



Independent Employer of Australian Government Authorised Officers (AAOs) Accreditation Scheme Fact Sheet for Abattoir Owners or Operators

What is the 'Independent Employer of AAOs Accreditation Scheme'?

It is a scheme developed by the Department of Agriculture to provide for the employment of Australian Government Authorised Officers (AAOs) by independent employment providers. Under the Scheme, agencies will supply AAOs to Australian export slaughter establishments to meet EU standards.

Why is the Department of Agriculture running the Scheme?

Many countries accept product prepared to the Australian Standards, however where there are additional requirements, the department will develop programs to facilitate trade to those markets.

The European Union requires that post-mortem inspections are performed by inspectors employed by a party other than the food business operation. Therefore to export product to that market, AAOs must be sourced from an Independent Employer.

Who can employ an AAO?

AAOs can be employed by an export registered abattoir or labour hire provider (e.g. independent AAO employer).

For the EU market, AAOs must be employed by an independent AAO employer approved by the department to supply AAOs.

How can an EU-listed Establishment meet EU AAO requirements?

The establishment has two options:

1. Option one is to use AAOs employed by an approved independent AAO employer. The establishment should ensure that the employer they choose has met, and continues to meet criteria of the Independent Employer of AAOs Accreditation Scheme.

Establishments will need to amend their approved arrangement to identify that they source AAOs from an approved independent employer and have this change approved by their ATM before 1 November 2014.
2. The other option is for the EU-listed Establishment to ask the department to supply Food Safety Meat Assessors to perform post mortem inspection. Please note establishments wishing to implement the traditional AEMIS model will need to provide the department with at least three months' notice of this requirement.

Can an export meat establishment run a mixed model where can use AAOs employed by the establishment as well as other AAOs employed by the Independent AAO Employer?

Yes. Where establishment management elect to use AAOs during a shift to conduct inspection, the management may choose to employ AAOs through independent AAO employers for specific runs and revert to company AAOs for other runs.

Can AAOs be employed by an Independent AAO Employer and an export meat company at the same time?

No. An AAO must be paid by the Independent AAO Employer at all times for whatever work they do at a meat establishment and cannot at any time work directly for or be paid by the meat establishment.

Can AAOs sourced from an Independent AAO Employer perform inspections on product destined to other markets?

Yes. These establishments will need to amend their approved arrangement to reflect these arrangements.

Can AAOs sourced from an Independent AAO Employer perform other tasks on the establishment?

An abattoir can use relief AAOs hired by the Independent AAO Employer to conduct other activities provided:

1. the AAO is not nominated in a position of management and control of the establishment; and
2. the primary function of the AAO is to perform meat inspection activities.

Where this may not be achievable, the owner or operator may make an application for consideration by the department, along with proposed amendments to the company's Approved Arrangement to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest or pecuniary interests, real or perceived, identified with the activities and responsibilities of AAO.

Can AAOs perform tasks such as butchering or labouring?

AAOs can be utilised to perform additional activities that are reasonably considered to be associated with meat inspection skills. Activities such as butchering or labouring are outside the scope of these associated activities and therefore would not be acceptable tasks to be performed by an AAO.

Where can I find information about the Scheme?

Information on the application process for AAOs, including the application form and the Independent Employer of AAOs Accreditation Scheme is available on the department's website at <http://www.daff.gov.au/biosecurity/export/meat/elmer-3>.

Participation

To participate in this initiative visit the [Independent Employer of AAOs Accreditation Scheme](#) and download the Scheme information.

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