Guidelines for airline and aircraft operators arriving in Australian territory

October 2019
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# Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term used</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goods</strong></td>
<td>Goods (as defined in the <em>Biosecurity Act 2015</em>) include the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• an animal;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a plant (whether moveable or not);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a sample or specimen of a disease agent;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a pest;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• mail;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• any other article, substance or thing (including but not limited to, any kind of moveable property).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excludes ballast water, human remains and conveyances (unless that conveyance is carried on another conveyance).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goods are subject to biosecurity control after it is landed and must only be landed under section 146 and moved in accordance with section 132 the <em>Biosecurity Act 2015</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department’s Arrivals email</strong></td>
<td><strong><a href="mailto:arrivals@agriculture.gov.au">arrivals@agriculture.gov.au</a></strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biosecurity officer</strong></td>
<td>A person who is authorised under the <em>Biosecurity Act 2015</em> section 545 to be a biosecurity officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disinsection</strong></td>
<td>The procedure whereby health measures are taken to control or kill the insect vectors of human diseases present in baggage, cargo, containers, conveyances, goods and postal parcels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> definition taken from the <em>International Health Regulations 2005</em> (IHRs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-scheduled flight</strong></td>
<td>Non-scheduled flight, of an aircraft, has the meaning given by the <em>Air Navigation Act 1920</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pratique</strong></td>
<td>The <em>International Health Regulation 2005</em> defines pratique as “permission for a ship to enter a port, embark or disembark, discharge or load cargo or stores; permission for an aircraft, after landing, to embark or disembark, discharge or load cargo or stores; and permission for a ground transport vehicle, upon arrival, to embark or disembark, discharge or load cargo or stores”. This is to ensure risks to human health can be identified and managed before the vessel or aircraft is unloaded or disembarked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive Pratique</strong></td>
<td>Under section 48 of the <em>Biosecurity Act 2015</em>, pratique is automatically given to all incoming vessels and aircraft arriving in Australian territory at an authorised landing place or port, unless the aircraft or vessel is a class specified by the Director of Human Biosecurity as being subject to negative pratique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Pratique</strong></td>
<td>Under section 49 of the <em>Biosecurity Act 2015</em>, there are classes of Aircraft or vessels (specified by the Director of Human Biosecurity) that must meet certain requirements in order to be granted manual pratique by a biosecurity officer. These circumstances may relate to human health aspects related to disinsection measures, listed human disease signs or symptoms, or death on board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs and symptoms</td>
<td>Details of what to look for when assessing an ill travel can be found in the Fact Sheet: Reporting an Illness or Death, developed by the Department of Health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listed Human Disease (LHD)</td>
<td>Is any disease declared to be a listed human disease by the Director of Human Biosecurity through a determination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conveyance</td>
<td>Means any of the following: (a) an aircraft; (b) a vessel; (c) a vehicle; (d) a train (including railway rolling stock); (e) any other means of transport as prescribed by the regulations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact details
For further information please visit the Department of Agriculture website or contact Arrivals or your local department office.

Disclaimer
- The requirements in this document are subject to change and it is the responsibility of the user to check they have the latest version and to ensure compliance with the legislation. For the latest version visit agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/avm/aircraft.
- The requirements contained in this document are those of the department only and do not include the requirements of any other Australian Government agency.
- Links to other websites are provided for the user’s convenience and do not constitute endorsement of all material at those sites, or any associated organisations, products or services.
- If you use automatic language translation services in connection with this document, you do so at your own risk.
- The department may revise this disclaimer at any time by updating this posting.
- In addition, please refer to the department’s disclaimer.
1 Purpose

This document provides an introductory guide to airlines and aircraft operators who intend to fly into Australian territory. The information contained herein outlines the biosecurity requirements for aircraft clearance in accordance with Australian Government legislation:

- *Biosecurity Act 2015* including all subordinate legislation.

2 Biosecurity

The department is responsible for managing Australia’s biosecurity system. Every year the department assists millions of people, goods, vessels and aircraft move in and out of Australia without harming our environment, animal, plant and human health.

The department works closely with other governments, industry and the community to manage biosecurity risks offshore, onshore and at the border.

Australia’s strong biosecurity system helps to protect our unique environment and agricultural sector and supports Australia’s reputation as a safe and reliable trading nation. This has significant economic, environmental and community benefits for all Australians.

The department administers human biosecurity functions at the border on behalf of the [Department of Health](https://www.doh.gov.au) (DoH) including the screening of arriving passengers for listed human diseases, surveillance activities relating to aircraft disinsection and vector monitoring.

The department is responsible for the biosecurity clearance of all incoming international aircraft, aircraft waste, goods, live animals and passengers’ accompanied baggage.

3 Pre-arrival reporting requirements

Under section 193 of the *Biosecurity Act 2015*, the operator of an aircraft is required to report prescribed information before landing.

Failure to comply with a requirement to report, or giving false or misleading information, is an offence under the Act.

3.1 What must be reported?

The operator of an aircraft must report if any of the following circumstances are applicable to the aircraft:

a. details of any person on board the aircraft who has, or had, signs or symptoms of a listed human disease during the flight;

b. details of any person on board the aircraft who died during the flight;

c. if there are animals or plants (or both) in the cabin of the aircraft;

d. if any animal in the cabin of the aircraft died during the flight;

e. if the aircraft is an incoming aircraft and the prescribed disinsection measures for the aircraft have not been taken, or will not have been taken, before the aircraft arrives at its first landing place in Australian territory.
In the event that any of the above circumstances are applicable to the aircraft and if the operator of an aircraft cannot make direct contact with the department, he/she must ensure their Ground Handling Agent or the Air Traffic Controller at the relevant airport contacts the department and reports the prescribed information prior to the aircraft’s arrival. The operator of an aircraft must also report any changes to the above information.

Where any of the above circumstances are reported, all passengers and crew must remain on board the aircraft until approval to disembark is provided by a biosecurity officer.

3.2 Non-scheduled flight
The operator of an aircraft on a non-scheduled flight must report the following additional information without exception:

a) information identifying the aircraft;
b) the intended first landing place of the aircraft in Australian territory;
c) the estimated day and time of arrival of the aircraft at the place referred to in paragraph (b);
d) the name and contact details of:
   i. the operator of the aircraft; and
   ii. if the operator is not the owner of the aircraft—the owner of the aircraft;
e) details about any animals or plants in the cabin of the aircraft.

3.3 When must the report be given?
The pre-arrival report must be given:

a) at the earlier of:
   i. as close to the top of descent as is operationally practicable before the aircraft is estimated to arrive at its first landing place in Australian territory; and
   ii. 30 minutes before the aircraft is estimated to come to a standstill after arriving at its first landing place in Australian territory; or
b) at the time specified by a biosecurity official.

Note: Aircraft on non-scheduled flights may provide the additional information to the department prior to the aircraft’s departure from the last port before entering Australian territory.

3.4 To whom must the report be given and how?
The pre-arrival report must be made to biosecurity officers located at the intended first landing place (or at the department office responsible for biosecurity clearances at the intended first landing place) either orally or in writing (including electronically).

4 Pratique
Pratique, in practice, is permission given to an aircraft arriving in Australia to disembark passengers and crew after determining the aircraft is free from any human illness or death.

Aircraft entering Australia currently operate under a system of positive pratique, which means pratique is deemed to be automatically granted at the time an aircraft arrives.
However, positive pratique does not apply, and is taken never to have applied, in the following situations:

1. The operator of the aircraft has given prescribed information in relation to items as listed in section 3.
2. The Director of Human Biosecurity has given a direction, before the aircraft arrives, that pratique is not taken to have been granted.
3. A departmental officer advises the operator of the aircraft, before or after the aircraft arrives, that he or she has not satisfied that the aircraft is free from infection.

Aircraft in the above circumstances will undergo negative pratique whereby departmental officers will meet all aircraft when pratique is not automatically granted. All passengers and crew must remain on board until pratique is granted by the department or unless authorised by a departmental officer. Failure by an operator of an international aircraft to fulfil pratique requirements is a breach of the Act.

5 Approval to land aircraft in Australia

5.1 First point of entry requirements
Section 237 of the Biosecurity Act 2015 requires overseas aircraft to land at a landing place that has been determined a first point of entry under section 223 of the Biosecurity Act 2015, unless specific permission has been granted under section 239 or a direction given under sections 241-42. Additionally, some first points of entry will have designated Biosecurity Entry Points (section 238) where particular aircraft or goods must be brought as soon as practicable, in order to manage the biosecurity risks associated with them.

It is an offence for the operator of an aircraft to land aircraft in contravention of any of these sections.

Each first point of entry has its own determination which details the classes of aircraft and goods that may be landed, any Biosecurity Entry Points, and conditions under which the landing place operates as a first point of entry. These determinations can be found on the Federal Register of Legislation as instruments of the Biosecurity Act 2015.

5.2 First points of entry permanently staffed by the department
The following first points of entry are permanently staffed by the department:

- Adelaide Airport
- Brisbane Airport
- Cairns Airport
- Christmas Island Airport
- Cocos (Keeling) Islands Airport
- Darwin Airport
- Gold Coast Airport
- Melbourne Tullamarine Airport
- Norfolk Island Airport (from 1 July 2016)
- Perth Airport
- Sydney Kingsford-Smith Airport.
5.3 First points of entry not permanently staffed by the department

Australian airports that have been determined as first points of entry and are not permanently staffed by the department are serviced for international arrivals under a request for service arrangement.

The National Passenger Processing Committee (NPPC) co-ordinates the exercise of various statutory controls and responsibilities carried out at airports. One of the NPPC’s functions is to review requests from aircraft/pilots arriving or departing from non-international and/or non-designated airports where there is no permanent presence by the:

- Department of Home Affairs
- Department of Agriculture.

Aircraft operators/pilots should refer to the NPPC Airport Guide to identify if NPPC approval is required for the airport at which they wish to arrive. (Note: If the airport at which you wish to arrive is not on the attached list, NPPC approval is required).

If NPPC approval is required, aircraft operators/pilots must provide a written request for NPPC approval to DIBP at least ten (10) business days prior to the flight.

For non-scheduled flight arrivals at first points of entry where NPPC approval is not required, notification of prescribed information is still required under the Act (see section 3). Other Government agencies will also require notification of your arrival. It is the responsibility of the airline operator/pilot or agent (Ground Handling Agent) to contact the regional office to make arrangements for an aircraft’s arrival.

5.4 Aircraft arriving into non first points of entry

Under section 239 of the Act, the Director of Biosecurity or the Director of Human Biosecurity (or a delegate) may give permission upon receipt of an application in writing for the entry of an overseas aircraft at a landing place that is not a first point of entry for aircraft.

Australian airports and landing places that are non first points of entry are serviced for international arrivals under a request for service arrangement.

Aircraft operators/pilots should refer to NPPC Airport Guide located on the NPPC website to identify if NPPC approval is required for the airport at which they wish to arrive. (Note: If the airport at which you wish to arrive is not on the attached list, NPPC approval is required).

If NPPC approval is required, aircraft operators/pilots must provide a written request for NPPC approval to DIBP at least ten (10) business days prior to the flight.

If NPPC approval is not required, a Request to land aircraft or unload goods at a place not determined to be a point of entry in Australian territory form must be submitted electronically via email to the department for consideration by the department at least ten (10) working days prior to arrival. Failure to do so may prevent a permission being granted and result in the aircraft needing to land at first point of entry permanently staffed by the department (see section 5.2). The application will be considered by the department based on whether the landing place has appropriate infrastructure, facilities and procedures to manage the biosecurity risk as well as the ability for that location to be staffed. Other Government agencies will also require notification of your arrival.

Department of Agriculture - Guidelines for airline and aircraft operators arriving in Australian territory
The NPPC Airport Guide, NPPC Application Form and further information on the NPPC can be found on the NPPC website.

5.5 Aircraft carrying cargo (animals, plants or other goods)
Section 146 of the Act requires that imported goods (including accompanied baggage and waste) be unloaded at a first point of entry for those goods. If either:

1. the intended landing place is a non first point of entry; or
2. the intended landing place is a first point of entry but not determined to unload that particular class of animal, plant or goods;

then the master, owner or agent of the aircraft must request permission for goods to be unloaded, under subsection 146 (2) of the Biosecurity Act 2015.

To apply for permission, a Request to land aircraft or unload goods at a place not determined to be a point of entry in Australian territory form must be emailed to the department at least ten (10) working days prior to arrival. Failure to do so may prevent a permission being granted and result in the commission of an offence if goods are landed without permission.

The application will be considered by the department based on the ability for that location to be staffed.

If goods are landed without permission they may be required to either remain on the aircraft or be held in an approved location storage area and penalties may apply.

In the event that permission is not granted, the master, owner or agent of the aircraft should consider alternative arrangements such as:

1. Biosecurity clearance of the goods at an airport that is a first point of entry for those goods, prior to moving them to the non first point landing place; or
2. Biosecurity bonding of goods (subject to the department’s approval) onboard the aircraft in circumstances where:
   a. the aircraft will be returning overseas; or
   b. the final destination of the goods is a first point of entry.

6 In-flight and on arrival announcements

6.1 Mandatory passenger announcement
Section 220 of the Act states:

‘The person in charge or the operator of an incoming aircraft or vessel that is subject to biosecurity control because of subsection 191(2) or (4) must ensure that each person (including a member of the crew) on board the aircraft or vessel is given information about biosecurity requirements under the laws of the Commonwealth. The content and form of information given under subsection (1) must have been approved by the Director of Biosecurity or the Director of Human Biosecurity. The information may be given in writing or orally, including by means of an audio, or audio-visual, recording.

Department of Agriculture - Guidelines for airline and aircraft operators arriving in Australian territory
The following caution is to apply to the person in charge or the operator of an incoming aircraft or vessel that is subject to biosecurity control because of s191(2) or (4), in accordance with s220 of the **Biosecurity Act 2015**.

‘You may be liable to a civil penalty if you fail to ensure that each person (including a member of the crew) on board the aircraft is given approved information about biosecurity requirements under the laws of the Commonwealth’.

Delivery of the approved incoming passenger announcement on all international flights is a legal requirement and must occur as close to the top of descent as is operationally practicable before the aircraft is estimated to arrive at its first landing place in Australian territory. The biosecurity passenger video and in-flight passenger announcement **must not be edited**.

**Biosecurity passenger video**

The biosecurity passenger video, ‘**Don’t be sorry, just declare it**’, is available in English, Hindi and Mandarin and must be played as the mandatory passenger announcement where the message is currently delivered in these languages. It is recommended that it also be installed on in-flight entertainment systems for passengers’ reference.

In instances where airlines do not have the capacity to show the video on an aircraft, departmental approval must be obtained for use of the existing in-language audio announcement, in order to meet the legislative requirements of the Act.

**In-flight passenger announcement**

The approved in-flight passenger announcement is as follows:

This is an important message from the Australian Government. Australia has strict biosecurity laws that affect you. This is to protect Australia’s agriculture and unique environment and wildlife from pests and diseases.

You will receive an Incoming Passenger Card that asks questions about what you are bringing to Australia and where you have visited. You must answer truthfully. It is a legal document and a false statement may result in a penalty, visa cancellation or criminal prosecution. Your card will be checked by an official on your arrival. You are responsible for all items in your luggage.

You must mark ‘yes’ on your card if you have:
- certain food, plant material or animal products, or
- equipment or shoes used in rivers and lakes or with soil attached, or
- been in contact with a farm or farm animals in the past 30 days.

Food supplied onboard must be left onboard. Do not take it with you.

The Australian Government has increased biosecurity activities at the border to manage the risk of diseases such as African swine fever and foot-and-mouth disease from entering the country. You must declare if you are bringing any meat products into Australia.

After any international travel, there may be a small chance that you have been exposed to a communicable disease. If you are feeling unwell, particularly with fever, chills or sweats, it is important for your own health and for the protection of others, that you bring this to the attention of a member of the crew.

Department of Agriculture - Guidelines for airline and aircraft operators arriving in Australian territory
Make your entry into Australia as smooth as possible – don’t be sorry, just declare it.

6.2 Optional on arrival announcement – Medical

When border officials are required to board an aircraft to attend to an ill passenger or a passenger who has died in-flight, the following on arrival announcement may be aired prior to disembarkation of the passengers. The purpose of this announcement is to advise passengers that there may be delays while border officials assess the situation. The approved announcement is as follows and must not be edited.

This is an important message from the Australian Government. There is a medical situation involving a passenger/s on board this aircraft. Border officials and medical personnel will now assess the situation. There is no need for concern. Please remain seated until the notice to disembark has been provided.

7 Aircraft disinsection

Regulation 7(1) of the Biosecurity (Human Health) Regulation 2016 states:

For section 53 of the Act, the operator of an incoming aircraft must take measures (disinsection measures) to control or destroy, by treating the aircraft, insect vectors of human diseases that:

- have the potential to cause, directly or indirectly, a listed human disease; and
- may exist in or on:
  - the aircraft; or
  - goods in or on the aircraft.

Failure to comply with regulation 7 is an offence and may attract a penalty.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines ‘disinsection’ as ‘the procedure whereby health measures are taken to control or kill the insect vectors of human diseases present in baggage, cargo, containers, conveyances’. For example, insect vectors include mosquitoes. The department administers disinsection requirements on behalf of the Department of Health (DoH).

International aircraft are disinsected to help protect Australia from potential disease vectors and harmful pests. Details of aircraft disinsection requirements based on the WHO’s recommendations and DoH policy requirements can be found in the Schedule of Aircraft Disinsection Procedures.

To assist airlines with differing operational requirements, several options for achieving effective disinsection for cabins and holds are available:
- Residual (conducted in the absence of passengers)
- Pre-embarkation (conducted in the absence of passengers)
- Pre-flight and Top of Descent (conducted in the presence of passengers)
- On-arrival (conducted in the presence of passengers).

Approval to perform some methods of disinsection is dependent on airlines entering into an arrangement with either the department or MPI. The arrangement outlines the application of a particular set of procedures and the supervision, monitoring and testing of the airlines’ compliance with those procedures. If an airline or airline operator has not satisfactorily negotiated
an arrangement with either the department or MPI, the on-arrival disinsection method will be undertaken on a fee for service basis.
8 Biosecurity waste

All cabin, galley and hold waste onboard the aircraft must be collected, transported, stored and/or treated by a service provider that has entered into an approved arrangement with the department or under the department’s supervision on a fee for service basis.

Biosecurity waste may be derived from:

- waste, sweepings, organic galley and accommodation refuse from aircraft;
- refuse or sweepings from the holds of aircraft;
- unconsumed prepared meals and other partly consumed food;
- any non-washable items, other waste or materials which may have come into contact with biosecurity waste;
- animal and plant materials (including floral arrangements and animal or plant waste); or
- materials used to pack and stabilise imported goods.

For more information on approved service providers contact your local department office and ask for the Approved Arrangements Section or contact Arrivals for any other queries.
Version control

Updates will occur automatically on the department’s website and this page will summarise the amendments as they occur. The specific sections updated are described in the revision table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Change</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• First draft</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Airports Program</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CLU clearance</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>DAFF Corporate Legal Unit</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 20D URL amendment</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Airports Program</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Amended the Been Away? Feel Ok? pamphlet ordering process</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Airports Program</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<td>• Amended the in–flight languages</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Passengers Program</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Amended approval to land aircraft in Australia section</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Passengers Program</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Amended pre-arrival reporting requirements section</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Passengers Program</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Amended branding</td>
<td>All 6</td>
<td>Policy and Prevention Program</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Amended NPPC and In-flight announcement section</td>
<td>All 6</td>
<td>Policy and Prevention Program</td>
<td>2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Amended in-flight announcement section</td>
<td>6 All</td>
<td>Policy and Prevention Program</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Updated links from @daff.gov.au to @agriculture.gov.au</td>
<td>All 6</td>
<td>Travellers and Vessels Section</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inserted optional on arrival announcement for ill and deceased passengers</td>
<td>All 6</td>
<td>Travellers and Vessels Section</td>
<td>2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Amended in-flight announcement</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Travellers and Vessels Section</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Amended content and links to forms for new Biosecurity Act 2015</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Travellers and Vessels Section</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Update to mandatory passenger announcement information (video)</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Updated passenger announcement for ASF</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Compliance Conveyances and Ports</td>
<td>2019</td>
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