



**Australian Government**

**Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service**

## **Update on the border testing of imported seafood**

**Date of Issue: April 2008**

### **Background**

In 2006-2007, the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) did a small survey of imported seafood, testing for chemical residues in addition to its routine testing under the Imported Food Inspection Scheme. The purpose of the survey was to provide a snapshot of chemical residues in imported seafood to check if its testing program was up-to-date.

For further information regarding this survey, refer to the seafood survey report on the AQIS website.

On the 3 September 2007, AQIS widened the existing antimicrobial screen applied to imported seafood (nitrofurans and malachite green) to add three additional antimicrobial chemicals (fluoroquinolones, quinolones and penicillin). This testing occurs under the random surveillance program at the 5% rate.

An additional six months of data has been collected by AQIS.

### **Results of seafood testing**

Since 3 September 2007, there have been 522 tests applied to imported seafood of which seven tests have detected the presence of an antimicrobial chemical and therefore failed. For a summary of the information relating to the tests that failed, please refer to Table 1 below.

The seafood that has been tested includes fish (barramundi, basa, cod, eel, mackerel, marlin, red emperor, salmon, trout, tuna, whiting and other species), lobsters, crabs and prawns. These products have been sourced from Argentina, Chile, China, Denmark, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niue, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, United States and Vietnam.

**Table 1:** Summary of failed tests

No. tests failed	Seafood product	Country of origin	Antimicrobial	Levels detected µg/kg
3	Prawns	China	Nitrofurans	1.7-5.9
2	Fish	Vietnam	Fluoroquinolones - Enrofloxacin - Ciprofloxacin	8.5-35 2.0-33
1	Prawns	Thailand	Fluoroquinolones - Enrofloxacin	5.6
1	Barramundi	Taiwan	Malachite Green	6.7

### **Review of seafood testing**

AQIS has reviewed the testing of antimicrobial compounds that was implemented on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2007. Given there have been no detections for penicillin or quinolones during this period, AQIS will remove these chemicals from the antimicrobial screen. Testing of imported seafood products for fluoroquinolones, nitrofurans and malachite green will continue.

### **Broader review into imported seafood**

Due to concerns about the safety of imported seafood, the Australian Government has committed to a review of existing testing protocols for seafood imports. The review will consider any measures necessary to improve the food safety standards of imported seafood products. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is coordinating this review, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2008.