



# Minimum documentary and import declaration requirements policy

The revised policy (v4.0) comes into effect 2 August 2021

All documents presented to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (the department) when lodging an import declaration, must meet the minimum documentary and import declaration requirements.



## What is the policy?

The Minimum documentary and import declaration requirements policy sets the requirements for documents submitted to the department for assessment of the biosecurity risk of goods imported into Australia.

## When does the revised policy (v4.0) come into effect?

The Minimum documentary and import declaration requirements policy (v4.0) comes into effect on 2 August 2021.

## Which policy do I follow?

Documentation issued for goods exported to Australia on or after 2 August 2021 must follow policy v4.0.

The department acknowledges that documentation issued for goods exported to Australia prior to 2 August 2021 may not meet the revised requirements when arriving after that date. To assist with managing biosecurity risk and movement of cargo, the existing policy will remain in effect for goods exported prior to 2 August 2021 until 31 October 2021.

## Will you still accept packing declarations with your old departmental name?

Documents with an outdated departmental name are still acceptable, provided they meet the overarching requirements listed in the policy. Current departmental name on documentation is not a requirement under the policy.

## Have you updated the templates on your website?

The templates on our webpage have been updated and are designed to meet the old version of the policy, as well as v4.0.

## Do we have to use your templates?

The templates we provide continue to be optional for use, they are designed as a guide on how to meet the policy.

They are not required for use by industry, so long as industry meet the requirements under the policy in effect at that time.

## Will my annual packing declaration still be valid?

Annual packing declarations issued prior to 2 August 2021 will be valid until their expiration 12 months from issue date.

Annual packing declarations issued after 2 August 2021 must meet the requirements of v4.0.

## Have there been changes to the definition of an address?

We have updated the definition of a company address which now specifies a physical address unless stated otherwise. This change was made to clarify and align the policy with requirements for treatment certificates.

[A detailed timeline on these changes is available on Page 3.](#)

## Is it mandatory for an invoice to be signed?

Invoices (including commercial invoices) are not required to be endorsed under the policy. However, where it is a requirement under the IFIS, an import condition on an import permit, or a BICON case states that a certain requirement can be produced, provided or stated on a commercial invoice, then the invoice must meet the overarching documentary and letterhead requirements of the policy (including endorsement). This includes, but is not limited to; mosquito declarations, new and unused field-testing declarations, and lot codes.

## What happens to my goods if documents don't meet the new requirements?

All goods arriving into Australia are subject to biosecurity control until the goods are released from biosecurity control. If any documents presented to the department for the purpose of meeting import conditions don't meet the minimum requirements outlined in the policy, then the biosecurity risk of the goods will be assessed and if necessary, managed to ensure any biosecurity risk is minimised. This means that you may experience delays or increased fees associated with the clearance of your goods. In certain circumstances your goods may not be permitted entry into Australia.



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## Who can issue a packing declaration?

Packing declarations must be issued by the exporter, supplier or packer who packed the goods into the container. We have updated our definition of a 'packer' to an entity who packs the goods into a container or observes the packing, which can include the supplier or exporter of the goods.

## When can I use vessel and voyage number on a packing declaration?

Vessel and voyage number can be used on a packing declaration if the date of issue is not present on the document.

Vessel and voyage can also be used as a numerical link in conjunction with an acceptable consignment-specific link on other documents. If vessel and voyage is the only consignment link on a packing declaration, another document for the consignment must include the vessel and voyage number and an acceptable consignment-specific link (see section 1.9 for more information).

While this wording has slightly changed as a result of this review, the intent of this section in the policy has not changed.



Refer to the [policy \(v4.0\)](#) and the [table of changes for further information on the changes to the policy](#):

[awe.gov.au/documentary-requirements](https://awe.gov.au/documentary-requirements)

## Do packing declarations need to list a 'company title' or 'employee title'?

The policy includes the requirement for the company title of the employee endorsing certain document types to appear on the document. This is not a requirement for packing declarations.

## What document types can be used for a lot code list and what are the requirements for them?

There are two ways to present lot code lists in your documentation.

A 'Lot Code List' is an international trade document which can be presented as a standalone document, requiring endorsement under section 1.7 of the policy. This endorsement must be by a company employee but does not need to specify the company title or position.

Alternatively, a lot code list can be provided on another type of commodity related document, such as an invoice, under section 4.6 of the policy and must meet that document's requirements. If a lot code list is presented on a manufacturer's declaration, then the document must be endorsed by a company employee, including their name and company title.

## What are the changes to fumigation certificates?

Treatment providers were previously only required to make a statement relating to plastic wrapping of the goods.

The revised policy, v4.0, enables a single statement to be used on all methyl bromide and sulfuryl fluoride certificates, regardless of the treatment provider.

Fumigation certificates must include any relevant statements as per the methodology as listed in the policy.

For more information, see the [Industry Advice Notice \(152-2021\)](#) which outlines these changes.

## Will fumigation certificates issued before 2 August 2021 still be accepted for goods that arrive in Australia after 2 August?

Where import conditions allow goods to be stored for up to 6 months following treatment, fumigation certificates issued before 2 August 2021 will continue to be accepted provided they meet the requirements under v3.0 of the policy.

Goods, for example wooden furniture, which are treated and issued with a certificate before 2 August under v3.0 of the policy and have a storage declaration attesting to the prevention of reinfestation, will also continue to be accepted for 6 months from the date of treatment if they arrive in Australia after 2 August.



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