

TOP WATCH! TAG



STOP THAT PEST!

Learn how you can help biosecurity and keep Australia free from exotic invasive pests, diseases and weeds.



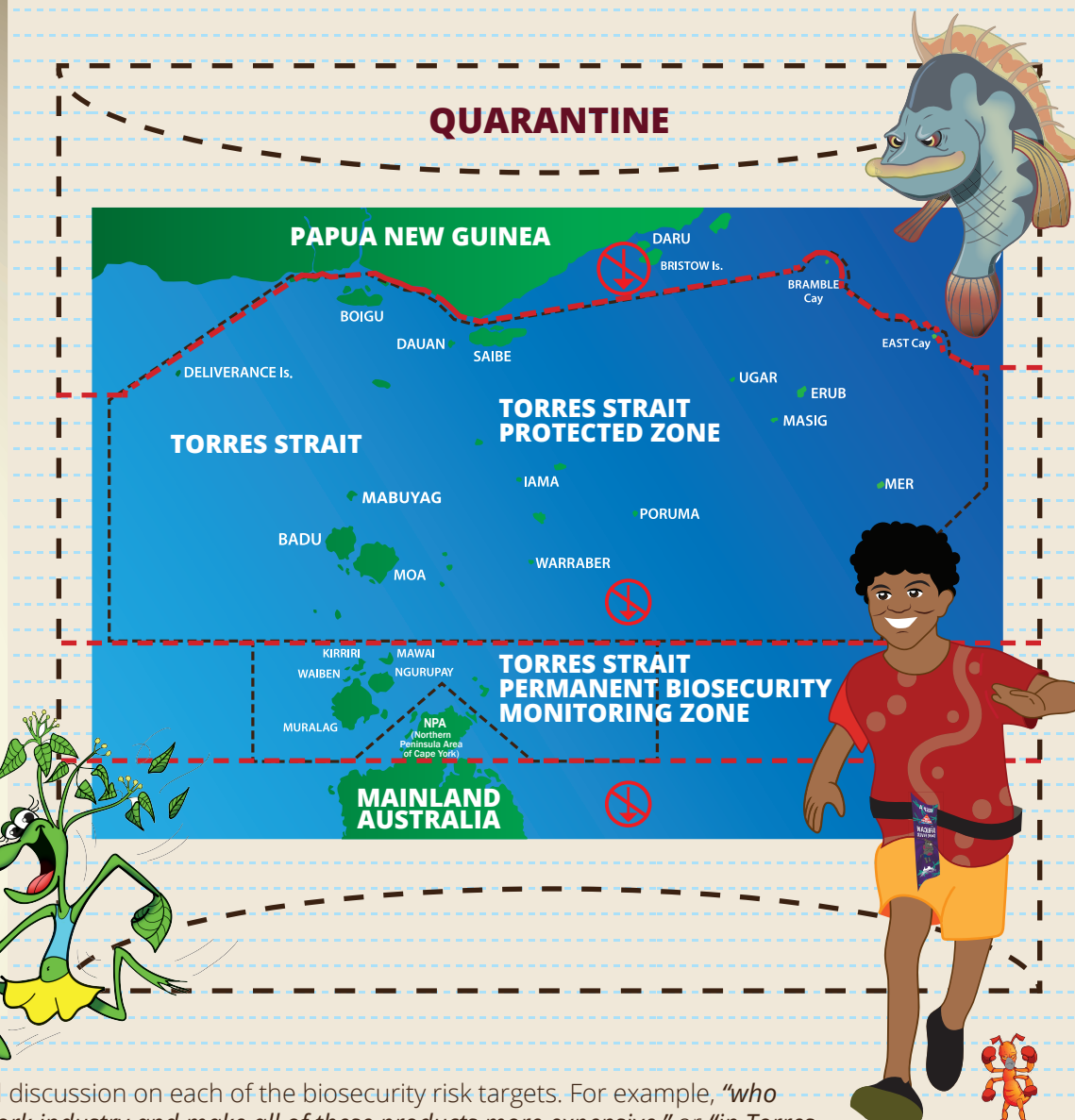
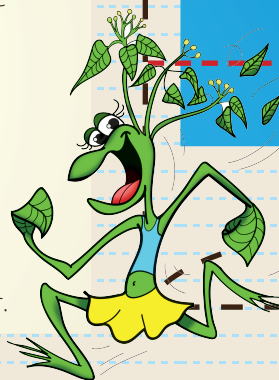
Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry



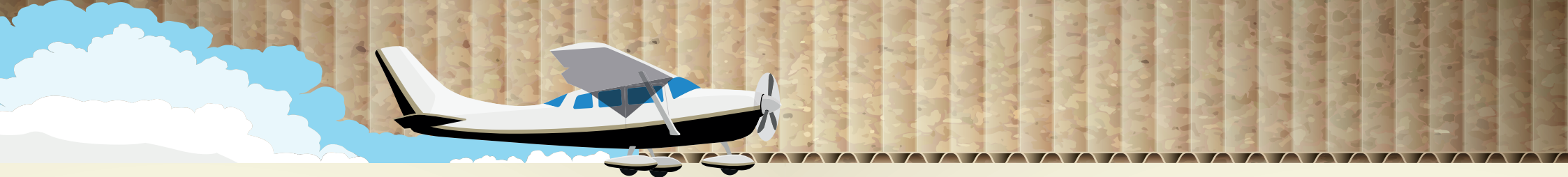
TOP WATCH! TAG

How to play

- TOP WATCH! TAG** demonstrates that it is hard for one Biosecurity Officer alone to stop the broad range of exotic and invasive pests, diseases and weeds that could enter or establish in Australia.
- Call on your group to help become the eyes and ears of biosecurity and help prevent the establishment or spread of biosecurity risk targets like:
 - > African swine fever
 - > Siam weed
 - > Black Sigatoka disease of bananas
 - > Invasive fish (climbing perch, snake heads)
 - > Invasive ants (yellow crazy, electric, Singapore, red imported fire ants)
 - > Rabies and
 - > Exotic fruit flies.
- Divide your group in two by asking **"who wants to be a pest?"**
- One-third of the group (up to 7) will be **CONVEYANCES** that carry the biosecurity risk **TARGETS** and the other two-thirds to be appointed **JUNIOR BIOSECURITY OFFICERS**.
- Give each conveyance a belt and a pest, disease or weed tag (target).
- The **BIOSECURITY OFFICER** will call the attacking side / conveyances (who are carrying the targets) to spread out across the centre of the field of play such as the centre line of a football field or basketball court, and ask them to rush across the **BIOSECURITY ZONE LINE**, trying to grab as many targets as possible.
- Send those that get caught off to **QUARANTINE** (dead ball line).
- Play again, inviting the Junior Biosecurity Officers to come and **KEEP A TOP WATCH!** and help the Biosecurity Officer catch the targets. The defending side (Junior Biosecurity Officers) will join the Biosecurity Officer and line up across the centre line to help stop those pests, diseases and weed targets from crossing the zone.
- The game can be played several times, letting everyone have a turn at being a conveyance carrying a target or Junior Biosecurity Officer.



After the game, the Biosecurity Officer can lead into a more detailed discussion on each of the biosecurity risk targets. For example, *"who likes bacon and pork chops? African swine fever could damage our pork industry and make all of these products more expensive,"* or *"in Torres Strait, we manage exotic fruit fly. If it was to establish on the mainland by moving infected fruit it could affect production and jobs in agriculture. Fruit and veg could become more expensive because we would have to control the damage to crops caused by the fruit flies. We've got the best produce in the world, let's keep it that way!"*



Tips to help you play

Field of play is divided to represent the various biosecurity zones across the Torres Strait region, from Papua New Guinea to the Northern Peninsula Area of Cape York.

The 'halfway line' represents where the **Torres Strait Protected Zone (TSPZ)** meets the **Permanent Biosecurity Monitoring Zone (TSPBMZ)**. This represents the notional line between First Reef and Kirriri where certain items such as fresh fruit and vegetables, live animals, red meat (deer, pig), bark and other conditionally non-prohibited goods that could harbour pests, diseases and weeds cannot be moved without a permit.

Defenders: Initially the Biosecurity Officer / instructor will stand alone against an attacking group of 7 pests, diseases or weeds. After the initial round, the Junior Biosecurity Officers will even up the odds and outnumber the pests. This is the message of the game – we can't do it alone and need your help to **keep a Top Watch!**

Attackers: The players are 'conveyances' (boats, planes, dinghies, or even helicopters) carrying 'hitchhiking' pests, diseases or weeds (targets) that Biosecurity Officers are trying to prevent moving across the biosecurity zones and establishing in any of the zones or on the mainland (try line / in-goal area). Attacking players moving across the field of play represent the way in which biosecurity hazards can change at short notice. For example, change in arrival times for aircraft and shipping or change of arrival locations. Movements can happen at any time of the day or night. This would be like a hazard running down the wrong side of the sideline!

Remember!

No body contact, just the tags!

If a Biosecurity Officer or Junior Biosecurity Officer recovers the tag from your belt, the attacking player must go into the **quarantine zone** until the round has finished.

If an attacking player makes it past the try line, they must remain in the goal area until the next round. That player's tag can be given to another player until all are in the in-goal area. The Biosecurity Officer then comments on how many pests, diseases and weeds have now made it to the Northern Peninsula Area and the mainland.



You can run the game again, but this time, all the other players who do not have a tag will be deputised as Junior Biosecurity Officers. Help defend the zones by lining up across the half-way line and team up to stop the attacking pests, diseases and weeds from breaking through the barrier of those who keep watch for threats to their communities - a Top Watch!

About Biosecurity in Torres Strait

Biosecurity, or 'quarantine' as it is sometimes called, plays a very important role in this part of the country. So important, in fact, there is a suburb called Quarantine on Waiben! This highlights the community's strong historical link to quarantine and its contribution to effective biosecurity as a vital function to **protect local people and produce** from exotic threats, a task local biosecurity officers continue to proudly perform.

The closest Australia has to a land border with a neighbouring country is Saibe, which is less than 4 km away from Papua New Guinea (PNG). Being so close, exotic pests have the potential to 'island hop' across the 150km between PNG and the Australian mainland at the tip of Cape York Peninsula.

In addition to the conveyances depicted in this game, there are **other pathways** through which exotic pests, diseases and weeds can arrive from overseas or other areas within Australia. Some of these pathways are natural (**unregulated**), such as wind and tide movements and animal migrations. Migrating birds, for example, can carry seeds in their bellies that could be from an exotic weed or they can carry disease with them.

Others pathways relate to human activities (**regulated**), either by accident or deliberate actions.

Australia's **biosecurity laws** help stop exotic pests, disease and weeds entering Torres Strait and spreading from Torres Strait to the mainland through regulated pathways such as traditional trade with PNG, via the mail or on small craft, for example. Certain goods must have a **permit to move** southward between the biosecurity zones in Torres Strait to the mainland because they can carry pests and diseases.

Help protect our communities. Don't move without a permit:



Adults, be sure to liaise with local suppliers to promote biosecurity messaging. Look for the **yellow sticker!** It should be on all of your cargo. This means your cargo has passed biosecurity inspection and is good to go.

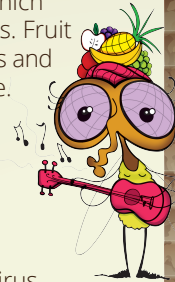


TOP WATCH! TAG

Australia's biosecurity system aims to minimise the risk of entry, establishment or spread of exotic pests, diseases and weeds that have the potential to cause significant harm to Australia's economy and unique environment. Because of its geographical isolation, Australia is free from many of the biosecurity threats that have had major environmental and economic consequences for other countries.

EXOTIC FRUIT FLY

Some exotic fruit fly species pose a serious threat to Australia. They look similar to native fruit flies but attack crops which are not damaged by our native flies. Fruit flies can infest a wide range of fruits and vegetables, causing a lot of damage.



AFRICAN SWINE FEVER (ASF)

ASF is a pig sickness caused by a virus that spreads rapidly. Only pigs can get this disease and lots of those that get it will die. If ASF came into Australia and lots of pigs died, we would not be able to get pork products to eat. We would also not be able to send any pig products to other countries.

SIAM WEED

Siam weed is one of the world's worst weeds. It is a fast-growing shrub that forms large, dense bushes. It can survive very dry conditions, fuelling hot fires that can kill trees and burn houses. It grows along riverbanks and could make it almost impossible for people to hunt and gather bush tucker.

BLACK SIGATOKA

Black Sigatoka is a disease caused by a fungus that attacks banana plants. It reduces the size and quantity of banana crops. In areas where there is black Sigatoka, chemical sprays are needed to protect banana farms which may be bad for the environment.

KEEP A TOP WATCH BIOSECURITY for RABIES



KEEP A TOP WATCH BIOSECURITY for INVASIVE ANTS



KEEP A TOP WATCH BIOSECURITY for INVASIVE FISH



RABIES

A sickness of animals and people caused by a virus spread through the bite or scratch of an infected dog, cat or dingo. Rabies can kill native animals and people, very quickly. If rabies spread to Australia we would need to take care. Bites or scratches from a sick animal can infect humans and can result in death.

INVASIVE ANTS

Invasive ant species are highly invasive. Once introduced, they spread rapidly threatening the environment, food sources and way of life. They can disrupt local wildlife, sting humans and animals and stop people from enjoying the outdoors. They can eat plants and damage machinery and building.

INVASIVE FISH

Invasive fish that are not native have the potential to have social, economic and environmental impacts. Ornamental fish become high-risk when let go in the wild. They can inhabit and flourish in undisturbed waterways (stagnant creeks, drains) as these can have abundant food resources without native fish to compete with.

WHY IS
Biosecurity?
IMPORTANT

Biosecurity
protects our communities
and our environment from
exotic pests, diseases
and weeds.

