



Notice to Industry

8/2008-09

Delays in AQIS Import Permit Issuing

What is the issue?

The AQIS Biological Imports and Plant Quarantine Programs have been impacted over recent months by factors that have increased assessment times for new and renewal permit applications.

These factors include:

- loss of experienced staff;
- an increased number of permit applications;
- changes in AQIS quarantine permit assessment protocols to more closely reflect the legal requirements of the *Quarantine Act 1908* resulting in greater scrutiny of applications for permit renewals; and
- the need for AQIS to seek scientific advice from Biosecurity Australia for some complex permit applications.

What is AQIS doing?

To address these issues AQIS is currently working to increase resources for permit issuing and client advisory services. However these resources will take some time to deploy.

What can Industry do?

Permit holders are advised that routine permit applications may now take over 20 working days to assess in some areas. Permits due to expire in coming months should therefore be submitted for renewal well in advance of expiry dates to ensure consignments are not detained on entry.

To help speed up assessments applicants should ensure all necessary information is provided at the time of submission. General advice on applications for an import permit is available on the AQIS website at <http://www.daffa.gov.au/aqis/import/application>. Applicants can check the requirements for biological products on the AQIS website at www.aqis.gov.au/biolcheck.

Further Information

As the biological imports phone helpline can have extensive waiting times, the status of submitted applications should be requested by emailing enquiries to the biological imports program to biologicals@aqis.gov.au and for plant programs to plantquar@aqis.gov.au or by fax to 02 6249 1798.