



Minimum documentary and import declaration requirements policy – Review outcomes

Foreword

In April 2019, the department commenced a review of the Minimum documentary and import declaration requirements policy involving internal and external stakeholder engagement. The feedback provided by our stakeholders has led to changes within the policy. To assist stakeholders with identifying and understanding key changes, the department has provided the following information for ease of reference.

Key Changes

Definitions

The following table outlines key changes to the Definition Section of the policy. Those changes include new definitions, removal of outdated definitions, and clarification of existing definitions.

Reference No.	Definition	Change	Reason for Change
1	Approved Arrangement	New definition: Is an arrangement between the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and another entity (known as a biosecurity industry participant) to permit the other entity to carry out specified biosecurity activities to manage biosecurity risks associated with specified goods, premises, or other things.	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy.
2	AQIS Commodity Code (ACC)	New definition: This code is utilised by the department to refine tariff classifications of goods subject to biosecurity control. Use of the code facilitates the clearance of the goods.	To define the intent and use of the ACC.
3	AQIS Entity Identifier (AEI)	Updated definition: The AEI is the treatment provider number for certain offshore treatment providers.	Updated to confirm that not all treatment providers have an AEI. Offshore treatment providers conducting Ethylene Oxide treatments are required to enter an AIN into the AIN field.



Reference No.	Definition	Change	Reason for Change
4	AQIS Identification Number (AIN)	Update definition: The AIN is the treatment provider number for companies approved by the department who are registered for the Ethylene Oxide Offshore Treatment Providers Scheme.	Departmental approved offshore treatment providers performing irradiation treatment are now required to enter an AEI.
5	AQIS Producer code field	Updated definition: The field in the Integrated Cargo System where details of the producer of an imported food are lodged in an import declaration. For imported food that requires a Food Safety Management Certificate (FSMC), the details of the producer shown on the FSMC must match the details recorded in the ICS producer fields.	To emphasise the importance of information in the field must match producer information shown on the FSMC.
6	Authorised Officer	New definition: Is either the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment; or a person who has been appointed by the Secretary under subsections 40(1) or 40(2) of the Imported Food Control Act 1992 .	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy.
7	Biosecurity Industry Participant	New definition: Is a person who is the holder of the approval of an approved arrangement.	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy.
8	Biosecurity Officer	Updated definition: Means a person who is authorised under section 545 of the Biosecurity Act 2015 to be a biosecurity officer.	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy.
9	Company address	Updated definition: Includes the physical address of the company unless otherwise stated.	Updated to require the physical address of the company issuing the document.
10	Company title	New definition: Is the title or position of an employee within a company or business	This requirement has been included to clarify who within the company is issuing the document. It may be relied on to confirm with the entity issuing the document that the document was legitimately issued by a person in a capacity within the company.



Reference No.	Definition	Change	Reason for Change
11	Country of Export	Is the country where the goods were exported from. Note: Refer to the definition of “Export” in this section.	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy.
12	eCert	New definition: An eCert is an electronic certificate that is sent directly from one overseas government to another in a digital format via a secure electronic system. eCerts can be issued for government certificates, including phytosanitary and sanitary certificates. An eCert is an original certificate and contains the same information as paper government certificates. eCerts are not an electronic form of a document (e.g. pdf) and cannot be emailed.	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy and define the purpose of eCert.
13	Export	Updated definition: A consignment is considered to be exported either: 1) when it is lodged with the freight forwarder, shipping company/airline, charter operator or an appointed agent in the place of origin, for ultimate destination in Australia, or 2) when it is shipped on board the vessel for an ultimate destination in Australia, or 3) when it is packed in a container and sealed in preparation for transport for an ultimate destination in Australia. Note: Refer to section 9.1 of this policy for details about how to declare the date of export.	To provide consistency across the application of the terminology when individuals are undertaking document assessment.
14	Exporter	A person/entity who initiates the export of goods from one country to a person/entity in an Australian territory. A supplier may also be considered an exporter of goods.	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy.



Reference No.	Definition	Change	Reason for Change
15	Foreign Government Certificate (FGC)	New definition: A FGC is issued by the national competent authority or National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) of a country exporting goods to Australia. The FGC may be issued to meet sanitary or phytosanitary requirements under the Biosecurity Act 2015 or the Imported Food Control Act 1992 .	To provide clarity on the differences between a FGC and a FSMC.
16	Food Safety Management Certificate	New definition: A FSMC is a certificate issued in accordance with the determination made by the Secretary under section 18A of the Imported Food Control Act 1992 . The certificate is required for food identified in the Imported Food Control Order 2019 as requiring a FSMC.	To provide clarity on the differences between a FGC and a FSMC.
17	Full declaration format SAC (SCL)	A type of import declaration that is lodged via the Integrated Cargo System for goods not exceeding the customs entry threshold. This type of declaration is also known as a long form self-assessed clearance declaration (SCL).	To provide clarity on the terminology of this type of import declaration.
18	Import Declaration	Updated definition: All goods that are subject to biosecurity control must be referred to the department on an import declaration. An import declaration can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• lodged directly into the ICS• lodged into the ICS by a broker/importer via third party software.	Remove reference to “quarantine” and clarify responsible parties capable of lodging FIDs and SCL type declarations.
19	Import permit	Updated definition: Certain classes of goods have been assessed as posing a biosecurity risk and must not be brought or imported into an Australian territory unless specified conditions are complied with. Some of these goods may only be imported into Australian territory if the department grants an import permit. The department may grant an import permit following application by a permit applicant.	To provide consistent terminology with that contained within the Biosecurity Act 2015 .



Reference No.	Definition	Change	Reason for Change
20	Imported Food Inspection Scheme (IFIS) importer declaration	<p>New definition:</p> <p>An importer declaration that can be lodged by importers and brokers for some types of food imported into Australia and are mandatory for some types of food. IFIS importer declarations enable the department to determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether a particular type of food is permitted for import into Australia • what border verification testing is appropriate for a particular type of food, for example, which <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> test to apply. 	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy.
21	Importer	<p>Updated definition:</p> <p>For the purposes of this policy the importer is the person or company importing the goods. The importer is also the owner of the goods.</p>	To provide consistent language with terminology under the Biosecurity Act 2015 and Imported Food Control Act 1992 .
22	International standards	<p>New definition:</p> <p>Are the standards which have been adopted internationally by Commissions responsible for sanitary and phytosanitary measures.</p>	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy.
23	Landed	Remove definition.	Redundant terminology under the <i>Quarantine Act 1908</i> .
24	Non-commercial consignments	<p>Updated definition:</p> <p>A consignment that is imported for private or personal use (that is, not commercial, retail or sample purposes or specified differently by the relevant provision in the Biosecurity (Conditionally Non-prohibited Goods) Determinations 2016, BICON case or import permit conditions).</p> <p>For the Imported Food Inspection Scheme, consignments for private use are determined based on section 7 of the Imported Food Control Regulations 2019.</p> <p>Import conditions for some goods stipulate maximum quantities that may be imported for personal use.</p>	To provide clarity around when certain goods are considered to be imported for personal use or for private use.



Reference No.	Definition	Change	Reason for Change
25	Offshore treatment provider scheme	New definition: An arrangement established by the department with an overseas government agency (counterpart agency) or directly with commercial treatment providers to register eligible providers to improve individual treatment verification and treatment provider accountability.	The terminology allows the department to capture any new approved offshore treatment provider scheme as each scheme becomes available. The definition will assist with ensuring the policy can account for the introduction and requirements of those schemes.
26	Packer	New definition: A packer is an entity who packs the goods into a container or observes the container being packed for export to an Australian territory. In some instances, the packer may also be the supplier or exporter of the goods.	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy.
27	Phytosanitary certificate	New definition: Is a plant health certificate which is issued in accordance the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures No. 12— Guidelines for phytosanitary certificates.	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy.
28	Place of Origin	New definition: As defined under Section 5 of the Biosecurity Regulation 2016 .	To capture the current terminology under the Biosecurity Act 2015 and the Biosecurity Regulation 2016 .
29	Signature	Updated definition: A method used to identify an individual and to indicate their acknowledgement of the content in the document. A signature includes an electronic signature.	To provide clarity on the terminology throughout the policy.
30	Supplier	New definition: A supplier is the person/company who initiates the sending of goods to a person/company in an Australian territory. An exporter may also be considered to be a supplier of goods.	The terminology of 'supplier' is consistent with the reporting requirements under section 14 of the Biosecurity Regulation 2016 and the terminology/reporting field in the ICS.



Reference No.	Definition	Change	Reason for Change
31	Transshipment	Remove definition.	The terminology is not used within the policy. The purpose of the policy is to focus on import declaration requirements.
32	Unloaded	New definition: Goods that have been unloaded from a vessel/aircraft at a landing place or port in an Australian territory.	To reflect current terminology under the Biosecurity Act 2015 .

Section 1

A number of amendments have been made to the Overarching documentary requirements within the policy. The following are key changes to the policy:

Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
33	1.5	Amend to confirm who can endorse an alteration to a document.	To provide consistency across the application of the terminology when individuals are undertaking document assessment.
34	1.6	Inclusion to require that any attachments to a non-government issued document meet all requirements under Section 1 of the policy inclusive of endorsement.	The requirement provides assurance to any person assessing the information on the attachment that it relates: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to the consignment,• to the document to which it is attached,• to the same entity issuing the document.
35	1.8	Amended to clarify when a vessel and voyage number can be used in lieu of a date being present on a packing declaration.	This section was clarified to assist with alleviating confusion by industry members around when the vessel and voyage details can be used in lieu of a date on the packing declaration.
36	1.9	Amend to include flight number and arrival date.	To be consistent with reliance on



			vessel/voyage reference as a numerical link.
37	1.9	Addition of Imported Food Inspection Scheme importer declarations to documents that are exempt from having consignment specific links.	Numerical link is not required.
38	1.9	Addition of secondary notation: numerical links on phytosanitary certificates.	Provide guidance and clarity on requirements for numerical links on phytosanitary certificates.
39	1.10	Addition of a new section: Outlining requirements when prescribed information on a document conflicts with other prescribed information on the same document.	Documents containing conflicting information must not be accepted.

Section 2

A number of amendments have been made to the Document format requirements within the policy. The following are key changes to the policy:

Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
40	2.1	Addition of a notation: Provisions for BICON to list other document types that may be used to meet import requirements.	To provide for emerging import management requirements specific to a certain class of goods.
41	2.1.1	Exemption of Imported Food Inspection Scheme importer declarations from the requirement to have a company letterhead or bear the company stamp or seal.	The declarations have a prescribed format that can be downloaded from the department's website.

Section 3

An amendment has been made to the Original documents and certifications or certified copies Section within the policy. The following is the change to the policy:

Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
42	3	Where a copy of a document that has been issued by an organisation other than the importer, the provision to permit an importer to provide a statutory declaration attesting to a copy of a document's validity has been removed.	A statutory declaration relating to the validity of a document should be issued by the person issuing the document, not another person.



Section 4

A number of amendments have been made to the Consignment specific documentation requirements within the policy. The following are key changes to the policy:

Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
43	4.2.1	Update the term “may” to “must” in the following sentence: In line with standard international trade requirements and practice, a commercial invoice or receipt of sale from the supplier must contain:	To remove ambiguity around the requirements for invoices to have certain information. The information under this section assists with assessing biosecurity risks associated with goods subject to biosecurity control.
44	4.2.1	Removal of Lot Codes from the invoice and inclusion of an explanatory note outlining when an invoice is required to meet the over arching documentary requirements (Section 1) and letterhead requirements (Section 2.2) of the policy.	The change aligns with the requirements of section 1 and 2.2 of the policy requirements and affords consistency in assessing documents to determine the level of biosecurity risk associated with the goods.
45	4.2.2	Update the term “may” to “must” in the following sentence: “A packing list must contain:”	To remove ambiguity around the requirements for packing lists/sheets/slips to have certain information. The information under this section assists with assessing biosecurity risks associated with goods subject to biosecurity control.
46	4.3	Various text updated.	To ensure consistent terminology is applied within the policy.
47	4.3.1	Confirmation that foreign government certificates issued as an eCert are not required to be endorsed with a stamp or seal of the issuing national competent authority.	To provide clarity on the overarching requirements of eCert certification.



Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
48	4.3.2	Removal of content relating to shading of security features.	If there are any issues regarding the authenticity of a government issued document then the broker, importer, or biosecurity officer should seek to obtain the original certificate to confirm authenticity. There are official channels by which enquiries can be made to confirm authenticity of foreign government issued certificates.
49	4.3.4	Addition of a notation to confirm that an AEI treatment provider number is not required to be recorded on a phytosanitary certificate.	Conform with ISPM 12 standards.
50	4.3.6	Addition of a new section outlining the documentary requirements for certification issued by non-government organisations for the purposes of meeting requirements under the Imported Food Control Act 1992 .	Included to assist in distinguishing between government-to-government certifications (section 4.3.5), and third-party non-government certification requirements.
51	4.4.1	Various text updated	To ensure consistent terminology is applied within the policy and that of the Biosecurity Act 2015 .
52	4.4.2	Addition of a notation to confirm that a clearance letter must contain an internal departmental file reference number.	The presence of the departmental internal file reference number on the clearance letter will assist with documentary assessment and clearance of goods.



Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
53	4.5	Removal of section 4.5 - Documentation endorsed by the department. (Section 4.5 has been replaced by Non-Commodity documentation requirements).	This sub-section related to the information required to be contained on documents issued by the department for pre-clearance inspection activities. This function is no longer provided by the department and therefore redundant.
54	4.5.2	Inclusion that the annual packing declaration must be endorsed by an employee of the entity issuing the annual packing declaration. This includes the name and signature of the individual. (Formerly section 4.6.2).	To ensure consistency of requirements across all non-commodity and commodity declaration types. Assists the department with identifying the person who has issued the annual packing declaration.
55	4.5.5	Inclusion that the packing declaration must be endorsed by an employee of the entity issuing the packing declaration. This includes the name and signature of the individual. (Formerly section 4.6.5).	To ensure consistency of requirements across all non-commodity and commodity declaration types. Assists the department with identifying the person who has issued the packing declaration.
56	4.5.6	Inclusion that the cleanliness declaration must be endorsed by an employee of the entity issuing the cleanliness declaration. This includes the name and signature of the individual. (Formerly section 4.6.6).	To ensure consistency of requirements across all non-commodity and commodity declaration types. Assists the department with identifying the person who has issued the cleanliness declaration.



Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
57	4.5.7	Inclusion that the vessel cleanliness inspection report be endorsed by a qualified marine surveyor. This includes the name and signature of the qualified marine surveyor. (Formerly section 4.6.7).	To ensure consistency of requirements across all non-commodity and commodity declaration types. Assists the department with identifying the person who has issued the vessel cleanliness inspection report.
58	4.5.8	Inclusion that the vessel cleanliness certificate be endorsed by a qualified marine surveyor. This includes the name and signature of the qualified marine surveyor. (Formerly section 4.5.8).	To ensure consistency of requirements across all non-commodity and commodity declaration types. Assists the department with identifying the person who has issued the vessel cleanliness certificate.
59	4.6.1	Amendment to include the requirement that manufacturer's declarations will only be accepted from the company that manufactured/produced the goods and may be issued by the individual manufacturing site or head office within the country of manufacture unless a valid import permit or BICON case states otherwise. Declarations made by wholesalers or other parties may be accepted if the relevant import permit or BICON case permits. (Formerly section 4.7.1).	Updated to remove any doubt about who may issue a manufacturers declaration. Certain import conditions relevant to a particular commodity may state other sources where a manufacturer declaration may be issued from.
60	4.6.1	Amendment to an individual's title within the company who is issuing the document. (Formerly section 4.7.1).	To remove current ambiguity about the purpose and intent of a person's title within the company.



Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
61	4.6.1	<p>Amend the requirement of the timeframe a manufacturer, supplier or exporter declaration will be valid.</p> <p>The timeframe remains at six months however it is valid from the time the document issued to the arrival date of the goods in Australian territory.</p>	<p>This change has been implemented to reflect the terminology within the Biosecurity Act 2015.</p>
62	4.6.6	<p>Amend information requirement for fumigation certificates from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• date the treatment was conducted to:• date the treatment was completed <p>(Formerly Section 4.7.6).</p>	<p>To align with the methyl bromide fumigation methodology.</p>
63	4.6.6	<p>Remove reference to the AFAS methyl bromide standard and replace with references to the Methyl bromide fumigation methodology and the Sulfuryl fluoride fumigation methodology.</p> <p>(Formerly section 4.7.6).</p>	<p>The fumigation methodologies now set out the requirements for how methyl bromide and sulfuryl fluoride fumigations are to be performed offshore.</p>
64	4.6.6	<p>Methyl bromide and sulfuryl fluoride fumigations.</p> <p>Removal of specific statements relating to plastic wrapping and replaced with a requirement for the treatment provider to provide a statement confirming that the target of the fumigation conforms to the plastic wrapping, impervious surface, and timber thickness requirements at the time of fumigation.</p> <p>(Formerly section 4.7.6).</p>	<p>To align with the methyl bromide and sulfuryl fluoride fumigation methodologies.</p>
65	4.6.6	<p>Inclusion of ethylene oxide treatment requirements</p>	<p>To capture the requirements of treatment certificate issued under the department's Ethylene Oxide Offshore Treatment Provider Scheme.</p>



Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
66	4.6.6	Inclusion of insecticide treatments	The offshore treatment provider scheme for insecticide treatment types is a new scheme.
67	4.6.7 and 4.6.8	Refined content relating to seed analysis certificate requirements.	The requirements for seed analysis certificates are outlined in the relevant BICON case and are not required to be replicated in this policy.

Section 5

A number of amendments have been made to the Imported Food Inspection Scheme document requirements within the policy. The following are key changes to the policy:

Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
68	5.1	Remove paragraph relating to the actions the department will take following receipt of the laboratory nomination form.	This paragraph relates to an internal process performed by the department. The content of the paragraph does not relate to assessment of import documentation or lodgement of import declarations.
69	5.2	Addition of: The Lot Code List must have company letterhead exporter/importer and numerical linkages to the consignment.	To remove any ambiguity around defining the lot codes within a consignment and who is confirming the content of the lot code list.
70	5.4	Inclusion of the requirements of Recognised Food Safety Management Certificates.	To acknowledge the requirement for Food Safety Management Certificates.

Section 6

A number of amendments have been made to the overarching import declaration requirements within the policy. The following are key changes to the policy:



Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
71	6.1	Addition of an advisory section regarding provisions of false or misleading information or documents to the Commonwealth.	To make clear to any person that the provision of false or misleading information or documents to the Commonwealth is a serious offence.
72	6.2	Addition of an advisory section regarding provisions of false or misleading information or documents to the Commonwealth.	To make clear to any person that the provision of false or misleading information or documents to the Commonwealth is a serious offence.
73	6.4	Inclusion of a statement to advise that It is a mandatory requirement that lines of declared goods are correctly associated with containers under the AEP approved arrangement.	Added to provide clarity around requirements of the AEP approved arrangement.
74	6.5	Updated information regarding the requirement for and reporting of AEI numbers.	Updated to reflect the current requirements and reporting of AEI reference numbers for treatment providers.
75	6.6	Inclusion of a new section to capture AQIS commodity code (ACC) requirements.	Included to capture requirements and purpose of ACCs.
76	6.7	Update requirements for reporting foreign government certificate numbers when lodging goods under a short format SAC or cargo report SAC (CRS) that are covered by an eCert.	To provide instruction on how to report the eCert number to the department.
77	6.8	Updated requirements for the reporting of vehicle identification numbers (VIN) or other unique vehicle identifiers. (Formerly section 6.7).	The accurate reporting of VIN numbers assists with the assessment and management of biosecurity risk.



Section 8

A number of amendments have been made to the Imported Food Inspection Scheme import declaration requirements within the policy. The following are key changes to the policy:

Reference No.	Sub-section	Change	Reason for Change
78	8.1	Addition of an advisory requirements regarding provisions of false or misleading information or documents to the Commonwealth.	To make clear to any person that the provision of false or misleading information or documents to the Commonwealth is a serious offence.
79	8.2	Updated information regarding the reporting of producer information when lodging a FID and producer information contained on a food safety management certificate.	Included to emphasise the importance of the FID Producer information matching the producer information on the FSMC.