

Australian Government Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY

Minimum Documentary Requirements Policy CRANNEL INTERNE

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INTRODUCTION

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to define the minimum requirements which must be met by documents presented to AQIS to support risk assessment of imported cargo, whether for quarantine or imported foods purposes.

2 BACKGROUND

The Import Clearance Program uses a range of measures to assess the quarantine risk posed by imported goods, including the assessment of documentation and certification accompanying imported goods. This documentation comes from a range of government and commercial sources and in some instances is issued by AQIS.

Based on the assessment of documentation and certification, authorised quarantine officers direct imported goods to either be released or ordered into quarantine for subsequent action. The suitability of documents presented for assessment as part of the import process has previously been assessed against the non-commodity policy outlined under the Broker Accreditation Schemes and a number of ICON Alerts relating to specific document types/classes.

This policy consolidates and expands this information to ensure a consistent approach to assessing documentation presented to AQIS.

3 KEY OUTCOMES

The key outcomes of this policy are as follows:

- 1) Clear minimum requirements for determining the acceptability of documents presented for assessment.
- 2) Clear parameters to establish whether documents presented for assessment are linked to a consignment.
- 3) Clear parameters to establish whether documents presented for assessment are linked to each other.

CONSULTATION

4 INITIAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This policy is based on existing requirements for documents presented to AQIS for assessment from ICON, the Broker Accreditation Schemes, the AQIS publication *Cargo Containers: Quarantine Aspects and Procedures* and other internal references.

5 NATIONAL AQIS CONSULTATION

RIMPLIME

This policy has been circulated for comment through the regional entry processing networks at each iteration and has been revised on the basis of comment provided.

6 INDUSTRY CONSULTATION

This policy has been circulated for comment through the Secretariat of the AQIS Industry Cargo Consultative Committee at each iteration and has been revised on the basis of comment provided.

7 FINAL ENDORSEMENT

This policy will be signed off by the National Program Manager – Import Clearance and the National Manager – Cargo Management and Shipping prior to implementation.

POLICY

8 **DEFINITIONS**

Term	Definition
Acceptable treatment provider	AQIS maintains lists of acceptable and unacceptable treatment providers by country on its website at www.aqis.gov.au/treatmentproviders
	Note: Some offshore treatments can only be performed by treatment providers registered under recognised overseas government programs. This is identified in the treatment options listed in the applicable ICON case.
AQIS approved seed testing laboratory	An ISTA-accredited laboratory in a country which AQIS recognises the government's ISTA accreditation process. A list of AQIS approved seed testing laboratories is available on the AQIS website.
Australian Fumigation Accreditation Scheme (AFAS)	A scheme based on intergovernmental arrangements under which AQIS recognises treatment providers registered by the overseas government as being acceptable treatment providers.
Chop Stamp	A seal or stamp used in lieu of a signature to prove identity on documents or contracts.
Commercial consignments	A consignment that is imported by or for commercial entities.
	For quarantine purposes, commercial consignments are not determined on the basis of value or size and small consignments or samples for commercial purposes are therefore considered commercial imports.
	For imported foods purposes, commercial consignments are determined on the basis of section 7 of the <i>Imported Food Control Act 1992</i> .
Company address	Physical address or postal address unless specifically stated otherwise.
Company name	Registered business name and/or trading name.
Company Seal or Stamp	A seal or stamp used to indicate a document has been issued or endorsed by a company/entity.
Customs Entry Threshold	Where goods have a Customs value equal to or greater than the entry threshold as defined in Section 68 of the <i>Customs Act 1901</i> .
Electronic Signature	A digital/electronic representation of a person's signature used in lieu of a handwritten signature to prove identity on documents or contracts.
ICON	AQIS's import conditions database - www.aqis.gov.au/icon
Import conditions	Import conditions are the requirements which must be satisfied for both
-	quarantine (as outlined in the Import Conditions Database (ICON) or on an individual Import Permit) and for imported foods (as outlined under the Imported Food Control Act 1992 and its subordinate logiclation)
ISPM 15	Imported Food Control Act 1992 and its subordinate legislation). International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures No. 15 – Guidelines for Regulating Wood Packaging Material in International Trade
ISTA	International Seed Testing Authority
Marks and Numbers	Batch numbers, serial numbers or other codes (may include company names and addresses) present on the goods or packaging of goods which enable them to be identified.

Non-commercial consignments	A consignment that is imported for the private use (i.e. not commercial or retail purposes) of the importer.
	For imported foods purposes, consignments for private use are determined on the basis of section 7 of the <i>Imported Food Control Act 1992</i> .
	Note: Import conditions for some goods stipulate maximum quantities which may be imported for personal use.

9 OVERARCHING REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO ALL DOCUMENTS

The following general requirements must be met for all documentation presented to AQIS as part of the import process.

COMPLETE

All prescribed information required to be on a document must be present and complete. A list of critical information for each class of document is provided at section 12 of this policy.

LEGIBLE

All prescribed information required to be on a document must be legible.

VALID

Many documents, such as AQIS import permits, are subject to a validity period. Presented documents must comply with the validity requirements specified for that class of document.

IN ENGLISH

All prescribed information required to be on a document must be in English. The only exception to this rule is that company letterheads need not be translated into English but must be in English characters.

Where a document cannot be provided in English, an affidavit from that country's consulate in Australia, from the Australian Embassy in the country of origin or from a translator accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd (NAATI) may be accepted.

FREE FROM ERASURES AND NON CERTIFIED ALTERATIONS

All prescribed information on a document must be free from erasures and alterations unless endorsed by the issuer of the document. The only acceptable endorsement is a company/government stamp or seal and the signature of a company employee applied adjacent to the alteration.

MULTIPLE PAGED DOCUMENTS

Where a document is required to have an individual reference number (e.g. government certificate number) and is greater than one page in length, the reference number must appear on each page of the document. Similarly, where a multiple paged document requires AQIS endorsement, it must be stamped with an AQIS stamp/seal, signed and dated by an AQIS officer on each page.

SIGNATURE

All documents must be signed by a representative of the body issuing the document. Where a document is required to be signed by a designated representative (eg. Government Veterinary Officer), their name, position and title must also be stated. Acceptable substitutes for a standard signature are an electronic signature, stamped signature or chop stamp.

Additionally, all prescribed information on a document must appear above the signature.

DATE OF ISSUE

All documents must identify the date of issue.

LINKED TO THE IMPORTED CONSIGNMENT BY A UNIQUE IDENTIFIABLE LINK

All documents presented to AQIS for assessment must have a unique identifiable link to the consignment. A "unique identifiable link to the consignment" means having a form of consignment identification on an acceptable document or having a numerical link to another document with a form of consignment identification on it. Such consignment identifications include but are not limited to: container numbers, bill numbers, commercial invoice numbers, preferential tariff certificate numbers, health certificate numbers, packing list numbers or letter of credit numbers.

Where a document does not contain one of the above forms of consignment identification, linkage to the consignment can be established through documentation used in the normal course of business. Linking details should include a combination of the following: internal reference numbers such as order numbers, marks and numbers, goods description, number of packages, importer/exporter details and the production dates of the documentation.

10 DOCUMENT FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FORMATS

Where applicable, documentation presented must be in accordance with internationally accepted practice and standards. Such documents typically include commercial and transport documents used in international trade and official government certification issued in relation to animal or plant health. These classes of document include, but are not limited to:

- Bills of Lading
- Air Waybills
- Commercial Invoices
- Preferential Tariff Certificates
- Phytosanitary Certificates
- Animal Health/Veterinary Certificates
- International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) Seed Analysis Certification

LETTERHEAD/COMPANY STAMP OR SEAL

Those documents required by AQIS which are not covered by international standards must be provided on the issuing company's letterhead. The only acceptable substitute for a letterhead is the issuing company's stamp or seal. The letterhead, company stamp or seal must include the company's name and address. Documents to be presented in line with this requirement include:

- Packing Declarations (including Annual Packing Declarations)
- Container Cleanliness Declarations
- Packing List/Sheet/Slips
- Treatment Certificates
- Manufacturers' Declarations
- Exporter Declarations
- Vessel Cleanliness Certificates
- Vessel Cleanliness Inspection Report

Note: Packing List/Sheet/Slips do not need to be on letterhead but must identify the company that issued them.

AQIS ENDORSED DOCUMENTS

In addition to other requirements, those documents requiring endorsement by AQIS must be stamped with an AQIS seal/stamp, signed and dated by a Quarantine Officer. Such documents include:

Rural Tailgate Exemptions

- Annual Packing Declarations
- Declaration/Notice of Intent to Export

AQIS ISSUED DOCUMENTS

AQIS issues a number of documents to facilitate clearance of imported goods. Such documents include:

- Low Risk Wooden Article Status Approvals
- Import Permits
- Clearance Letters

These documents must be on AQIS letterhead and endorsed with an AQIS seal/stamp, signed and dated by a Quarantine Officer.

Note: Import permits are not required to be presented for documentary assessment as the permit number is sufficient for AQIS to undertake the documentary assessment process.

11 ORIGINAL COPIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)

AQIS does not routinely require original documentation to be presented other than phytosanitary and veterinary certificates for specific commodities.

Original documents must be presented when this is required under the import conditions.

Note: AQIS reserves the right to request original documentation to be presented as required.

Where presentation of an original document is required but cannot be presented in the AQIS regional office processing an entry, the original document is to be presented to the local AQIS regional office to be endorsed with an AQIS seal/stamp and signed and dated by a Quarantine Officer. An electronically submitted copy of the endorsed document will then be accepted.

12 PRESCRIBED INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

AQIS relies on consignment specific documentation to support quarantine risk assessments for imported cargo. Commodity specific information requirements and supporting documentation are outlined in the AQIS Import Conditions Database (ICON) and individual Import Permits. Non-commodity information requirements are outlined in the Non-Commodity Information Requirements Policy.

Each class of document has specified minimum requirements which must be met for the document to be accepted by AQIS. The prescribed requirements for each document are outlined below:

TRANSPORT DOCUMENTATION

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A BILL OF LADING

A Bill of Lading should contain the following in line with standard international trade requirements as specified by the International Chamber of Shipping:

- Individual Bill of Lading Number
- Shipping Line's details
- Consignor details (including name and address)
- Consignee details (may be "To Order")
- Vessel and Voyage Details
- Load Port, Discharge Port and Final Destination Port
- Weight, volume and description of the goods

Additionally, a Bill of Lading may include:

- Container number (if goods are containerised)
- Commercial Reference numbers, such as invoice or order numbers
- Shipped on Board date
- > Marks and numbers to identify goods, such as serial numbers or batch numbers

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR AN AIR WAYBILL

An Air Waybill should contain the following in line with standard international trade requirements as specified by the International Air Transport Association (IATA):

- Individual Air Waybill Number
- > Consignor details (including name and address)
- Consignee details (may be "To Order")
- Flight carrier and flight number
- Load Port, Discharge Port and Final Destination Port
- Country of Origin
- Weight, volume and description of the goods

Additionally, an Air Waybill may include:

- Commercial Reference numbers, such as invoice or order numbers
- Marks and numbers to identify goods, such as serial numbers or batch numbers

COMMERCIAL DOCUMENTATION

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A COMMERCIAL INVOICE

A commercial invoice should contain the following in line with standard international trade requirements and practice:

- Supplier and Purchaser details (including name and physical address)
- > Commercial reference numbers, such as invoice or order numbers
- Quantity and description of the goods

Note: Commercial invoices do not require a signature unless additional declarations have been made on them.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A PACKING LIST/SHEET/SLIP

A Packing List should contain the following information:

- Supplier and Purchaser details
- > Commercial reference numbers, such as invoice or order numbers
- Description and quantity of the goods

GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTATION

Further to the overarching international requirements for government to government certification, AQIS has the following additional requirements:

- The certificate must have been issued and dated within the last 6 months unless otherwise specified;
- > Be sealed with the stamp/seal of the issuing National Competent Authority; and
- > Contain the correct statement/s as required by the import conditions.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR VETERINARY/GOVERNMENT CERTIFICATION

International requirements for Veterinary/Government Certification are outlined on the website of the World Organisation for Animal Health (<u>OIE</u>), according to species of origin:

For Veterinary Certificates for terrestrial animals and their products, refer to the OIE Terrestrial Code Certification Procedures. For Veterinary Certificates for aquatic animals and their products, refer to the OIE Aquatic Code Certification Procedures.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATE

International requirements for Phytosanitary Certification are outlined on the website of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) in the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) No. 12: Guidelines for Phytosanitary Certificates.

AQIS ISSUED DOCUMENTATION

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A RURAL TAILGATE EXEMPTION

A Rural Tailgate Exemption must contain:

- > The business name of the occupier of the premises to which the exemption applies; and
- > The physical address of the premises.

Validity Requirement: May only be used for goods which are to be transported to the premises to which it applies.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR AN IMPORT PERMIT

An Import Permit must contain:

- A description of the goods being imported;
- The importer and their address;
- Exporter Details
- > An electronic signature from a delegate of the Director of Quarantine;
- Import conditions relevant to the commodity; and
- An expiry date.

Validity Requirement: May only be used by (or on behalf of) the person or entity named as the importer and must be valid at the time the cargo is landed.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A CLEARANCE LETTER

A Clearance Letter must contain:

- The name of the manufacturer of the goods;
- A description of the products made by that manufacturer to which the clearance letter applies;
- Import conditions or clearance advice relevant to the commodity; and
- An expiry date.

Validity Requirement: Must be valid at the time it is presented for assessment.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A LOW RISK WOODEN ARTICLE (LRWA) STATUS APPROVAL

A Low Risk Wooden Article Approval Letter must contain:

- A description of the goods given approval;
- A description of the treatment the goods must be subject to during manufacture;
- > The name and address of the manufacturer of the goods; and
- An expiry date.

Validity Requirement: Must be valid at the time it is presented for assessment.

AQIS ENDORSED DOCUMENTATION

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A DECLARATION/NOTICE OF INTENT TO EXPORT

A Declaration/Notice of Intent to Export must contain:

- > The assigned AQIS pre-clearance number;
- Participant/Exporter/Packing House that requested pre-clearance;
- Inspection Location;
- Pallet card numbers and packing house;
- > Any declaration required by the import conditions; and
- > Statement indicating pass/fail of pre-clearance inspection.

NON-COMMODITY DOCUMENTATION

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR ALL NON-COMMODITY DOCUMENTATION

Required statements for non-commodity concerns are identified by cargo type in the Non-Commodity Information Requirements Policy. Non-Commodity documents on which these statements may appear are:

- > Packing Declarations (annual or consignment specific); and
- Container Cleanliness Declarations.

Note: Cleanliness declarations may be made on the packing declaration.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR ANNUAL PACKING DECLARATIONS

Annual Packing Declarations must:

- > Contain all statements required by the Non-Commodity Information Requirements Policy;
- > Be issued by the packer or supplier of the goods; and
- > Be stamped with an AQIS seal/stamp, signed and dated by a Quarantine Officer.

Note: Annual packing declarations may have a block/chop/signature stamp in place of a signature.

Validity Requirement: Annual packing declarations are valid for one year from the date of issue (i.e. not the date of endorsement) and must be valid at the time they are presented for assessment.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR CONSIGNMENT SPECIFIC PACKING DECLARATIONS

Packing Declarations must:

- Contain all statements required by the Non-Commodity Information Requirements Policy; and
- > Be issued by the packer or supplier of the goods.

Note: Consignment specific packing declarations may have:

- > a block/chop/signature stamp in place of a signature; and
- vessel and voyage numbers in lieu of the date of issue.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR CONTAINER CLEANLINESS DECLARATIONS

Container Cleanliness Declarations must:

- Contain all statements required by the Non-Commodity Information Requirements Policy; and
- Be issued by the packer or supplier of the goods.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A VESSEL CLEANLINESS INSPECTION REPORT

A Vessel Inspection Cleanliness Report must contain:

- A completed Hold Cleanliness Checklist (as found in the Imported Bulk Cargo Fertiliser Protocols – Attachment 5)
- Vessel Name and Call Sign;
- Inspection Time and Date
- A statement as follows:

- "We hereby certify that we have carried out the pre-load Vessel Cleanliness Survey Inspection as per the Hold Cleanliness Checklist and Guidelines and to the specifications of the Charterer"; and
- Be issued only by a qualified marine surveyor.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A VESSEL CLEANLINESS CERTIFICATE

A Vessel Inspection Cleanliness Certificate must contain:

- Vessel Name and Call Sign;
- Inspection Time and Date
- A statement indicating that "all vessel holds were inspected and found clean and dry with no previous cargo residues and suitable to load the intended cargo"; and
- Be issued only by a qualified marine surveyor.

OTHER DOCUMENTATION

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A MANUFACTURER'S OR EXPORTER'S DECLARATION

Manufacturer's declarations will only be accepted from the company that manufactured the goods and may be issued by the individual manufacturing site or head office within the country of export. Declarations made by suppliers, wholesalers or other parties will not be accepted.

Exporter's declarations will only be accepted from the company that exported the goods.

A manufacturer's or exporter's declaration must:

- Unless otherwise specified have been issued within the last 6 months;
- > Contain the correct statement/s as required by the import conditions; and
- Be specific to the product and consignment.

Note: Declarations accompanying non-commercial/personal consignments do not need to be specific to the consignment.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A GOVERNMENT ENDORSED DECLARATION

Where a declaration is required to be endorsed by the government of the exporting country, in addition to the above requirements the declaration must also:

- Be signed and dated by a Government Officer within the last 6 months (unless otherwise specified;
- > Include the Government Officer's name and title; and
- > Be sealed with the stamp/seal of the applicable Government Department.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR TREATMENT CERTIFICATES

Certificates attesting to the performance of offshore quarantine treatments require both the following overarching information and additional information for the relevant class of treatment as follows.

Import conditions for some commodities (predominantly timber products) also require specific information to be provided on a treatment certificate for it to be accepted.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL TREATMENT CERTIFICATES

- > Treatment Provider's letterhead including name and physical address;
- Description of goods/packaging treated;
- Quantity/volume of goods treated; and
- Date treatment was performed; and
- Any statement as required by the import conditions.

Where AQIS has arrangements with overseas governments (such as the Australian Fumigation Accreditation Scheme), treatment certificates must include:

- > the government scheme under which the treatment provider has been registered; and
- > the treatment provider's registration number.

Validity Requirements: All treatments must be performed by an acceptable treatment provider within the mandated timeframe prior to export as outlined in the applicable import conditions.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS BY TREATMENT TYPE

Fumigations

- Name of fumigant;
- Dosage expressed as mass per volume eg. grams per cubic metre;
- Minimum temperature and pressure (if applicable);
- Duration; and
- For Methyl Bromide Only:
 - Plastic Wrap Declaration "This consignment has been fumigated prior to application of plastic wrapping or plastic wrapping used in the consignment conforms to the AQIS wrapping and perforation standard as found in the AQIS Methyl Bromide Fumigation Standard"

Permanent Preservative Treatments

- Statement attesting to compliance with Hazard Level 2 or greater of Australian Standard 1604; and
- > Chemical composition of preservative used;

OR

- Name of preservative treatment;
- > Chemical composition of preservative; and
- Loading of preservative expressed as:
 - o % mass/mass based on oven dried mass of treated wood; or
 - o mass per volume (net dry salt retention).
- Plywoods and Veneers Only:
 - Veneer thickness

Gamma Irradiation

Dosage in kGray or Mrad

Heat Treatments

- Statement to reflect temperature was measured at the core of the product;
- Temperature in °Celsius or °Fahrenheit; and
- Statement that the required temperature was maintained for no less than the minimum duration.

Kiln Drying

- Statement to reflect temperature was measured at the core of the product;
- > Temperature in °Celsius or °Fahrenheit;
- Statement that the required temperature was maintained for no less than the minimum duration; and
- Timber Thickness.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A SEED ANALYSIS CERTIFICATE

In line with ISTA requirements, Seed Analysis Certificates must contain the following information:

- \succ Weight of the bulk sample;
- Weight of the working sample examined;

- Endorsement that the sample was drawn in accordance with ISTA rules from an identified seed lot by a person licensed by the seed laboratory to obtain seed samples for submission to the seed laboratory;
- The botanical name of each identified species of seed found in the sample (any unidentified genera or species are to be recorded as such); and
- > The percentage of any soil particles or ergot found in the sample.

Validity Requirement: Seed analysis certificates will only be accepted if issued by an AQIS approved seed testing laboratory.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A PREFERENTIAL TARIFF CERTIFICATE/CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN

Preferential Tariff Certificates/Certificates of Origin should contain the following information:

- Exporter details;
- Consignee details; and
- Description of the goods.

PRESCRIBED INFORMATION FOR A LETTER OF CREDIT

Letters of Credit should contain the following information:

- Issuing bank details;
- Buyer details;
- Seller details;
- > Value of the credit; and
- Description of the goods.

13 REPORTING

PREVIOUSLY ACCEPTED DOCUMENTS

Where the application of this policy would prevent a previously acceptable document from being accepted, the AQIS Officer is to consult their supervisor prior to contacting the Entry Management Unit for clarification.

14 MONITORING

NEW DOCUMENT CLASS

When a new document class or type is created, it is to be reviewed against and incorporated into this policy by Import Clearance – Canberra to ensure the requirements of the policy can continue to be met.

PERIODIC REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed by Import Clearance – Canberra on a two yearly basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

15 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

NON COMMODITY INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicable statements for non commodity concerns must be as per the 'Non-Commodity Information Requirements Policy'.

CO-REGULATION IMPORT SCHEMES

This policy document should be read in conjunction with the following Co-regulation Schemes:

Broker Accreditation Schemes for Non-Commodity concerns

- > Automatic Entry Processing (AEP) for Commodities Scheme
- Empty Container Scheme

IMPORT CONDITION REQUIRED STATEMENTS/INFORMATION

AQIS import conditions may require specific statements to appear on documentation associated with imported cargo. Refer to the relevant import conditions case in the AQIS Import Conditions database (ICON) or the applicable import permit for further information.

VERSION HISTORY

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0.1-1.1	Document development and	Entry Management Project Team	Aug 07 –
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