

Customs and AQIS

Who Are They, and What Do They Do?

What is AQIS?

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) is part of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF).

AQIS manages quarantine controls at our borders to minimise the risk of exotic pests and diseases entering the country. AQIS also provides import and export inspection and certification to help retain Australia's highly favourable animal, plant and human health status and wide access to overseas export markets.

The Importance of AQIS

Due to the strict quarantine controls imposed by AQIS, Australia is free from a number of biological threats, such as foot and mouth disease, that have had major economic and environmental consequences in other countries.

AQIS works closely with the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service, the Department of Health and Ageing, Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) and state/territory governments.

Your Obligations

If you are an exporter of food (meat, fish, seed, grains, fruit and vegetables) or livestock, or you import goods into Australia, you must be aware of your obligations under Australian law. Even if your import or export product is non-perishable and not plant or animal material, you must still know your quarantine obligations under Australian Law. AQIS may also be able to assist registered exporters with information about quarantine requirements in other countries.

For more information about the role of AQIS and your obligations as an importer/exporter, see [‘AQIS at a Glance’](#).

How is Customs Different to AQIS?

AQIS and Customs work together at airports, seaports and mail centres to detect the unlawful movement of goods into Australia.

While AQIS helps to reduce the risk of exposure of Australia's agricultural industries and environment to exotic pests and diseases, the Australian Customs and Border Protection intercepts illegal goods such as drugs and weapons in addition to processing the import and export of goods in and out of Australia.

The Importance of Customs to Australian Logistics

The Australian Customs and Border Protection Service works closely with other government and international agencies, in particular AQIS, the Australian Federal Police, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and the Department of Defence, to detect and deter unlawful movement of goods and people across the border.

Customs and Border Protection plays a vital role in Australia's international logistics supply chains. Whether importing or exporting, all commercial goods must be cleared through customs to ensure (among others):

- The correct amount of tax is paid to the Australian Tax Office;
- Goods are legally allowed to be imported or exported;
- Goods have the right commerce markings; and
- Goods comply with intellectual property regulations (e.g. counterfeit goods).

Your Responsibility as an Importer/Exporter

Australian importers and exporters are legally responsible for the accuracy of information supplied to Customs and Border Protection, even if they use a broker, freight forwarder or service provider to prepare their documents.

Customs have excellent information on their website about compliance and common errors for exporters and importers which can be accessed at <http://www.customs.gov.au/site/page4271.asp>

Customs Brokers

Licensed by Customs and Border Protection, Custom Brokers are independent professionals who specialise in the clearance of imported goods. Customs and Border Protection recommend the use of a licensed Custom Broker, especially if importers are unsure of their ability to accurately classify goods.

You can find a list of licensed Customs Brokerages in Australia at http://www.customs.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Licensed_Custom_Brokerages.pdf