



Factsheet: Starting on the Right Tack

What can you bring in on a vessel including yachts and superyachts?

Australia has strict laws relating to the importation and/or possession of certain goods to minimise the risk of the introduction of exotic pests and diseases into Australia. It is recommended that passengers should consume as much organic provisions as possible prior to arriving in Australia.

- Vessel masters must declare and present all food/provisions, plant material, animal products and live animals for inspection on arrival in Australia.
- Some goods may require treatment to make them safe. Other goods, such as live animals, that pose pest and disease risks may not be permitted to be imported to Australia.

For a list of goods that you must declare on arrival in Australia, see Arriving in Australia.

For further information on the products that can be brought into Australia, refer to the Biosecurity Import Conditions system (BICON).

What needs a permit?

Some goods may be allowed into Australia if they are accompanied by an import permit (issued by the department prior to arrival) or with treatment in Australia to make them safe (fees and charges apply).

What you can do to help and prepare your non-commercial vessel for arrival in Australia?

For an efficient biosecurity inspection, please ensure the following actions are undertaken:

- report your pending arrival; vessel details, arrival berth and ETA, Human Health of travellers on board, or any changes in voyage or other circumstances onboard.
- do not let anyone leave or board the vessel before the inspection.
- alert the department to the presence of, and contain/confine pets or animals on board.
- secure the vessel in such a way that prevents excessive movement during the inspection.
- remove all hazardous items.
- remove panels, personal effects and other equipment from lockers/cupboards.
- have fresh fruit, meat and waste bagged on arrival for removal.
- ensure all areas of the vessel are accessible for inspection, particularly timber surfaces.
- have information available regarding timber components, such as history of refits.

The inspection process for non-commercial vessels

1. Interview with the master or operator

An interview with the master provides a biosecurity officer with the opportunity to verify the biosecurity status of the vessel, people and animals (where applicable) onboard. The officer will also view all relevant documentation, such as information related to timber components.

2. Inspection

On arrival at a first point of entry, your vessel will be physically inspected. This includes inspection of:

- health of persons onboard
- personal effects/articles
- timber components of the vessel and any history of damage or refits
- kitchen facilities and storerooms foodstuffs, personal effects, souvenirs
- Sanitation and waste,
- hull, anchors, chains and other ancillary gear
- water collection/storage containers. Standing water, (Vector for mosquito larvae)

If the vessel timber inspection cannot be undertaken on arrival the vessel remains subject to biosecurity control. The vessel will need to complete a timber inspection within 14 days.

Inspections will only be undertaken in safe conditions, during daylight hours and usually within normal operational hours. You should also be aware that more than one inspection may be required to resolve any identified biosecurity risks.

If no biosecurity concerns are detected during the inspection, the biosecurity officer will release your vessel.

3. Pratique

Under the Biosecurity Act, pratique is permission for “anything to be unloaded from or loaded onto” a vessel or “any person to disembark from or embark onto” a vessel. Note: Granting of pratique confirms that the human health risk of the travellers on board the vessel can be identified and managed before the vessel is unloaded or disembarked. On arrival at a first point of entry, non-commercial vessels must:

- have biosecurity risks mitigated to an acceptable level for pratique and release from biosecurity control on arrival (except where continuance of biosecurity control has been requested or is required, such as a live animal on board or for a later (within 14 days) timber inspection) not remove goods from the vessel until the goods or vessel has been cleared from biosecurity control and stripped to coastal status or the goods or vessel are subject to biosecurity control for the voyage in Australian waters.

Inspections will only be undertaken in safe conditions, during daylight hours and usually within normal operational hours. You should also be aware that more than one inspection may be required to resolve any identified biosecurity risks.

If no biosecurity concerns are detected during the inspection, the biosecurity officer will release your vessel.

4. Managing risks

Once the biosecurity officer has completed the inspection, a post inspection interview is conducted to discuss any biosecurity issues identified in the vessel inspection with you. Biosecurity clearance may be provided at this time and confirmation of any biosecurity conditions for further travel within Australia. e.g. The biosecurity officer will advise if the vessel is released from biosecurity control and no longer subject to biosecurity inspections.

To manage any biosecurity risks, the biosecurity officer may undertake or direct you to undertake certain directions and/or treatments, including (but not exclusive to):

- isolation, treatment and/or export of [live animals](#) on board
- management of [plants](#) on board
- disposal of biosecurity waste
- stripping to coastal - the process of removing all biosecurity risk materials from a vessel so it can be released from biosecurity control
- other treatments as directed.

If biosecurity concerns are detected, the biosecurity officer can take any of the following actions:

- seek further advice from departmental technical experts or other authoritative body
- refer concerns such as human health issues to other relevant Australian Government agencies
- use alternative detection methods (e.g. detector dog or device for termites)
- direct the vessel to undergo remedial action via approved methods, such as timber treatment
- direct the vessel to a particular place
- direct the vessel to be imported as cargo.

Vessel may also be subject to verification inspections by a biosecurity officer on succeeding days at the first point of entry and subsequent port/s of call to ensure continued compliance with issued by a biosecurity officer.

5. Vessel with timber components

All vessels with timber components entering Australia must be inspected for timber pests, whether the vessel is sailed in, itinerant, a returning Australian vessel or imported as cargo.

When a vessel is sailed in, the inspection of timber components is likely to be included as part of the arrival inspection. If the inspection of timber components cannot be performed on arrival, the inspection must be completed within 14 days. If the inspection of timber components cannot be performed on arrival, the inspection must be completed within 14 days. It is the vessel operator's responsibility to make arrangements for this inspection to occur and to ensure the vessel is presented at the port of arrival within this timeframe. The vessel will continue to be subjected to biosecurity control, including restrictions, until this inspection has been performed and the vessel can be released. See Requirements for vessels with timber components.

If you are importing your vessel refer to the (BICON) system for information on import requirements for individual commodities and cargo.

6. What if there are pets or animals on board?

The vessel master must notify the department of the presence of any animals on board. A biosecurity officer may request additional information be provided to enable the department to assess the biosecurity risks associated with a live animal on board. A biosecurity officer may issue directions to the person in charge to manage the biosecurity risk associated with the animal/s on board. This may include, but not limited to, the requirement for the vessel (and animal/s on board) to be isolated at mid-water mooring and that the animal/s are confined to the vessel at all times. You must comply with any directions issued by a biosecurity officer.

If the animal/s do not have a valid Australian import permit, are of a species not permitted for import to Australian territory, have been illegally imported, or if the biosecurity risk cannot be managed, a biosecurity officer may direct that the animal is exported from Australian territory or euthanased.

Dogs and cats

If you wish to import your cat or dog to Australia from all approved countries other than New Zealand, you must prepare your animal to meet the relevant import conditions, which includes applying for an import permit and transporting the animal directly to Melbourne International Airport on an international flight as manifest air cargo. Cats and dogs from New Zealand may be imported with a veterinary health certificate. You can find more information in our step-by-step guides for importing cats and dogs to Australia on the department's website.

For all other enquiries contact Live Animal Imports, at least 4 weeks in advance of intended arrival.

Other pets and animals

Other species of pets arriving in Australian ports or transiting within Australian waters onboard a non-commercial vessel without a valid import permit, are not permitted. These species that arrive in Australian territory without a valid import permit will be treated as illegally imported animals.

Further information

See [Animals on Vessels – non-commercial vessels](#) or contact the department via telephone 1800 900 090 (+61 3 8318 6700 outside Australia).

7. Non-commercial fees and charges

Where a vessel is cleared and inspected at the first port of call, an arrival levy and a fee for the time taken to inspect and clear the vessel will be charged.

- The department service fees are invoiced, normally through your broker for yachts imported as cargo. Some fees must be paid prior to inspection taking place.
- Inspection services for yachts and superyachts are payable at the time of inspection. Credit card payments can be made by calling 1800 647 531.
- Cash will not be accepted by biosecurity officers.

Where there is no biosecurity risk detected, the inspection is covered by standard departmental vessel fees and no additional payments are required. Where a biosecurity issue is detected, vessel owners will be charged fee-for-service and any additional charges relating to removing biosecurity risk materials.