



Returning Australian Defence Force (ADF) Cargo transition to COLS - FAQs

Question	Answer
Process	
1. Does this affect clients that do not use the import assessment email for Military consignments?	There is no change to the current lodgement process for clients who do not use the import assessment email for lodgement. Biosecurity Industry Participants (BIPs) and existing COLS users will see a system update, with a new consignment import option, 'Military Cargo', available in COLS.
2. Do I still need to email the manual coversheet?	No. Military entries are now lodged through COLS, so there is no longer a need to email a manual coversheet. The information previously captured on the coversheet is now entered directly into the required fields during lodgement.
3. Can I still email in my lodgement for Military?	No. From 10 August 2026, documentation will no longer be accepted by email for Military clearances. Instead, you will receive an autoreply directing you to submit your lodgement through COLS. Support materials are available to help you complete your lodgement, including a step-by-step guidance available on the COLS support - DAFF
4. I've emailed my Military entry into the mailbox. What do I do? Will it be a duplicate entry if I now submit it into COLS?	Any lodgements submitted prior to 10 August via the Import Assessment Mailbox will be assessed. Lodgements for Military will only be processed through COLS from this date. Refer to the auto reply email you received.
5. What happens after I have submitted my request through COLS?	1. After submitting your request through COLS, you will receive an email confirmation with your lodgement reference number. Your request will be assessed by the department. Once the assessment is complete, you will receive a Biosecurity Direction containing the AIMS entry number (starting with Qxxxx). 2. If the goods are directed for inspection, you may then request an inspection by completing and submitting a Request for Inspection (RFI), quoting the Qxxxx entry number.
6. What is the time frame of receiving a Direction once lodged through COLS?	For import documents lodged via COLS, we will process urgent lodgements within 1 business day and non-urgent lodgements within 2 business days of receiving it. We may take longer to process lodgements if they need policy



	advice, you have provided incomplete or incorrect information, or if we need more information to continue the assessment. More information about our Client Service Standards can be found on our website Client service standards .
7. Is COLS managed over the weekend?	Clients can access COLS and submit documents for import assessment at any time however, the department's business hours are 6:30 am to 6:30 pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). Documents may be assessed outside business hours at industry request, subject to officer availability and industry acceptance of the cost. Please note where officer availability is limited for assessment outside business hours, perishable and some emergency services goods will be prioritised first.
Lodgement and timings	
8. What is classed as a late lodgement?	A late lodgement occurs when documents for a sea freight shipment are submitted within 2 business days of their arrival. Where possible, documents should be lodged well in advance of arrival of the goods into Australia (between 5-7 days prior to a vessel's arrival for sea freight and 24 hours for airfreight) as this will allow assessment to occur and any identified concerns to be addressed prior to the discharge of goods.
Miscellaneous	
9. How do I enter cargo that is being 'bonded' through an intermediate location? I.e. if cargo arrives in Darwin from Singapore but is bonded through to RAAF Edinburgh.	There are two free text fields available to allow users to include further details they need to convey that cannot be captured through the standard fields in the system.
10. How do I request approval to use a non-first point of entry location?	Requests to use a non-first point of entry location are separate from Cargo lodgements and are not managed through COLS. The existing request process remains unchanged. Standalone application processes are available on these websites: • Aircraft arriving at first points of entry and non-first points of entry - DAFF, • Request permission to bring goods to an alternative biosecurity entry point - DAFF An officer will review the request and may be in contact for additional information or clarification.
11. Will the Request for Inspection (RFI) eventually be through COLS?	At this stage there are no plans for COLS to be broadened out to include inspection activities or bookings.
12. If I receive a Documentation Direction requesting further	You can add additional information to your COLS lodgement using the LRN that was provided when original



information, how do I provide that information.	documentation was submitted and is in the email sent at time of lodgement. Please refer to COLS support - DAFF for further instructions.
13. How can I tell what stage my assessment lodgement is at?	Using the 'Check Lodgement Status' section of COLS, you can view the status of your submission and see what stage of the assessment process it is at.
14. After assessment is completed, how can I advise of new information that requires the entry and Direction to be changed?	If changes are required, please request a reassessment. You will need the LRN of your original assessment and select the radio button for ADF Cargo.
15. Is there a naming convention for uploaded documents?	No. There is no required naming convention, but it is recommended that you use a clear, descriptive file name that identifies the document.
16. How do I choose the correct document type?	Select the document type that best matches your document. If none of the options available are suitable, choose "Other".
17. Do I need to mention that a Military Working Dog (MWD) will offload at RAAF Amberley if an import permit has already been submitted?	Yes. Please include this information in your lodgement, even if an import permit has already been submitted. Providing clear and complete information helps us complete accurate and timely assessments.
18. What if there is no packing declaration for Defence consignments?	Packing declarations are only required for sea freight. If a packing declaration is not provided, DAFF will inspect all packing materials and the empty container for biosecurity risk. If timber or wood packaging has been treated, you must provide a treatment certificate from the authorised treatment facility.
19. What information should be included to support DAFF's assessment?	Provide clear details about the type of goods arriving and their intended use. This information helps DAFF complete an accurate assessment.
Support	
If I have a query about my Military lodgement, can I still contact import assessment 1800 number?	Yes. Alternatively, you can contact the department through COLS by using the 'Make and Enquiry' section. Please include your Lodgement Reference Number (LRN) found in your lodgement email.

General enquiries

Call [1800 900 090](tel:1800900090)

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