



# 2020-21 Vessel Seasonal Pest Scheme (VSPS) Biosecurity Risk Plan

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## The Vessel Seasonal Pest Scheme (VSPS)

The VSPS offers a specific response for Roll on Roll off (RoRo) vessels to consider risk points, demonstrate continued compliance with eligibility criteria and assist with seasonal pest risk measures over the course of the voyage which includes:

- Prior to loading
- Transit
- Anchorage
- Berth
- Onshore
- Biosecurity inspection
- Unloading of cargo.

To qualify for the VSPS, a vessel operator (shipping line) must submit a biosecurity risk plan to the department for assessment and agreement.

### What to write in the plan?

The VSPS Biosecurity Risk Plan must identify:

1. Vessels to be included and their key responsible parties.
2. All participating vessels that must undertake cleaning prior to loading, on board and commencement of each separate voyage to Australia to minimise contamination/infestation.
3. All participating vessels to undertake on route daily self-inspection.
4. Other measures that will be undertaken to reduce the likelihood of onboard cross-contamination and to detect any infestations, for example:
  - a. en-route trapping and/or netting
  - b. activities undertaken prior to loading to minimise contamination (e.g. treatment of all cargo by a BMSB approved method)
  - c. segregation of cargo and/or decks, treatment of vessel by an approved BMSB method after loading
  - d. en-route fogging with a residual fumigant.
5. Outlines the evidence that can and will be provided to the department on request.
6. Measures to be undertaken at anchorage to disrupt and treat any known infestations.
7. Measures to be undertaken at berth to detect, monitor and contain any infestations.
8. Measures to be undertaken because of biosecurity inspection before cargo loading can begin.
9. Measures to be undertaken onshore to manage any contaminated cargo at each anticipated port of arrival.
10. Other measures that will be undertaken to improve the biosecurity risk awareness of crew members and their compliance with the agreed plan.
11. Evidence of these measures to be provided to the department on request.

## VSPS eligibility

To be eligible for the VSPS, each vessel for each separate voyage to Australia must:

1. Provide, at the time of submitting their pre-arrival report, information relating to the risk status of loaded cargo, e.g. confirming whether cargo has been treated, is covered by a Safeguarding Arrangement, or is compliant with [New, Unused and Not Field Tested \(NUFT\) BMSB requirements](#)
2. Have met the obligations of any on board Biosecurity Risk Plan agreed by the department and the vessel's operator
3. Have access to the VSPS Biosecurity Risk Plan agreed by the department and the vessel's operator for the management of the cargo and vessel in the event that an infestation is detected.

## The department's assessment of the plan

At all stages of implementation, the department will continue to monitor delivery of the agreed plan with the responsible parties and verify the effectiveness of activities through supervision and inspection.

The purpose of a vessel inspection would be to assess whether the measures taken under this plan give the department sufficient assurance that the biosecurity risk posed by BMSB (and any other exotic pest species) associated with cargo and the vessel is at an acceptable level of risk.

If the department is not satisfied that the biosecurity risk associated with a vessel or its cargo can be adequately managed, the department may direct the vessel to leave Australian territory and for the cargo to be exported.

Where cargo is permitted to be discharged, if at any time, the department is of the view that the risk is no longer acceptable, the cargo may be directed for export and the vessel directed to leave Australian territory.

## Questions on drafting a plan?

Email the seaports policy team: [seaports@awe.gov.au](mailto:seaports@awe.gov.au)

## Reportable biosecurity incidents

If you see any unexpected pests, plant matter or soil, **secure** the area and **report** them to the department immediately.

## Who to contact for seasonal pest reporting?

The department's Maritime National Coordination Centre (MNCC) is based in Adelaide, South Australia. Phone: 1300 004 605 (in Australia) or +61 8 8201 6185 (outside Australia), fax 1300 005 882 or email [maritimncc@awe.gov.au](mailto:maritimncc@awe.gov.au)

### **MNCC operating hours are:**

Monday to Friday 07:00 - 19:00 (06:30 - 18:30 Adelaide time) AEST.

Saturday to Sunday 09:00 - 17:00 (08:30 - 16:30 Adelaide time) AEST.

**Emergency only** on-call phone assistance after MNCC operating hours is available as listed on the [Vessel Contacts](#) page.

## Brown Marmorated Stink Bug

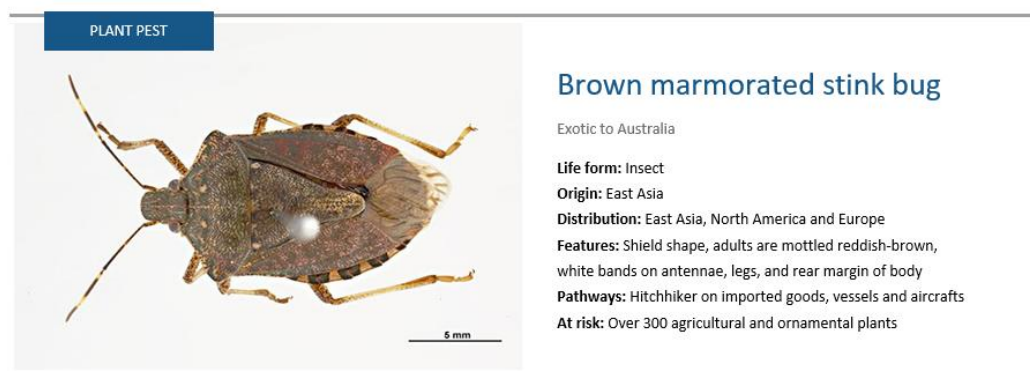
The Brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) and other stink bugs are not present in Australia. Stink bugs and other insect pests have the potential to harm plant health and have economic consequences.

BMSB impacts agriculture industries, as juveniles and adults feed on and can severely damage fruit and vegetable crops, reducing production yields or rendering them unsellable. There is also a potential for harm to human health, as some people have allergic reactions to BMSB secretions.

BMSB seeks shelter over winter in places such as vehicles, homes, machinery, shipping containers, boats, caravans and factories, often in large numbers. They can arrive in Australia on cargo such as cars and containers shipped to Australia between September and May. This coincides with autumn and winter in the Northern Hemisphere.

BMSB is just one example of a range of exotic pest species that can hitchhike on cargo and in containers and arrive in wood used for pallets and other packing materials.

### Brown marmorated stink bug (Halyomorpha halys)



**Illustration above:** Photograph of a BMSB. For further identification details, see the Cargo pest identification guide: [agriculture.gov.au/import/arrival/pests](https://agriculture.gov.au/import/arrival/pests)

## Points to consider when drafting a VSPS plan

Shipping lines to complete a VSPS Biosecurity risk plan based on the details below. There are some dot points for consideration when writing the plan:

### Responsible parties

*Consider:*

- *Who is responsible for implementing this plan?*
- *Who is/are the points of contact for this plan? At specific locations?*

### Introduction

*Consider:*

- *Providing a basic overview of vessel/industry and contamination considerations - vessel structures, routes, challenges, etc.*
- *What are the objectives of this plan?*
- *What is in scope - all vessels, some vessels, some routes?*
- *Differences in vessel structures, deck layouts.*

## Prior to loading the vessel – at an international port, not Australia

*Consider measures undertaken prior to loading or on board to minimise contamination/ infestation including but not limited to:*

- *Cleaning of the vessel including all cargo decks, tie down points, ingress/egress points*
- *What activities have been undertaken prior to loading to minimise contamination, e.g. treatment of all cargo by a BMSB approved method; fumigation; inspection?*
- *What activities have been undertaken on board the vessel to detect any insect infestations, e.g. self-inspection; trapping; fogging using an irritant?*
- *What activities have been undertaken on board the vessel to minimise cross-contamination, e.g. segregation of treated and non-treated cargo, segregation of decks?*
- *Loading of new and used cargo, consideration of cross contamination.*

## During transit – to Australia

*Consider*

- *Measures for self-inspection of all cargo decks that includes:*
  - *Self-inspection reporting 48hours after the vessel has departed every international port en-route to Australia*
  - *Self-inspection reporting seven days prior to arrival into Australia.*
- *What activities will be undertaken on board the vessel to detect any insect infestation, e.g. trapping; on route fogging using an irritant on route fogging using a residual fumigant?*
- *Biosecurity awareness and BMSB training for Master and crew which includes storing and collecting insect specimens.*
- *Evidence that agreed self-inspection activities have been undertaken effectively.*

## At anchorage – in Australia

*Consider measures to be undertaken at anchorage that would disrupt and treat any known infestations*

- *How the cargo would be prepared for treatment to maximise effectiveness, e.g. boots, bonnets or doors opened?*
- *How the vessel would be prepared for treatment application to maximise effectiveness, i.e. heated; decks isolated; cargo isolated/contained?*
- *How treatment providers would be transferred to the vessel?*
- *What treatment would be applied; who would apply the treatment; would they be operating under an existing Approved Arrangement; have they obtained all regulatory approvals?*
- *How the treatment would be applied, i.e. fogging or sprayed, to what areas; and how would its delivery be measured/certified?*

## At berth – in Australia

*Consider measures to be undertaken at berth to detect, monitor and if necessary, contain any infestations*

### Inspection

- *How the cargo would be prepared for inspection for a Biosecurity Officer to maximise effectiveness, e.g. boots, bonnets or doors opened; relocated to maximise access?*

### Treatment

- *How the cargo would be prepared for treatment to maximise effectiveness, e.g. boots, bonnets or doors opened?*
- *How the vessel would be prepared for treatment application to maximise effectiveness, i.e. decks isolated; cargo isolated/contained?*
- *What treatment would be applied; who would apply the treatment; would they be operating under an existing Approved Arrangement; have they obtained all regulatory approvals?*
- *How the treatment would be applied, i.e. fogging or sprayed, to what areas; and how would its delivery be measured/certified?*

Controlled discharge

- How the ramp and transit path would be prepared and monitored to minimise disturbance, detect insects or to contain fly-offs?
- How the cargo would be discharged, e.g. staging; total number of units per tranche; rate of discharge; will it move immediately for treatment; will it be stored inside or outside, covered or uncovered; for what length of time will it be stored before inspection/treatment?
- Contingency arrangements should the detection of high risk pests necessitate cessation of the discharge process?

**Onshore - prior to unloading in Australia**

Consider measures to be undertaken onshore to manage any contaminated cargo.

- Confirmation that the port authority has agreed to an onshore inspection/treatment process.

Inspection

- How the cargo would be prepared for inspection by a Biosecurity Officer to maximise effectiveness, e.g. boots, bonnets or doors opened?

Treatment

- How the cargo would be prepared for treatment to maximise effectiveness, e.g. boots, bonnets or doors opened?
- What treatment would be applied; who would apply the treatment; would they be operating under an existing Approved Arrangement; have they obtained all regulatory approvals?
- How the treatment would be applied, i.e. heated, fogging or sprayed; total number of units per tranche; rate of treatment; and how would its delivery be measured/certified?

**Plan approval and release**

Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)	Position/title	Signature	Date

**Document control**

File name and Location			
File reference number			
Version	Description	Author	Date
1.0			25 August 2020