Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Inorganic Fertiliser Management Policy suite

Attachment 4: Loading sample inspection guidelines and certificate template

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the continuous connection of First Nations Traditional Owners and Custodians to the lands, seas and waters of Australia. We recognise their care for and cultivation of Country. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and recognise their knowledge and contribution to the productivity, innovation and sustainability of Australia's agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries.

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Overview

Inorganic fertiliser can present a significant biosecurity risk because they are likely to be applied directly to soil. Biosecurity risks can also arise due to the sourcing of inorganic fertiliser (e.g. mined) or methods used to store, prepare or transport the product to Australia. Examples of biosecurity risk are hitchhiker pests, soil, seeds or other plant material or contaminants of animal and microbial origin. The primary biosecurity risk contaminants commonly associated with imported inorganic fertiliser are hitchhiker pests, soil, seeds or other plant material.

Plant material and seeds

Plant material can harbour a vast range of pests and diseases. This includes pathogens such as fungi, bacteria or viruses, insect pests in all life-cycle stages, as well as nematodes in various stages of development. Plant material may also contain other biosecurity risk material, including live animals (e.g. snails), seeds classed as weeds, fungal bodies or animal faeces.

Soil

Soil can harbour contaminants such as fungi, bacteria, viruses (e.g. foot-and-mouth disease) and prions, animal faeces, live animals (e.g. giant African snails) or crop residues.

Hitchhiker pests

Hitchhiker pests, such as invasive ants, insects and snails, travel opportunistically on conveyances, containers and commodities.

Due to the potential threats posed by these biosecurity contaminants, it is essential that the inspection of inorganic fertiliser consignments is conducted meticulously and in conditions that enable the identification and removal of any biosecurity contaminants present.

The loading sample inspection is conducted or led and certified by an authorised goods inspector (e.g. a marine surveyor) of inorganic fertiliser consignments that are intended for import into Australia.

The loading sample inspection is a requirement for all imported consignments of bulk in-ships-hold and containerised inorganic fertiliser listed within scope in the Imported Inorganic Fertiliser Management Policy.

If a consignment passes inspection immediately or after addressing any identified biosecurity concerns, the authorised goods inspector must issue a certificate attesting to the cleanliness of the consignment. The certificate is provided to the importer.

1 Documentary requirements

The importer must provide the department with an inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection certificate that has been issued by an authorised goods inspector. The inspector issues the certificate once the inspection is completed and they have confirmed that any contamination has been removed.

The inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection certificate must include:

- inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection declaration
- cargo details.

See the Inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection certificate template.

The authorised goods inspector must also provide an inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection report to the importer and the offshore registered entity responsible for export of the consignment. The report is evidence of the sample inspection and its outcomes.

We may request inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection reports from registered offshore entities at any time.

See the Inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection report template.

2 Inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection certificate template

[insert authorised goods inspector company letterhead here]

Inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection certificate

Report details (e.g. number)	[insert details]
Name of registered entity	[insert details]
Registered entity identifier (AEI)	[insert details]
Consignment link	[insert details]
Date of inspection (dd/mm/yyyy)	[insert details]
Name of authorised goods inspector	[insert details]
Authorised goods inspector's company	[insert details]
Vessel name, voyage number, call sign	[insert details]
Cargo	[insert details]
Shipping method	In-ships-hold (loose or bagged) [insert Yes or No] Containerised (loose or bagged) [insert Yes or No]

I [insert name] _____ hereby declare that a loading sample inspection has been conducted on this inorganic fertiliser consignment as per the relevant import conditions and the requirements of the Imported Inorganic Fertiliser Policy's loading sample inspection guidelines.

The loading sample inspection was conducted on [insert dd/mm/yyyy], commencing at insert commencement time [insert (24-hr) 00:00 hrs] and ending at [insert (24-hr) 00:00 hrs].

I have prepared an inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection report as evidence of the inspection and its outcomes and provided the report to the importer and the offshore registered entity responsible for export of the consignment. The registered offshore entity can provide this report to the department upon request.

Inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection declaration

I hereby certify that:

1) The inorganic fertiliser consignment loading sample inspection was conducted or overseen by the authorised goods inspector as per the inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection guidelines.

☐ No

☐ Yes

2) No biosecurity risk contaminants were identified.

☐ No

☐ Yes

3) Biosecurity risk contaminants were identified and removed and affected areas reinspected and verified as being free from biosecurity risk contaminants.

☐ No

☐ Yes

☐ Not applicable

Cargo details

Hold or container number	Cargo	Cargo volume (kg)
[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert details]
[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert details]
[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert details]
[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert details]

Certification

Certified true and correct.

Authorised goods inspector's full name (printed)

_____

Authorised goods inspector's position title

_____

Authorised goods inspector's signature

_____

Authorised goods inspector's official stamp

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

_____

3 Loading sample inspection guidelines

Loading sample inspections of inorganic fertiliser must be carried out during daylight hours only. Vessel masters must provide inspectors with full access to the entire consignment to enable a full representative sample to be taken. Appropriate equipment should be used to assist inspection processes where required.

3.1 Safety

Authorised inspectors should adhere to safe working practices. These should include abiding by country, port and local safe work practice procedures, using qualified and licensed operators of any lifting equipment and ensuring that equipment is well-maintained and is lifted in a safe manner.

The authorised inspector must ask the person in charge of the goods to declare whether the goods have been chemically treated and, if so, confirm that:

- the chemicals used are clearly identified
- appropriate safety precautions have been taken to ensure safe handling of the treated goods.

3.2 Sampling and inspection of inorganic fertiliser product

Inorganic fertiliser intended for export to Australia must undergo inspection and sampling by an authorised inspector prior to export – whether the goods are held in shipping containers or the ship's hold. To ensure that the inspection and sampling process is representative of the entire consignment, the authorised goods inspector must conduct sampling from a range of locations or bags per container or hold.

3.2.1 Sampling rates and volumes for in-ships-hold consignments:

Both bulk, loose and bagged product must undergo a minimum sampling volume and frequency that is determined by the following equation:

Sampling interval = tonnage ÷ (load rate x 60) ÷ sampling volume

For example:

Sampling interval = 2,500 tonnes ÷ (400 tonnes per hour x 60) ÷ 120 ml

Sampling interval = 3.125 mins rounded to the nearest half minute = 3.0 min

Table 1 provides calculations for samples ranging from 2,500 to 55,000 tonnes.

Table 1 Inorganic fertiliser sampling volume (ml) and interval (min), by load rate (t)

Total tonnes	Sampling volume (ml)	Sampling intervals (mins)			
		Load rate 400 (t/h)	Load rate 800 (t/h)	Load rate 1,000 (t/h)	Load rate 1,400 (t/h)
2,500	120	3.0	1.5	1.5	1.0
3,000	120	4.0	2.0	1.5	1.0
4,000	120	5.0	2.5	2.0	1.5
4,500	120	6.0	3.0	2.5	1.5
5,000	120	6.5	3.0	2.5	2.0
8,000	230	5.0	2.5	2.0	1.5
10,000	230	6.5	3.5	3.0	2.0
12,000	230	8.0	4.0	3.0	2.0
15,000	230	10.0	5.0	4.0	3.0
18,000	300	9.0	4.5	4.0	2.5
20,000	300	10.0	5.0	4.0	3.0
25,000	300	12.5	6.5	5.0	3.5
30,000	300	15.0	7.5	6.0	4.5
35,000	350	15.0	7.5	6.0	4.5
40,000	350	17.0	8.5	7.0	5.0
45,000	350	19.5	6.5	7.5	5.5
50,000	350	21.5	10.5	8.5	6.0
55,000	400	20.5	10.5	8.5	6.0

3.2.2 Sampling rates and volumes for containerised consignments:

The department requires inspection and sampling of containerised inorganic fertilisers to be undertaken in accordance with the following rates and volumes:

- **Bulk or loose product** – must undergo a minimum 1.5 litre or 1.5 litres per 20-metric-tonnes sample inspection per container, whichever is larger, taken in 300-millilitre increments from a minimum of 5 separate locations per container during loading.
- **Bagged product** – must undergo a minimum 1.5 litre or 1.5 litres per 20-metric-tonnes sample inspection per container, whichever is larger, taken in 300-millilitre increments from a minimum of 5 separate bags per container during loading.

Authorised goods inspectors are permitted to obtain more than the required minimum sample size. We recommend that inspectors increase sample rates if contaminants are identified during the inspection process. The department does not outline specific sampling techniques that must be adhered to. However, we expect that authorised goods inspectors:

- have the necessary training and experience to obtain representative samples
- use sampling procedures that are adequate to determine whether the entire consignment is free from contamination.

Where biosecurity risk contaminants are identified, the authorised inspector must supervise the effective removal of all biosecurity risk contaminants and only certify the inorganic fertiliser consignment once they can verify them as being free from biosecurity risk contaminants.

3.3 Sample inspection process

Once the authorised goods inspector has drawn samples from each hold or container, these should be blended (1 x blend per container or hold), sieved and inspected visually to check for biosecurity risk material contaminants. The nest of sieves used should incorporate at least 2 layers of sieves, with a base dish at the bottom arranged so the sieve with the greatest aperture is on top, descending in order of aperture size, with the finest sieve at the bottom, adjacent to the base dish.

Following sieving, any residue should be examined under lighting that has a minimum intensity of 600 lux. If necessary, the inspector should use magnification lamps or magnifying glasses to identify residues.

3.4 Inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection record

The inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection record outlines the outcomes of the sample inspection of the inorganic fertiliser to be imported into Australia.

Use the Inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection report template as a guide to ensure all relevant elements of the inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection are documented. If contaminants are identified during the sample inspection, they must be documented in the report, along with any remedial action taken (and by whom) to address contamination concerns, and the outcome of the reinspection.

This information, along with the relevant commercial, shipping and consignment details form the basis of the Inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection certificate.

3.5 Collecting additional samples for in-ships-hold consignments: Level 2 and Level 3

Authorised goods inspectors must ensure that additional samples are collected and set aside on the vessel for onshore inspection by a biosecurity officer. Authorised goods inspectors must:

- collect a 15-litre bagged sample per hold of in-ships-hold consignments classified as Level 2 or Level 3 and sets the samples aside for departmental inspection on arrival in Australia
- clearly label the 15-litre bagged samples to show which hold or bag they were taken from and the type of fertiliser within each bag
- ensure that all packaging used to collect the samples is clean, new and securely sealed to avoid tampering or the entry of contaminants during transport.

If the 15-litre bagged samples are not available for inspection upon arrival in Australia, that hold will be subject to in-hold inspection and sampling by the department. This may cause delays to the clearing of the consignment.

4 Loading sample inspection report template

[insert authorised inspector company letterhead here]

Table 2 Inorganic fertiliser loading sample inspection record

Report details (e.g. number)	[insert details]
Name of entity	[insert details]
Registered entity identifier AEI (if applicable)	[insert details]
Consignment link	[insert details]
Date of inspection (dd/mm/yyyy)	[insert details]
Name of authorised inspector	[insert details]
Authorised inspector's company	[insert details]
Vessel name, voyage number, call sign	[insert details]
Cargo	[insert details]
Shipping method	In-ship's-hold (loose or bagged) [insert Yes or No] Containerised (loose or bagged) [insert Yes or No]

Inspection summary

The inspection should be thorough, with emphasis on, but not limited to, areas listed in Table 4 and Table 5.

If you find contaminants, use the codes in Table 3 to complete either Table 4 or Table 5. If you find multiple contaminants, use a forward slash to separate each (e.g. 'PM/S' to indicate plant material and sand). If goods in containers or holds are in acceptable condition for loading, record them as 'PASS'.

Table 3 Contaminant codes

Contamination	Code
Animal material	AM
Grains or seeds	G
Meals	M
Plant material	PM
Organic, other	O
Mineral	MN
Rust	R
Soil or sand	S
Inorganic, other	I

[Complete either Table 4 or Table 5, as appropriate, and delete the other table.]

Table 4 In-ships-hold consignments (bulk, loose or bagged) sample inspection outcomes

Hold number	Hold volume	Inspection volume	Inspection outcome	Remedial action taken (if required)	Re-inspection outcomes
1	[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert code or 'PASS']	[insert details]	[insert details]
2	[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert code or 'PASS']	[insert details]	[insert details]
3	[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert code or 'PASS']	[insert details]	[insert details]
4	[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert code or 'PASS']	[insert details]	[insert details]
5	[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert code or 'PASS']	[insert details]	[insert details]

Table 5 Containerised consignments (bulk, loose or bagged) sample inspection outcomes

Container number	Container volume	Inspection volume	Inspection outcome	Remedial action taken (if required)	Re-inspection outcomes
[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert code or 'PASS']	[insert details]	[insert details]
[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert code or 'PASS']	[insert details]	[insert details]
[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert code or 'PASS']	[insert details]	[insert details]
[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert code or 'PASS']	[insert details]	[insert details]
[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert details]	[insert code or 'PASS']	[insert details]	[insert details]

Additional comments, treatment orders or action taken.

_____

_____

Verified true and correct

Authorised good inspector's full name (printed)

_____

Authorised goods inspector's position title

_____

Authorised goods inspector's signature

_____

Authorised goods inspector's official stamp

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

_____