



Request for Inspection – Frequently Asked Questions

The department has prepared some frequently asked questions to assist you with booking inspections using the Request for Inspection (RFI) Form via Email or via the Biosecurity Portal.

(Updated 15 July 2022)

Can I submit my import RFI via the new online system (Biosecurity Portal)?

Approved arrangements operators, customs brokers, importers, freight forwarders and clients without an ABN wishing to book and manage import inspections can book via a new online Biosecurity Portal. To request a booking via the Portal you must have an Entry Number.

The ability to make and manage import inspection booking requests at any time in a centralised online location is the first function in a broader scope of work intended to modernise and improve the biosecurity system for clients.

Arrangements that are currently not supported by the Biosecurity Portal include:

- recurring bookings for inspections at manned depots
- bulk bookings
- airways bills bookings
- virtual label visual inspections bookings
- high volume specialist operators (HVSO) booking personal effects inspections
- exports.

The Biosecurity Portal, together with the new Scheduling and Workload Management System (SWMS), have been deployed to all regions.

Comprehensive information (User Guide and Help Guide(FAQ)) on using the Biosecurity Portal can be found at: <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/import/online-services/biosecurity-portal/guides>

Can I still use the manual RFI form and email process?

Yes. If you are not yet eligible to use the Biosecurity Portal, you can still complete the [request for inspection form](#), available on the department's web site. Please do not lodge the same request in the Portal and via email.

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Will the Biosecurity Portal allow me to view AIMS directions while I am creating my RFI?

Yes. The Portal allows import clients, who have registered using MyGovID, to view and print AIMS direction information issued by the department against an Entry Number.

Note: Food Control Certificates cannot be viewed via the Portal at this stage.

Import clients will be able to view direction information issued by the department if:

- Approved Arrangement – if the AA number is listed against an active Direction.
- Brokerage – the ABN of the brokerage is listed against the import declaration in the integrated Cargo System (ICS).
- Importer – the ABN of the importer is listed against the import declaration in the integrated Cargo System (ICS).

If you are still unable to determine which direction to lodge an inspection request against, please contact 1800 900 090.

What email address do I use to submit my import RFI form?

Please submit your email based on inspection location to:

Australian Capital Territory (Canberra)	ImportsRFIACT@agriculture.gov.au
Darwin and Cairns	ImportsRFI@agriculture.gov.au
New South Wales	ImportsRFINSW@agriculture.gov.au
South Australia	ImportsRFI@agriculture.gov.au
Southern Queensland	ImportsRFI@agriculture.gov.au
Victoria	ImportsRFIVIC@agriculture.gov.au
Western Australia	ImportsRFIWA@agriculture.gov.au

The current email addresses can always be found on page 2 of the RFI form.

I accidentally sent my import RFI form to the old email address?

Emails will not be automatically forwarded. You will need to resubmit your request to the correct email address.

You should always download the latest version of the form from the department’s web site.

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/import/arrival/clearance-inspection/booking>

Submitting your request for inspection via the Biosecurity Portal removes the problem of specifying wrong email addresses.

Can I use the Email and Portal channels at the same time?

No. When booking an import inspection via the online Biosecurity Portal, please do not also attempt to rebook, modify or cancel the inspection via the email channel or vice versa. Doing so will create confusion and may cause errors and delays to your booking request.

Will the Biosecurity Portal allow me to view and manage import RFIs lodged via email?

No. Bookings made via email will not be available to view, modify or cancel on the Portal.

How will I know that my import RFI has been received?

For RFI's submitted via the Biosecurity Portal or lodged via email using the manual form, you will receive an auto reply email from the department confirming your request has been received.

I submitted an RFI and have not received a confirmation email

Check your junk mail folder.

If you have not received an auto reply from the department, then your request has not been received.

For RFIs lodged via the Biosecurity Portal:

Check the entry number within the Portal system to view the Status.

- If the status is Requested (not booked), Booked or Modification Requested, please contact 1800 900 090
- If the entry number is Cancelled or does not appear under "Inspection requests", resubmit the RFI via "Request an import inspection".

For RFI forms lodged via email:

- Please check the email address used, to confirm that it is correct and resend the email. If you still do not receive an auto reply acknowledging receipt of email, please contact 1800 900 090

What is the difference between a Booking Reference Number and a CRM?

A booking reference number is generated when an inspection has been booked and confirmed. It is referenced on the booking confirmation email. A CRM number is a unique number applied to an individual email interaction within the booking system.

What notifications will I receive?

For RFIs submitted via the online Biosecurity Portal or RFI form via Email, the department's SWMS system generates many types of automatic notifications, these include:

- Email receipt (new record)
- Email receipt (existing record linked)
- Further information request
- Entry number issues / RFP number notification

- Inspection scheduled notification
- Booking change / Amendment confirmation
- Cancelled by the client
- Overtime inspection scheduled
- Booking reminder notification
- 'On our way' – officer travelling to the designated location.

My Booking has been confirmed for AM, what does this mean?

An inspecting officer will attend the inspection location, within the sites specific business/trading hours, between the hours of 6:30am and 12:00pm.

My Booking has been confirmed for PM, what does this mean?

An inspecting officer will attend the inspection location, within the sites specific business/trading hours, between the hours of 12:00pm and 6:30pm.

Will my preferred time (e.g AM / PM) be booked outside of what I requested?

Where possible the department will book inspections at your preferred date and time. If this is not possible you will be given the next available appointment within your operating hours. For example, if you request AM on 25 October but the next available appointment is not until PM on 26 October, you will be booked a PM appointment.

How can I improve my likelihood of a faster booking confirmation?

Another tip to get the most out of using the Biosecurity Portal (or emailed RFI form) is to take a flexible approach to the timing of your inspection requests. When requesting a preferred inspection time, we recommend that you select 'Anytime' in lieu of AM or PM.

This could result in your inspection request getting confirmed faster, and your inspection happening at the earliest possible timeslot. Of course, you also need to ensure when your inspection is confirmed, that your goods are ready for the confirmed inspection time.

What can I do if the booked time is not suitable? How do I cancel or modify a booked inspection?

Please note: You may be charged a cancellation fee for modifying/cancelling a booking within 24 hours of the scheduled inspection.

For RFIs lodged via the Portal:

You can request to change the date or time of an existing booking from the 'Upcoming bookings' view only when the booking status is 'booked'. Bookings in the status – 'In-progress' or 'On our way' cannot be modified.

To lodge a request to modify date/time of a booking:

Step 1. Go to the 'Inspections' page.

- Step 2. Find your booking in the 'Upcoming bookings' view.
- Step 3. Select the chevron (down arrow) at the right of the list under 'Actions' and click 'Modify date/time'.
- Step 4. Enter new date/time information and submit the request.
- Step 5. Confirm the request when you see a pop-up window requesting your confirmation.

By submitting the request:

1. Your existing booking will be cancelled and placed in the 'Historical bookings' view with its status updated as 'Cancelled/rebooked'.
2. Your request to modify date/time will be reviewed by the department. A new booking will be made by the Department.

For RFI forms lodged via Email:

Reply to the booking confirmation email you received and amend the subject heading to include "CANCELLATION" if the booking requested is no longer required OR "MODIFY" if you wish to request a change to the date/time or inspection location of the booking. Full details of the requested changes are to be included in the email response. Where the department cannot meet your preferred requirements, the next suitable appointment will be provided.

I require my booking at an agreed time, can I still request this?

Yes, bookings can be made at specific times in certain circumstances. These include:

- Inspection location is a private residence
- Initial live fish inspections
- CCV inspections
- Inspections on goods treated with sulfuryl fluoride
- Unaccompanied Personal Effects at CAPEC facilities
- Returned Australian meat
- Prawns
- Break bulk
- Non-manned locations
- Labour hire requirements for unpack inspections
- Third party presence
- Other – consideration given to requests when reason for to meet appointment is provided.

I need to make a change to my RFI however it has not been processed, what do I do?

For RFI forms lodged via Email:

Resend your original email and indicate the updates you require.

If my requested inspection date has already passed and I haven't yet received a booking confirmation, do I need to update or resubmit my request?

No, do not resubmit your request. The original request has been received and you will be provided with the next available appointment.

I have not received a confirmed booking time for the RFI that I submitted, what should I do?

If your request was submitted more than 3 business days ago call the department on 1800 900 090 and speak with the bookings team.

To improve the visibility of your RFI email, please include the following words (if applicable) in the subject line of your email:

- AWB
- PERISHABLE
- CANCEL, REMOVE, CHANGE, MODIFY, UPDATE, MODIFICATION
- OVERTIME, O/T
- AGREEMENT, ARRANGEMENT, APPROVED, EXTEND, REDUCE, PERMANENT

My goods are perishable, do I need to do anything different?

For RFIs lodged via the Portal:

No. The system will assign the correct priority based on the Inspection type that you specified in your RFI.

For RFI forms lodged via Email:

Include the word "PERISHABLE" in the subject heading of your email. This includes requests for perishable products such as foods, plants and live animals.

I want to book an inspection in Overtime. How do I do this?

Please note that Overtime will be scheduled based on officer availability.

For RFIs lodged via the Portal:

Select OVERTIME in PREFERRED INSPECTION PERIOD field,

For RFI forms lodged via Email:

Include the word "OVERTIME" in the subject heading of your email. IMPORTANT - Please also send the same RFI form without the word OVERTIME in a separate email i.e. 2 emails. This ensures that your request is sent to the overtime queue and the standard queue, ensuring that your place in the email queue is not lost if your overtime request cannot be booked.

How do I make a change for an existing agreement that I have with the department?

To confirm, reduce or cancel your agreement for a specific day please email us and include the word “AGREEMENT” OR “PERMANENT” in the subject heading. Please submit your email based on inspection location to:

Australian Capital Territory (Canberra)	ImportsRFIACT@agriculture.gov.au
Darwin and Cairns	ImportsRFI@agriculture.gov.au
New South Wales	ImportsRFINSW@agriculture.gov.au
South Australia	ImportsRFI@agriculture.gov.au
Southern Queensland	ImportsRFI@agriculture.gov.au
Victoria	ImportsRFIVIC@agriculture.gov.au
Western Australia	ImportsRFIWA@agriculture.gov.au

Can I submit a request with multiple entry numbers on one RFI?

No. A separate RFI needs to be submitted for each entry number that requires inspection.

I need multiple inspections for one entry number, how do I submit this request?

For RFIs lodged via the Portal:

A multi day booking can be requested via the Portal. A question is included under the “Consignment Information” tab to provide details of the days / times for the booking.

For RFI forms lodged via Email:

Multiple inspections can be requested on the one form provided this relates to one consignment. Please include the details of all dates / times required on the RFI form. The comments field can be used if additional space is required.