



Inchcape
Shipping Services

April 15th 2008

Quarantine and Biosecurity Review
GPO Box 858
Canberra
Australian Capital Territory 2601.

Quarantine and Biosecurity Review submission

Our Company acts as Port Agent for a large proportion of cruise vessel's that call at Australian ports. We have been taking a keen interest in the issues associated with storing these vessel's and, in particular, with those surrounding the transshipment of various goods from overseas for loading on board cruise vessels for passenger and crew consumption. The following submission is made by our Company on the basis of our practical experience and knowledge of cruise vessels over many years. We do not wish to encourage anything that would harm our environment but strongly feel that the operation can be managed so that the risk element is virtually negligible.

We request that the following be taken into consideration in the enquiry and seek to have the chance to speak to the enquiry panel at a convenient time.

Taking the various stages from packing the container overseas to when the contents are loaded on to a cruise vessel, we see potential for the following:

Goods ordered overseas

AQIS will be notified of the goods to be ordered and would advise the ordering line of any special precautions to be taken. The goods are then collated in a depot ready for loading into the containers.

Overseas pre loading inspection

If high risk (deemed to be so by AQIS) products are involved, an inspection and certification by the Government authority, or qualified representative, should be possible. There is already a precedent for this in the fertiliser trades where AQIS approved surveyors inspect a vessel prior to her loading overseas. This ensures that no unwanted pests/insects etc enter Australia. A certificate is usually issued after this inspection and we would see the same scenario applying for cruise vessel goods.

Sea transit

AQIS will be kept fully up to date of the carrying vessel's arrival time and date in the port of discharge.

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Port of discharge procedures

In ports such as Melbourne, containers of goods would be transhipped via the same port that the cruise vessel will be calling at to eliminate any possibility of an accident in an area where clean up facilities may not be readily available. In ports such as Sydney, containers must arrive at Port Botany and be transported a short distance by road to the cruise terminal. These container movements are typically done during off peak hours when traffic is minimal. The units could be followed by AQIS personnel, as sometimes happens with deemed high risk garbage from ships to the tip, to ensure the containers are not tampered with en route.

In all cases, the containers would remain locked and sealed and would be stored at an AQIS approved secure bond store to await the cruise vessel's arrival, at which point, they would be transported to the ships side. Checks could be put in place by AQIS, such as checking the locks and seals in the discharge terminal, in the bond store, at the cruise ship dock etc to ensure that integrity had been maintained.

Loading on board the cruise vessel

The containers would be brought as close to the ships side as practicable, in an AQIS controlled area, and the goods loaded directly from the containers into the ship. The units would only be unlocked, and the seals broken, in the presence of an AQIS officer at the cruise vessel dock. **The goods are then unloaded from the container and moved by fork lift trucks on pallets the few metres to the shell of the ship. Nets are placed under the loading ramp to remove the chance of goods spilling from the pallets into the sea. The goods are typically frozen, sealed in plastic wrap, and packaged in cardboard boxes.**

Once the goods are loaded, the containers can be internally inspected by AQIS to ensure no residues remain, after which they would be transported to an offhiring depot as is the case with most other units.

Summary

While nothing is entirely risk free, we consider some, or all, of the above measures would reduce risk to a very minute level where any issues arising at the time could be handled without the potential to damage Australia's environment.

We understand that there may be an opportunity to speak directly to the Panel. If that is the case, we would appreciate that opportunity.

Yours faithfully


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For Inchcape Shipping Services Pty Ltd
As Agents only

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