



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Agriculture,  
Water and the Environment**

# Non-commodity information requirements policy

**Cargo and Conveyances Branch**

Biosecurity Operations Division

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Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Postal address GPO Box 858 Canberra ACT 2601

Telephone 1800 900 090

Web [awe.gov.au](http://awe.gov.au)

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Effective from 12 July 2021

# Introduction

## Purpose

This document defines the information requirements that must be met to support assessment of non-commodity concerns associated with imported goods.

## Background

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment assesses the biosecurity risk posed by imported goods from two main perspectives: commodity and non-commodity concerns. Commodity concerns represent the inherent likelihood of those goods introducing an exotic pest or disease to Australia, and non-commodity concerns consider the container origin, packaging, transportation and unpack destination among other factors, in determining the level of biosecurity risk posed. In line with longstanding departmental policy, it is preferred that biosecurity risk be managed before importation wherever possible. The subject of this policy is the required information and supporting documentation or certification to give the department confidence that these measures have been applied.

Although information is not routinely required for assessment for some cargo types, compliance with import requirements for non-commodity concerns remains the responsibility of the person in charge of the goods. For example, all timber packaging and dunnage remains subject to mandatory treatment or inspection requirements irrespective of whether timber packaging statements are routinely required for the applicable cargo type.

As non-commodity concerns relate primarily to origin, packaging, transportation, and unpack destination, the department has standard information requirements that must be met for each non-commodity concern. The department is mindful that differing cargo types (such as air versus sea cargo and containerised versus break bulk) are dealt with in different ways on arrival in Australia. Each cargo type has unique information requirements, this ensures importers provide only information that is essential for assessment.

This document outlines:

- standard non-commodity concerns
- information required for each of the standard non-commodity concerns
- standard non-commodity concerns to be addressed by each cargo type.

This document forms the basis of the department's assessment of non-commodity concerns for imported goods and is the technical reference that informs accredited persons in their assessments of non-commodity concerns under the Class 19.1 Non-Commodity for Containerised Cargo Clearance (NCCC) approved arrangement.

This document refers to AQIS where AQIS remains current in IT systems and departmental approved arrangements.

## Critical outcomes

This policy has 3 critical outcomes:

- provide parameters to support the department in determining the level of non-commodity-based biosecurity risk posed by an imported consignment and the appropriate level of intervention to be applied
- define information requirements to support the department in determining the level of non-commodity-based biosecurity risk posed by an imported consignment
- define the parameters for acceptability of the information presented for non-commodity assessment.

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# Glossary

Term	Definition
AQIS Entity Identifier (AEI)	Treatment provider number for offshore treatment providers.
AQIS Entity Identifier (AEI) field	ICS field used to record the offshore treatment provider number.
AQIS Identification Number (AIN)	Treatment provider number for companies approved by the department who are registered for the Gamma Irradiation Offshore Treatment Providers Scheme and the Ethylene Oxide Offshore Treatment Providers Scheme.
BICON	The department's Biosecurity import conditions system.
Break bulk	Cargo type describing goods that are transported by sea but not in a shipping container or bulk in ship holds. Examples of break bulk cargo include machinery, vehicles and timber.
Bulk (in hold)	Cargo type where goods are transported loose within the holds of ships designed for this purpose, for example grain or fertiliser.
Dangerous goods	Consignments which present a potential work health and safety risk; for example, explosives, gases, flammable liquids, flammable solids, oxidising substances, toxic and infectious substances, radioactive material, corrosives and other hazardous material.
Dunnage	Material used to support or stabilise a consignment during transport which is not attached to, or forming part of, the consignment. Examples of dunnage include used tyres, drums and timber. Refer to <a href="#">BICON</a> for more information.
FCL	Full container load (single supplier – single importer)
FCX	Full container load (multiple suppliers – single importer)
Integrated Cargo System (ICS)	Electronic system used to lodge import declarations with the Department of Home Affairs.
ISO tanks	Steel cylindrical containers mounted in a rigid steel framework used to carry bulk liquids or chemicals. Also known as tank containers, tanktainers, bulk liquid containers (BL) or ISOtainer.
ISPM 15	International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures No. 15— <a href="#">Guidelines for regulating wood packaging material in international trade</a> .
Khapra beetle target risk container	Refer to <a href="#">Urgent actions to protect against khapra beetle (Trogoderma granarium)</a> .
LCL	Less than a container load (multiple suppliers – multiple importers)
Metro, rural, split and grain growing post codes	Post code classifications as stipulated by the department. Refer to <a href="#">Regional postcode delivery classifications</a> .
Person in charge of the goods	In relation to goods, person in charge refers to the owner of the goods or a person (other than a biosecurity officer or biosecurity enforcement officer) who is in possession or control of the goods.
Reconstituted wood products	Wood products that as a result of the manufacturing process no longer contain solid wood. These include particleboard, chipboard, masonite, oriented strand board, medium and high-density fibreboard. See BICON for more information.
Refrigerated container (reefer)	A temperature-controlled container used in intermodal freight transportation of temperature sensitive goods.

Non-commodity information requirements policy

Term	Definition
Refrigerated container (reefer) - hard frozen	Containers of goods which have been continuously maintained at -18°C (0°F) or below for a period of at least seven days.
Ship's stores	Inventory carried on board a vessel/aircraft to meet its daily requirements, such as food, water, cleaning, medical and safety supplies. This may also include goods being transhipped from one vessel to another which are held 'under bond'. See BICON for more information.
Timber packaging	<p>All solid timber, or articles made thereof, used to support, secure or protect a consignment that constitute a part of the consignment (that is, attached to the consignment). Examples of packaging include pallets, crating, packaging blocks, cases, load boards, pallet collars, gluts and skids.</p> <p>Packaging material made entirely from reconstituted wood or plywood/veneer is not required to be declared as timber packaging or dunnage as they are not considered to pose a biosecurity risk.</p>
Unacceptable packaging material	Packaging materials not permitted as stipulated in the BICON Non-commodity case.

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# Policy

## 1 Non-commodity concerns

Table 1 indicates non-commodity concerns related to each cargo type and the documentation required to address the concern.

**Table 1 Non-commodity concerns**

Cargo type	Container concerns	Packaging and dunnage concerns			Destination concerns	Khapra beetle concerns	Ship's hold cleanliness
	Cleanliness statement	Unacceptable packaging material statement	Timber statement	ISPM 15 statement or treatment certificate (if timber declared)	Rural tailgate inspection	Containers packed in a khapra target risk country destined for unpack in a grain growing postcode	Ship cleanliness certificate
Transshipment <sup>ab</sup>	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Unaccompanied personal effects <sup>b</sup>	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Airfreight <sup>b</sup>	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Bulk (in hold) <sup>b</sup>	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Break Bulk <sup>b</sup>	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Bulk liquid containers/ISO tank	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Reefer - hard frozen	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Reefer - not hard frozen	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
FCL/X <sup>c</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>d</sup>	No
LCL	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

<sup>a</sup> does not include ship's stores to be used on cruise vessels. <sup>b</sup> outside the scope of the non-commodity for containerised cargo clearance approved arrangement (NCCC). <sup>c</sup> FCL/X include flat rack, high cube containers and open top/side general-purpose containers. <sup>d</sup> FCL/X include open top/side and general-purpose high cube containers only.

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## 2 Cargo types exempt from standard non-commodity information requirements

### 2.1 Transhipped goods

Goods that are being transhipped, other than ships' stores to be used on cruise vessels, are exempt from all non-commodity information requirements.

Consignments of ships' stores that are to be used on cruise vessels must be reported to the department and are required to meet all non-commodity information requirements for the applicable cargo type.

**Action:** Because transhipments (other than ships' stores) are not routinely reported to the department, no action is taken for these cargoes, unless broker volunteered.

### 2.2 Unaccompanied personal effects consignments

All lodgement types for unaccompanied personal effects are exempt from standard non-commodity information requirements because of commodity-specific clearance processes.

**Action:** Consignments must be identified as unaccompanied personal effects in the Integrated Cargo System (ICS) and must be referred to the department for clearance.

### 2.3 Air freight consignments

Air freight consignments are exempt from standard non-commodity information requirements because surveys have indicated that non-commodity concerns are minimal within this class of goods.

**Action:** Non-commodity concerns for air freight consignments are addressed through ongoing surveillance of air freight facilities and are addressed on a case-by-case basis.

### 2.4 Bulk (in hold) cargo

Bulk (in hold) consignments subject to biosecurity intervention require a ship cleanliness certificate and/or ship surveyor's inspection report attesting to the cleanliness of the hold/s prior to loading.

**Action:** Where bulk (in hold) cargo requires a ship cleanliness certificate and/or ship surveyor's inspection report and if one cannot be presented, the goods may be refused discharge or may be subject to increased intervention including sampling, inspection, treatment or export.

### 2.5 Break bulk consignments

Break bulk consignments are exempt from standard non-commodity information requirements.

**Note:** Non-commodity concerns for break bulk consignments are addressed through ongoing surveillance of port facilities and are addressed on a case-by-case basis.

## 3 Khapra beetle concerns

### 3.1 Packing origin - Unpack destination

All FCL/X containers that are packed in a khapra beetle country and are destined for unpack in a [grain growing post code](#) in Australia, must be treated offshore by an approved method. There are 3 approved khapra beetle treatments for containers: methyl bromide, heat treatment and

insecticide spray. Refer to [Sea container measures to protect against khapra beetle \(\*Trogoderma granarium\*\)](#) for treatment requirements.

Exemptions include:

- iso tanks
- reefers – regardless of temperature or operation status
- flat racks.

### **3.2 Khapra beetle treatment certification**

A treatment certificate that meets the department's treatment requirements as outlined in the Non-commodity cargo clearance [BICON](#) case will be accepted as evidence that the container meets the department's import conditions.

**Action:** Containers classified as high risk must be accompanied by an acceptable offshore treatment certificate. Containers that are not treated will be directed for export from Australian territory.

## **4 Rural destination concerns only**

### **4.1 Unpack destination—rural post code**

All containerised goods destined for unpack in a rural post code are subject to a rural tailgate inspection before delivery. This inspection must occur at an approved arrangement site at the port of discharge. See [Regional postcode delivery classifications](#).

**Note:** Rural tailgate inspections consist of an internal and external inspection at an approved metropolitan location. Except for the following, which require an external inspection only:

- consignments containing dangerous goods
- consignments containing hard frozen goods
- iso tanks.

**Action:** All containerised goods destined for unpack in a rural post code must undergo a rural tailgate inspection before delivery.

### **4.2 Bulk liquid containers (ISO tanks/tank containers)**

The department considers all ISO tanks to be FCL consignments, but they are exempt from packaging statements, cleanliness statements and khapra measures because of their restricted usage, design and construction. Only rural destination concerns are considered for ISO tanks.

ISO tank containers must be identified as such on the bill of lading with a statement to that effect (this may also be represented by the international standard codes as per [ISO 6346](#)).

**Action:** Consignments not covered by an acceptable indication of the container being an ISO tank (tank container) on the bill of lading may be directed for inspection to confirm that the container is an ISO tank.

### **4.3 Reefers – hard frozen**

Refrigerated containers (reefers) carrying goods that are hard frozen only require an external rural tailgate inspection and may be granted an exemption from packaging and cleanliness

statements. For this exemption to be granted, the temperature must have been continuously maintained at  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $0^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) or below for a period of at least seven days.

The hard frozen statement should read: 'The goods packed in the container(s) listed on this document, have been continuously maintained at  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $0^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) or below for a period of at least seven days.

The department will accept this statement on:

- bill of lading/waybill
- packing list or invoice
- beneficiary certificates
- government-to-government certification
- delivery order issued by the relevant shipping company.

In the absence of a hard frozen statement, a biosecurity officer will use the shipped onboard date on the bill of lading as commencement of the seven-day minimum period. Where the shipping period is less than seven days, additional documentation may be presented that indicates that the consignment was hard frozen before the voyage covered by the current bill of lading or port discharge, such as a temperature statement printout from the reefer.

**Action:** External rural tailgate only. Consignments not meeting hard frozen container requirements must meet all non-commodity requirements for the relevant cargo type.

## 5 Non-commodity concern statements (containers)

This section outlines the requirements for each non-commodity statement presented to the department. Refer to [table 1 Non-commodity concerns](#).

### 5.1 Unacceptable packaging material statement

Various cargo types require a statement indicating whether unacceptable packaging material has been used in the packaging of the consignment.

Unacceptable packaging material include bark, chaff, hay, rice hulls, sandbags, soil bags, used empty bags, used egg cartons, used meat cartons, used tyres, compressed non-timber type material/strawboard including agricultural waste.

The statement should read: 'Have unacceptable packaging materials been used as packaging or dunnage in the consignment covered by this document?' Yes/No.

The department will accept this statement on a:

- packing declaration
- packing list
- invoice.

Where the department's [templates](#) are not used, the unacceptable packaging statement must declare that unacceptable packaging material has not been used in the consignment.

**Action:** Where unacceptable packaging concerns have not been declared, no further action is required. In all other instances, consignments will be directed for inspection and/or treatment.

## 5.2 Timber/bamboo packaging/dunnage statement

Various cargo types require a statement indicating whether timber or bamboo packaging or dunnage has been used in the packaging of the consignment as indicated in the table in [table 1 Non-commodity concerns](#).

The statement should read: 'Has timber/bamboo packaging/dunnage been used in consignments covered by this document?' Yes -Timber/ Yes Bamboo/No.

**Note:** Packaging made entirely from reconstituted wood, bamboo laminate or plywood/veneer is not required to be declared as timber packaging or dunnage as they are not considered to pose a biosecurity risk.

The department will accept this statement on a:

- packing declaration
- packing list
- invoice.

**Action:** Where timber/bamboo packaging/dunnage has not been declared, no further action is required.

## 5.3 Timber/bamboo treatment statements

Where timber or bamboo packaging/dunnage has been declared within a consignment, either an ISPM 15 statement, treatment certification or appropriate treatment document are required to accompany the consignment.

### 5.3.1 ISPM 15

The ISPM 15 statement should read: 'All timber packaging/dunnage used in the consignment has been treated and marked in compliance with ISPM 15'.

The department will accept this statement on a:

- phytosanitary certificate
- packing declaration
- packing list
- invoice.

**Note:**

- If timber packaging is declared and an acceptable ISPM15 statement is provided, no further action is required.
- Note: ISPM15 treatments only apply to timber packaging. An ISPM 15 statement is not acceptable for bamboo packaging/dunnage.

### 5.3.2 Timber/bamboo packaging treatment certification

A treatment certificate, phytosanitary or government treatment certificate (not ISPM 15 treated) that meets the department's treatment requirements as outlined in the import conditions for timber/bamboo packaging and dunnage will be accepted as evidence that the packaging meets the department's import conditions.

**Note:** If timber/bamboo packaging is declared and an acceptable treatment certificate is provided, no further action is required.

**Action:** Where no evidence is provided that the packaging/dunnage has been treated, the consignment will be directed for inspection and/or treatment.

### 5.4 Cleanliness statement

Various cargo types require a statement to be made indicating whether the container has been cleaned prior to loading. Cleanliness statements are not required for LCL consignments.

A container cleanliness statement should read: 'The container(s) covered by this document has/have been cleaned and is/are free from material of animal and/or plant origin and soil'.

For annual packing declarations only, the container cleanliness statement should read: 'The container(s) covered by this document will be cleaned and will be free from material of animal and/or plant origin and soil'.

The department will accept this statement on a:

- cleanliness declaration
- packing declaration
- packing list
- invoice.

For FCX consignments where it can be demonstrated that packing has been done by one supplier or by a third-party consolidator, the department will accept a single supplier packing declaration or cleanliness declaration provided the container number is used as a link to the consignment.

**Action:** FCL/X consignments not covered by an acceptable container cleanliness statement will be directed for inspection (except ISO tanks and dangerous or hard frozen goods) to verify the container's cleanliness and compliance with the department's packaging requirements.

## 6 Considerations

### 6.1 Consignments containing dangerous goods

Consignments of containerised dangerous goods are exempt from inspections for packaging and internal container cleanliness concerns. This is due to the work health and safety related risk associated with these types of consignments.

The person in charge of goods, or the broker is responsible for notifying the department of any potential hazards associated with the dangerous goods in the consignment.

## 6.2 External container cleanliness

The cleanliness of the external surfaces of both empty and full shipping containers leaving the wharf, is randomly assessed and managed through wharf-gate inspections. Failed external inspections can be sent for external cleaning at an approved arrangement site, then re-inspected by department officers or by the staff of an approved site.

## 6.3 Previously accepted statements

Where application of this policy would prevent a previously acceptable document from being accepted, the biosecurity officer is to consult their supervisor/manager before contacting the Cargo and conveyances branch for clarification.

## 6.4 Periodic review

The department will review this policy every three years or as required.

The department welcomes feedback at any time and may conduct a review earlier if required to ensure the requirements outlined in this document reflect current business practices.

## 6.5 Consultation

All changes made to this policy are subject to consultation with departmental policy and service delivery staff as well as with key industry stakeholders.

# 7 Related documents/information

## 7.1 Minimum documentary requirements

Each statement must be made on a document that complies with the [Minimum documentary and import declaration requirements policy](#). [Acceptable documentation templates](#) are provided on the department's website.

## 7.2 Broker approved arrangement requirements and conditions policies

This policy document should be read in conjunction with:

- [Requirements and conditions for approved arrangement class 19.1: non-commodity for containerised cargo clearance](#)
- [Requirements and conditions for approved arrangement class 19.2: automatic entry processing for commodities.](#)

## 7.3 BICON

This policy document should be read in conjunction with:

- Non-commodity [BICON](#) case
- khapra beetle sea container measures [BICON](#) case.