

## WW Ocean calls on Federal Government to strengthen biosecurity regulations

### ▪ Potential consequences disastrous if there are no changes

WW Ocean, the ocean transport division of the global Wallenius Wilhelmsen group, has appealed to the Federal Government and New Zealand's Ministry for Primary Industry to introduce new biosecurity regulations to minimise the risk of brown marmorated stink bugs (BMSB) becoming established in Australia and New Zealand and to eliminate delays to imports of cargo that is critical to the countries' economies. BMSB have migrated from East Asia to the US, Canada and Europe where they have caused significant damage to agricultural crops and, without consistent and effective regulation, there is a danger of their spreading to Australia and New Zealand and causing major harm to both countries' agricultural economies.

WW Ocean now appeals to the Federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) and New Zealand's Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) to take action following recent delays to cargo shipped to Australia and New Zealand that have disrupted businesses' supply chains. To prevent BMSB from entering Australia and New Zealand all cargo shipped there must be free of contamination of any kind, particularly live insects, and if from a country classed as high-risk, it must be treated prior to loading. Ensuring compliance is the responsibility of the importer, whilst the presentation of clean cargo at the port of load is the responsibility of the shipper. According to WW Ocean, however, the current regulations are neither consistent nor effective. Specifically;

- While cargo from countries classified as 'high risk' sources of BMSB has to be treated in line with DAWR and MPI requirements prior to loading, cargo from neighbouring countries – some of which are known to be sources of BMSB – are not covered by regulation. The criteria for classifying a country 'high risk' have not been clearly defined by either the DAWR or MPI. The DAWR and MPI have not, as yet, aligned on which countries are 'high risk' or on acceptable treatment methods.
- Implementation of current regulations is inconsistent between different modes of transport. For example, if live or dead BMSB are detected on a RORO (roll-on roll-off) carrier, the entire vessel is subject to scrutiny, often leading to delays of days or weeks, while their detection in a container generally is limited to that single unit. In addition, airfreight cargo does not receive the same amount of scrutiny by the regulatory authorities despite reported instances of infestation.
- The DAWR has recently suggested that carriers refuse untreated cargo from countries that are not classified 'high risk', rather than expanding regulation to these countries. This would create an untenable situation, with carriers required to adopt practices that are out of step with regulation.

The company welcomes the [Freight & Trade Alliance \(FTA\) recent call for an independent investigation](#), and is also encouraging its customers to lobby the DAWR and MPI, either directly or through their industry associations, to:

- Increase alignment of BMSB risk areas, treatment windows and seasons.
- Allow development and use of near/on-shore treatment solutions in Australia and New Zealand. The DAWR and MPI fully control the framework/rules under which cargo is shipped, but they do not take accountability or provide support if those rules are not effective. Hence, as long as shippers/carriers have fully complied with DAWR/MPI rules and there are still insects detected

upon arrival in Australian and New Zealand waters, the authorities should establish options for remedial treatment upon arrival.

- Initiate increased direct engagement between regulators and exporters/importers by analysing their supply chains to make sure BMSB and other pests do not contaminate cargo in the first place, including via the use of 'import questionnaire/screening' starting well upstream (life cycle of the cargo as opposed to three days prior to vessel arrival).
- Introduce consistent regulations and application of regulations across all vessel types and transportation modes.

Simon White, WW Ocean's chief commercial officer, said: 'We are committed to doing all we can to maintain Australia's and New Zealand's biosecurity and have worked diligently with the DAWR and MPI to encourage consistent and effective regulation to control the spread of BMSB. Regrettably, however, the current regulations are neither consistent nor effective; they continue to pose a risk to the agricultural industry, while delaying cargo that is essential to many sectors of the economy. We appeal to both the DAWR and MPI to engage with industry to find a solution that will be effective before the next BMSB season begins in September. If no solution is found, the result could be devastating for the Australian and New Zealand economies.'

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**About Wallenius Wilhelmsen**

The Wallenius Wilhelmsen group (OEX: WWL) is a market leader in RoRo shipping and vehicle logistics, transporting cars, trucks, rolling equipment and breakbulk around the world. The company owns or operates 127 vessels servicing 32 trade routes to six continents, and operates a global inland distribution network, 77 processing centres, and 13 marine terminals.

Wallenius Wilhelmsen Ocean (WW Ocean) is a leading provider of deep-sea ocean transportation for cars, trucks, rolling equipment and breakbulk cargo. Through a fleet of more than 50 modern RoRo vessels, WW Ocean offers a global liner service in 12 trade routes to six continents. Last year, WW Ocean moved 3 million car equivalent units (CEU) of cars, rolling equipment and breakbulk worldwide.