



## **Vessel Policy Statement - Brown marmorated stink bug risk (BMSB) 2020-2021 season**

### **Purpose**

This policy outlines Seasonal Pest (SP) measures for commercial vessels for the Brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) 2020-21 season.

In response to the rapid expansion of BMSB throughout Europe and North America, the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (the department) has strengthened the seasonal measures to manage the risk of BMSB arriving in Australia for the 2020–21 BMSB risk season.

The department uses a range of scientific, intelligence and evidence based information when setting the measures including data collected from onshore verification activities conducted during previous BMSB seasons.

### **Policy objective**

In response to detections and challenges in managing on board insect infestations during the 2018-19 BMSB season and lessons learned during the 2019-20 risk season, the 2020-21 BMSB season aims to:

- Continue improvements to the department's ability to assess seasonal pest risks on vessels prior to arrival.
- Reward shipping lines that take greater responsibility for preventing and mitigating on board risks.
- Enhance the ability for all parties to manage risks offshore, at berth and onshore.
- Improve the effectiveness and timeliness of BMSB mitigation activities.

### **Policy Scope**

This policy applies to all commercial RoRo vessels that have berthed, loaded or transhipped goods from target risk countries from 1 September 2020 and that arrive in Australian territory by 31 May 2021 (inclusive).

### **Policy statement**

The risk of BMSB on board commercial vessels will be managed through the following four (4) measures:

#### **1. Target risk countries**

The following 32 countries continue to be target risk countries within the scope of vessel measures:

Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Kosovo, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Montenegro, Netherlands, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States.

Four additional target risk countries have been added for the 2020-21 BMSB season: Kazakhstan, Moldova, Portugal and Ukraine.



## 2. Vessel surveillance (SP Questionnaire + self-inspection) for specified vessel types

Commercial vessel operators intending to enter Australian territory must provide a Pre Arrival Report (PAR) using the Maritime Arrivals Reporting System (MARS) between 96 and 12 hours before the vessel's estimated time of arrival.

From 1 September 2020, and once a pre-arrival report has been received through MARS, all RoRo vessels, from all countries of origin, will be emailed a Seasonal Pest (SP) Questionnaire.

All RoRo vessels that have berthed, loaded or transhipped cargo from target risk countries will be directed to perform a pest self-inspection in transit and report their findings through the SP Questionnaire.

- The SP Questionnaire will request details of the vessel's recent ports of call, whether the vessel has been approved for participation in the Vessel Seasonal Pest Scheme (VSPS), whether it has been fogged during its current voyage, and the results of any self-inspections.
- All RoRo vessels will be required to perform at least one self-inspection. Where insects are detected, the vessel will be required to perform two additional inspections over 48 hours.
- Where insects are detected, vessel masters must provide details of the number of insects found, where they were found (e.g. the deck/location), and whether they were alive or dead.
  - Photos of all insects must be submitted along with the completed SP Questionnaire. The questionnaire includes guidance on how to take photos of insects.
- All insects must be kept for presentation to Biosecurity Officer on arrival in Australia.

Other vessel types must report detections of any insects through their PAR as per mandatory biosecurity vessel reporting obligations. Where BMSB or other actionable exotic species are reported, the vessel will be directed to perform a self-inspection.

## 3. Mandated seasonal pest (SP) inspections of all roll-on roll-off vessels from target risk countries

RoRo vessels from target risk countries will be subject to a mandatory SP inspection on arrival in Australian territory.

RoRo vessels that have loaded only cargo that has been treated by a BMSB approved method, is covered by a safeguarding agreement, or is compliant with [New, Unused and Not Field Tested \(NUFT\) BMSB requirements](#) and have detected no insects on board will be exempted from the mandatory SP inspection.

Vessels loaded with any cargo that does not meet the above criteria will be ineligible for exemption.

RoRo vessels that participate in the Vessel Seasonal Pest Scheme (VSPS) and have detected no insects on board during transit will be exempted from the mandatory SP inspection on arrival.

The department will continue to perform inspections on vessels for other biosecurity reasons unrelated to BMSB. The nature of these inspections will vary based on the vessels history of biosecurity compliance and pre-arrival reporting.



**4. SP inspection principles**

- Except to allow access for Australian government official/s, a vessel’s ramp and doors are to remain closed and goods must not be discharged until the SP inspection is completed and approval has been granted by a biosecurity officer.
- Where live insects or significant numbers of freshly dead insects are detected, an SP inspection will be supplemented by dual action fumigation (thermal pyrethrum fog + residual insecticide).

**5. Vessel Seasonal Pest Scheme (VSPS)**

VSPS offers a specific response for RoRo vessels that can demonstrate continued compliance with eligibility criteria. To be eligible for the VSPS, vessel operators (shipping lines) must submit documentation to the department for assessment for each RoRo vessel on a single voyage:

- a. Provide, as part of their PAR, information relating to the risk status of loaded cargo. e.g. confirming whether cargo has been treated, is covered by a safeguarding agreement, or is compliant with [New, Unused and Not Field Tested \(NUFT\) BMSB requirements](#).
- b. Have met the obligations of the VSPS Biosecurity Risk Plan. The VSPS Biosecurity Risk Plan (the VSPS Plan) sets out agreed measures by the department and the vessel operator to manage on board seasonal pest risk mitigation of the vessel and its cargo in the event that an infestation is detected. This VSPS Plan must be agreed, in writing, by the department and the vessel’s operator. The VSPS Plan includes contingency arrangement for the management of the cargo and vessel in the event that an infestation is detected.

**Department management**

The department will:

- Assess reported SP questionnaire responses, managed by the Maritime National Coordination Centre (MNCC).
- Assess the status of cargo and BMSB risk and aim to notify the vessel at least 24 hours prior to its scheduled arrival of berthing conditions.
  - Notifications are generally via MARS but may include verbal advice from the MNCC or other department officer where there are any issues.
- Consider the use of a controlled discharge and onshore management of compliant cargo in accordance with the agreed VSPS Biosecurity Risk Plan where detections are confirmed.
- Implement an assurance regime to verify the continued compliance of vessel operators in reporting detections and risk status of goods.
- Apply sanctions to individual vessel and vessel operators where non-compliance is detected.

**Document information**

The following table contains administrative metadata.

<b>Policy owner:</b>	Director, Conveyances and Ports, Border Controls Branch, Biosecurity Operations Division
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