

Conveyance waste recycling requirements

Commercial and cruise vessels

August 2026

Requirements to participate in waste recycling on arrival into Australia

Vessel agents or masters of international cruise and commercial vessels seeking to discharge eligible waste for recycling must submit an initial proposal request via email to conveyance.maritime@aff.gov.au.

The request must include the following information for each participating vessel:

- IMO and name of participating vessel(s).
- Proposed First Point of Entry (FPoE) waste discharge port.
- Proposed subsequent waste discharge ports.
- Name of waste providers under an Approved Arrangement and recycle providers for each port discharge location.

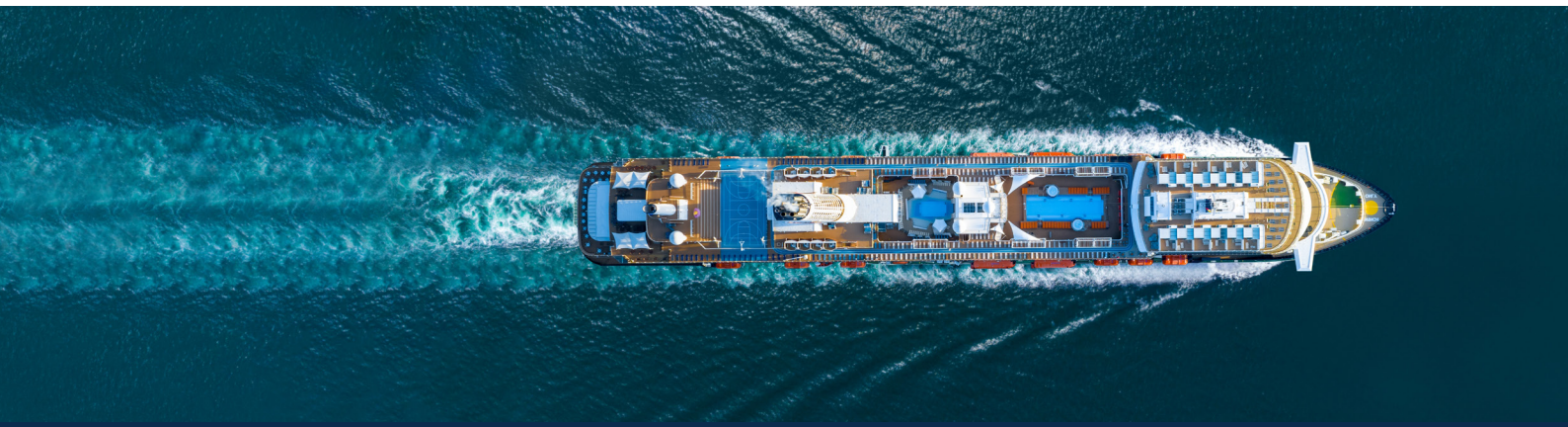
Vessels approved under the DAFF Maritime Waste Recycling Pilot (DMWRP) do not need to re-apply.

Vessels must comply with the following cleaning and segregation requirements:

- Clean and segregate eligible recyclable waste.
- Remove all biological matter and food residue.
- Isolate eligible recyclable waste from other waste.
- Only use ISPM-15 wooden or plastic pallets.
- Submit a Waste Discharge Inspection request in the Maritime & Aircraft Reporting System (MARS).
- Clearly label segregated recyclables for inspection by a biosecurity officer.
- Pay applicable fees.

Key requirements to discuss with the crew include:

- Recyclables must be washed clean. This includes removing all food residue from containers and fruit garnishes (for example, lemon wedges) from beverage bottles.
- Recyclables must be sorted by type. Mixed recyclable materials are not allowed while on-board.
- Recyclables must be segregated from other waste.
- Recyclables must be stored in clean bins, bulk bags or bulk boxes, or on ISPM15 pallets or plastic pallets.
- Any packaging used must be clean and new.
- Any contamination detected during inspection may result in recycling being managed as biosecurity waste.



Soft plastics

Soft plastics are not recyclable. Recyclables contaminated with soft plastics such as shopping/grocery bags, food bags or cling wrap cannot be recycled. All recyclables within the same bin/bag become in-eligible for recycling and must be managed as biosecurity waste.

Aluminium foil

Aluminium foil should not be included with recycling due to food residues.

Important

Vessels that have implemented pre-border biosecurity risk mitigation measures, including the cleaning and segregation of recyclable waste, may present this waste for inspection at a First Point of Entry (FPoE).

Recyclable waste that does not meet requirements will remain under biosecurity control and must either be managed as biosecurity waste or retained on board the vessel.

If a Biosecurity Officer is unavailable to inspect recyclable waste at a subsequent port, the waste must be retained on board or managed as biosecurity waste.

Recyclable materials associated with biosecurity risk goods, such as cardboard boxes used to transport eggs, dairy products, meat, seafood, honey, or raw fruit and vegetables, are not eligible for recycling and must be managed as biosecurity waste.

Sort recyclables

Wash and clean items to remove any contamination such as food residues before sorting recyclables according to type:

- Glass
- Aluminium drink cans
- Cardboard and paper
- Plastic beverage containers (bottles and plastic cups)
- Non-beverage glass jars and bottles
- Hard plastic containers
- Tin and metal cans/containers

Storing recyclables

When storing recyclable materials, the following requirements must be met:

- Segregate from other waste.
- Store each type of recyclable separately.
- Store in clean bins, new bulk bags, bulk boxes or new (clear) plastic bags.
- Packaging must be clean and new (except clean bins that remain onboard).
- If using pallets, use only ISPM 15 pallets or non-wood pallets.
- Clearly label each bin, bag, bulk bag, bulk box or pallet.



Examples of waste recycling segregation and packaging

Examples of suitable receptacles for recycled waste inspection (Figure 1).



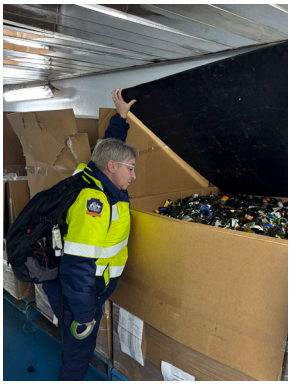
Bins



Bags



Bulk bags



Bulk box

Presenting recyclables for inspection

Cruise vessels – bulk

To facilitate inspection, recyclables must be presented in accordance with the following requirements:

- Present each type of recyclable in its own bin, bulk bag or pallet.
- Clearly label the recyclables.
- Recyclables must be packaged to allow visual inspection in bulk bags, bins or on ISPM 15 or plastic pallets.

Commercial vessels – smaller quantities

For commercial vessels presenting smaller quantities of recyclables, the following requirements apply:

- Present each type of recyclable in its own bin or bag.
- Clearly label the recyclables.
- Recyclables must be packaged to allow visual inspection.
- If using pallets, use only ISPM 15 or plastic pallets.

Inspection

Biosecurity Officers will inspect the recyclable waste. Recyclable waste that does not meet requirements will be deemed biosecurity waste and must be discharged in accordance with mandatory biosecurity requirements.

The vessel must:

- elect to recycle waste and formally notify the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry of its intention to do so
- submit a waste removal request through the Maritime and Aircraft Reporting System (MARS)
- arrange appropriate service providers for the collection and disposal of biosecurity waste and the collection of waste released for recycling purposes following biosecurity inspection.

After the onboard inspection

The vessel is required to provide their own method of labelling to clearly identify recyclables released from biosecurity control following on-board inspection.

Recyclables which have NOT been released from biosecurity control following inspection must be managed as biosecurity waste through mandatory biosecurity requirements.

Recyclables which have been released from biosecurity control may be discharged from the vessel.

Note: Commercial vessels using large plastic bags for recyclables may be required to remove the plastic bag prior to disposal of the recyclables – check with your recycling service provider.

Recyclable materials, including HPDE plastics, that previously contained non-dairy, non-egg foods and beverages or non-food items (for example, cleaning chemicals) may be recycled.

They cannot be repurposed and should be crushed or punctured to prevent reuse in Australia. This ensures they are recycled after discharge from the vessel.



Example of a recycling label

More information

Learn more about Conveyance waste recycling for cruise and commercial vessels.

Web agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/aircraft-vessels-military/vessels/waste-recycling

Email conveyance.maritime@aff.gov.au

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