This Animal Biosecurity Policy Memorandum (ABPM) provides stakeholders with a progress report on, and the next steps in, the Import Risk Analysis (IRA) of non-viable prawns and prawn products. The ABPM also provides details on public workshops; those interested in attending are asked to advise Biosecurity Australia by 17 April 2002.

This ABPM provides an update of progress on the IRA of non-viable prawn and prawn products since the release of the draft IRA report in August 2000 (ABPM 2000/41). Seventeen submissions were received on the draft IRA report and a summary of the comments is attached. All submissions have been placed on the Public File maintained by Animal Biosecurity in Canberra.

**Interim conditions**

Interim conditions for the importation into Australia of green (uncooked) prawns were announced in December 2000 (ABPM 2000/057) and February 2001 (ABPM 2001/06). The measures included the introduction of testing of whole green prawns and unpeeled, headless green prawns for White Spot Syndrome Virus (WSSV). Further details of the interim conditions and their implementation were provided in May 2001 (ABPM 2001/11).

**Awareness campaign**

ABPM 2001/06 also outlined Biosecurity Australia’s commitment to facilitating the development of an education (awareness) campaign on the safe use and handling of aquatic animals and their products. This campaign will include contributing to the development of codes of practice for the seafood industry in Australia. In September 2001, representatives from Biosecurity Australia, other groups within the Department, States and Territories, Reefish and the National Anglers Lobby met to discuss the development of the campaign. At this meeting, the objectives of the campaign, the key elements, target groups, key messages and proposed outputs, were discussed and agreed on. A logo and various promotional materials are in development. Benchmarking research is being commissioned in order to establish the current levels of community awareness, their opinions and how they behave.

**National Survey to Verify Australia’s freedom from White Spot Disease**

During 2001, the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD) conducted a survey to establish Australia’s status regarding WSSV disease. (CCEAD comprises of the Commonwealth and State/Territory Chief Veterinary Officers and Directors of Fisheries, as well as representatives from appropriate diagnostic laboratories). The report on this survey has now been finalised. To obtain a copy of the report, or for further information regarding the survey, please contact:
Consultancies

As part of the agreed workplan for the IRA on non-viable prawns and prawn products, Biosecurity Australia has commissioned two consultancies.

Bait and berley use (by recreational fishers) consultancy

Biosecurity Australia has engaged a consultant to design, conduct and report on a national survey of bait and berley use by recreational fishers. This survey includes the use of aquatic animals and their parts that have been supplied as seafood or bait and berley, and were used as bait or berley. This information will also be relevant to a number of aquatic animal IRAs. The output specifications and the draft survey design have been completed, the survey is to commence at the beginning of May and the final report is due for completion by the end of August 2002.

WSSV in native crustaceans consultancy

To assist with both the prawn and freshwater crayfish IRAs, Biosecurity Australia has commissioned research into the susceptibility of several native Australian crayfish to WSSV. The final report from this consultancy is due at the end of June 2002.

Documentation

All ABPMs and reference documents related to this IRA are available on the AFFA website, http://www.affa.gov.au/animalbiosecurity. [Follow the links to ‘current Animal IRAs’ then ‘Prawns and Prawn Products’ or ‘Prawns and Prawn Products Reference Documents’.]

Risk Analysis Panel (RAP) activities

Most recently, the RAP met briefly on Friday, 8 March 2002 to discuss proposed stakeholder workshops: their content, timetable and locations. The next panel meeting is scheduled for 17 May 2002 and it will consider a number of issues, including:

- the bait and berley use survey;
- the awareness campaign;
- the national survey for WSSV;
- the national survey for Yellow Head Disease (YHD);
- a review of State and Territory legislation and licensing arrangements for the bait industry and post-entry controls to prevent the diversion of imported prawns to bait use;
- the effects of disease on wild populations; and
- the revised work plan for the IRA.
After the next RAP meeting, we will issue another ABPM summarising the outcomes.

As a result of staff changes within Biosecurity Australia, Dr David Banks has replaced Dr Sarah Kahn as chair of the panel and Dr Vanessa Findlay has replaced Dr Brett Edgerton as Biosecurity Australia’s member on the panel. The panel is:

Dr David Banks (chair)  Biosecurity Australia
Dr Vanessa Findlay  Biosecurity Australia
Dr Leigh Owens  James Cook University
Dr Richard Callinan  NSW Fisheries
Dr Glenn Hurry  Fisheries and Aquaculture, AFFA

Proposed Public Workshops

The RAP is organising public workshops to give interested parties the opportunity to discuss the IRA and to ensure that all relevant issues have been identified and fully clarified. The workshops will also provide an opportunity for the panel to present stakeholders with an update on recent work relating to the prawn IRA.

The proposed dates and locations for the workshops are:

- Monday, 20 May 2002   Townsville
- Tuesday, 22 May 2002   Tweed Heads
- Wednesday, 23 May 2002   Sydney

The workshops will commence at 10am.

These dates and locations will be finalised according to stakeholder interest. Biosecurity Australia would like to hear from those interested in participating in the workshops. Following the workshops, the RAP will prepare a response to the submissions on the draft IRA report and any further issues raised in the workshops.

Next Steps

Expressions of interest and other inquiries regarding the public workshop should be directed to the contact officer listed below by 17 April 2002 (please include a contact telephone or facsimile number or a contact e-mail address). Comments on any issues raised in this ABPM would also be appreciated by the same date.

Please pass this circular to other interested parties whom you may know of, and who should advise Biosecurity Australia if they wish to be included in future communications on this matter.
If you are not receiving Biosecurity Australia’s policy notes and newsletters and you would like to, you can become a registered stakeholder via the AFFA website. Go to, and follow the links from, Market Access and Biosecurity through to Biosecurity Australia. There is a downloadable stakeholder registration form there. Alternatively, please direct your inquiries to the contact officer listed below.

Confidentiality

Respondents are advised that, subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1982 and the Privacy Act 1988, all submissions received in response to Animal Biosecurity Policy Memoranda will be publicly available and may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports prepared on the subject matter of the Memoranda.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reveal the identity of a respondent unless a request for anonymity accompanies the submission. Where a request for anonymity does not accompany the submission, the respondent will be taken to have consented to the disclosure of his or her identity for the purposes of Information Privacy Principle 11 of the Privacy Act.

The contents of the submission will not be treated as confidential unless they are marked ‘confidential’ and they are capable as being classified as such in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

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