



Notice to Industry

14/2008-09

Tiles and Related Commodities.

Further to Notice to Industry 28/2006-07, AQIS will continue the increased intervention on 'Tiles and related commodities' until at least the end of 2008 due to continued non-compliance with the AQIS requirements for timber packaging and container cleanliness associated with this commodity.

What is the issue?

Approximately 700 consignments of 'Tiles and related commodities' were inspected from 1 July 2007 to mid December 2007. A failure rate of around 35% was recorded for this period and this figure has now increased to 40% over the last 6 months. The failures are due to problems with the **accompanying packaging and container cleanliness**, not the actual commodity and include:

- Quarantine Risk Material (QRM) found in the timber packaging such as bark and live insects (including exotic termites),
- untreated timber being used and,
- containers being contaminated with residual plant and animal material.

There were no trends identified between countries, commodity and inspection results.

To reiterate, the commodity itself is not the risk, it is the accompanying packaging and container cleanliness which is failing to meet the strict AQIS requirements.

What can Industry do to resolve this issue and avoid continual directions for full unpack of consignments on arrival?

AQIS recommends that importers contact their suppliers and/or overseas service providers to ensure that they are aware of the relevant AQIS import conditions, especially for any timber packaging used and the cleanliness of containers. The import conditions for timber packaging are available from the AQIS Import Conditions Database (ICON) under "[Timber packaging and dunnage](#)". Suppliers and service providers must ensure all documentation, such as packing declarations, are correct in accordance with the AQIS publication '[Cargo Containers: Quarantine aspects and procedures](#)'.

What are AQIS requirements for accompanying timber packaging?

1. Mandatory off-shore treatment, including ISPM 15 treatments

All timber packaging must be treated before arrival to Australia. AQIS approved treatments can be found in Appendices I, II, and III of the AQIS publication '[Cargo Containers: Quarantine aspects and procedures](#)', and include permanent preservative treatment, methyl bromide fumigation, sulphuryl fluoride fumigation, and heat treatment. These treatments must be accompanied by valid treatment certificates as indicated in the publication above.

ISPM 15 certified treatments are also accepted for timber packaging, and are to conform to the requirements set out in section 1.3.2 of AQIS's '[Cargo Containers](#)' publication above. The only internationally accepted treatment options under the ISPM 15 are heat treatment to 56°C for 30 minutes or fumigation with methyl bromide. These treatments must also be accompanied by valid declarations or treatment certificates as indicated in the 'Cargo Containers' publication above.

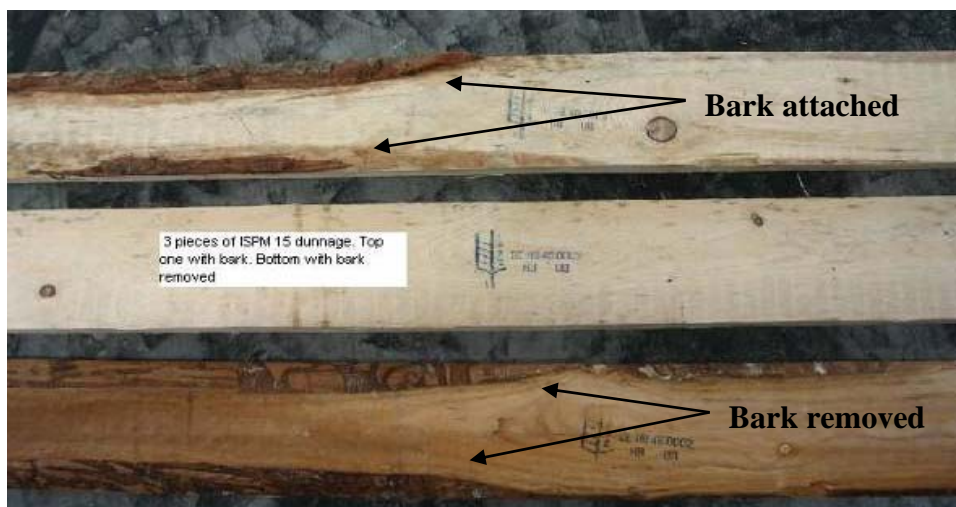
2. Nil tolerance for bark on wood packaging

In addition to mandatory treatment in point 1, AQIS has a nil tolerance for bark of any description on wood packaging. If bark is found on inspection on arrival, regardless of whether the wood has a valid treatment certificate or is ISPM 15 compliant, the consignment will be ordered into quarantine for the bark to be removed manually at the importers' expense before release from quarantine.

Examples of ISPM 15 marking:



Examples of bark on wood packaging before and after removal:



What will happen after non conformities are detected during inspection?

Supplier profiles will be created if non-commodity incidents are detected. This means the next five consignments from the identified supplier will be directed for full unpack at a Class 1 Quarantine Approved Premise (QAP). The supplier profiles will remain in place if further non-compliance is detected.

What costs are there to industry?

The 'Tiles and related commodities' profile referrals and supplier profile inspections will continue to be charged a [fee for service](#). AQIS charges for entry lodgement, assessment of documentation, and inspection will apply as normal. This cost is separate to any fees charged by QAP's or any transport and handling fees.

What if I have demonstrated my packing has complied on profile unloads?

AQIS will be trialling an application process to exclude importers from the 'Tiles and related commodities' profile.

Importers who have had three successive full unload inspections of the same commodity from the same overseas supplier in the same country under the current 'Tiles and related commodities' profile that have shown no presence of QRM in the last twelve (12) months, can apply to be excluded from the 'Tiles and related commodities' profile for twelve (12) months (or until this commodity and the tile review are reconsidered early 2009).

A separate application is required for each supplier and country combination, i.e. the same supplier in different countries will require a separate application for each country.

This exclusion is only for the 'Tiles and related commodities' profile. The normal referral process to AQIS for all other profile inspections (including supplier profiles) and normal clearance procedures will still apply.

Exclusions will not be granted if a supplier/s currently have a supplier profile against them. It is important to note that your supplier can be put on a supplier profile from non-compliance on consignments sent to other importers.

If your imports meet these requirements then you should contact treat.inspect@aqis.gov.au for further details of the 'Tiles and related commodities' profile exclusion process.

Further Advice

For further information on the continuation of increased intervention on 'Tiles and related commodities' please contact AQIS Sea Cargo Unit at treat.inspect@aqis.gov.au or telephone 02 6272 3390.