in February 2008 and AFAS Philippines is anticipated to be fully implemented by 30 September 2008.



AFAS – New Zealand

AQIS officers David Cox and Nathan Reid recently travelled to Wellington, New Zealand, to meet with officials from the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (NZ MAF). The meeting was a great success and AQIS and NZ MAF have given 'in-principle' support for the development of an AFAS arrangement between the two agencies.

Once in place, NZ MAF will progress the delivery of AFAS training in the Pacific islands.

The revised AQIS Methyl Bromide Standard

We would like to thank everyone who provided comments on the revised AQIS methyl bromide fumigation standard. It is anticipated that the revised Standard will be made available on the AFAS website early 2008.

The AQIS heat treatment standard

A draft of the newly developed AQIS heat treatment standard has been sent out to all AQIS AFAS contacts for comment. All comments are required by 30 December 2007.

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For further information contact:

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