



GUIDELINE

Empty bulk vessels for export

Direction to staff

This document is instructional material for the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (the department) under its Practice Statement Framework. All staff must comply with it.

Direction to external authorised officers

In accordance with the deed of obligations, external authorised officers must perform services in accordance with any lawful directions or instructions issued by the department.

Direction to Industry

This guideline outlines the requirements for empty bulk vessels for loading of prescribed goods for export. All parties with roles and responsibilities explicit in this guideline and legislation must comply with it.

Summary of main points

This document outlines the policy and process for the inspection of empty bulk vessels for loading of prescribed goods for export. It includes:

- pre-inspection requirements
- documentation requirements
- vessel inspection requirements
- principles for passing and failing holds and other areas of a vessel
- principles for cancelling and suspending bulk vessel approval
- treatment and reconditioning requirements
- requirements for issuing bulk vessel approval
- marine surveyor requirements

In this document

This document contains the following topics.

Purpose of this document	4
Definitions.....	4
Legislative framework.....	5
Roles and responsibilities	6
Training and accreditations	8
Work health and safety	8
Bulk vessel inspection buddy system	9

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Assessing work health and safety risk	9
Personal protective equipment (PPE) for bulk vessels.....	9
Care and maintenance of equipment.....	9
Confined spaces on bulk vessels.....	10
WH&S when accessing a hold.....	10
Using inspection equipment and tools.....	10
Using ladders on bulk vessels	10
Post-fumigation inspections	10
WH&S reporting requirements.....	10
Essential inspection equipment.....	11
What are the pre inspection requirements?	11
Requesting bulk vessel inspection and approval.....	11
Marine surveyor’s certificate.....	11
When is a marine surveyor’s certificate required?	11
When is a marine surveyor’s certificate not required?.....	12
What are the requirements for the marine surveyor?.....	12
What are the requirements for the marine surveyor certificate?	12
What are the inspection requirements?	12
Inspection at a port other than the loading port	12
Two or more ports loading prescribed goods	13
Is further inspection required at a second or subsequent port?	13
Boarding the bulk vessel.....	13
Opening hatch covers	13
Timber components on vessels	14
What are the requirements for the inspection of empty vessel holds?	14
Inspection of vessel holds.....	14
What are the requirements for the inspection of other areas of the vessel?	15
Inspection of weather deck and deck structures	16
Inspection of spaces adjoining holds.....	16
Inspection of bulk vessel stores and general galley areas.....	16
Wet stores and refrigerated or chilled stores	16
Inspection of loaded holds	16
Inspection of ballast holds.....	17
When does a vessel pass or fail inspection?	17
Changes in vessel condition following bulk vessel approval.....	17
Passing or failing an empty vessel hold or other areas identified for loading goods	17
Insects flying into holds	18
Passing or failing holds or other areas not intended for loading prescribed goods	18
What are the treatment requirements for bulk vessels?.....	18
Treatment of <i>Trogoderma</i> spp. infestations	19

Advice to vessel master regarding treatments.....	19
Treatment of dunnage.....	19
Treatment of infested residues	19
Quarantine compliant disposal of residues.....	19
Disposal in suitable containers	20
Removal of the residue from the vessel.....	20
What are the requirements for the reinspection of bulk vessels?.....	20
Reinspection of a vessel following treatment	20
Reinspection of timber sites	21
Reinspection following treatment of rodent infestation	21
What are the requirements for bulk vessel approval?.....	21
Recording bulk vessel inspection results and approvals	21
Issuing bulk vessel approval	21
Approval for loading non-consumable goods onto other areas of the vessel	22
Expiration of bulk vessel approval	22
Exceptional circumstances.....	22
Suspension of bulk vessel approval	22
Revoking the suspension of bulk vessel approval	23
Cancellation of bulk vessel approval	23
Record keeping	23
Related material	24
Contact information	24
Document information	24
Version history	25
Attachment 1: Buddy system	26

Purpose of this document

This guideline details the policy and process for the inspection of empty bulk vessels for the loading of prescribed goods for export.

Definitions

The following table defines terms used in this document. Additional terms and definitions relating to bulk vessels are captured in Plant Export Operations Manual (PEOM) Reference: [Bulk vessel terms and definitions](#).

Term	Definition
Authorised officer (AO)	A person appointed under section 20 of the <i>Export Control Act 1982</i> to conduct export activities on behalf of the department. Note: An AO can be departmental, that is, employed by the department, or external.
Buddy	Someone who is a partner or workmate and is one of a pair or team that is working under the buddy system.
Buddy system	A process whereby a worker's safety is enhanced by the supportive acts of workmates.
Bulk vessel approval record (BVAR)	Record of the findings and result of a phytosanitary inspection of an empty bulk vessel, including approval for loading of prescribed goods. Note: This record can be electronic in the Plant Exports Management System (PEMS) or manual on a PE103 form.
Cargo	Any good, other than prescribed goods, that has or will be loaded into or onto a vessel.
Client	The exporter, exporter's representative, vessel agent or person responsible for the prescribed goods.
Contaminant	See non-infestible residues.
Exporter	The entity identified as the exporter in a Notice of Intention/Request for Permit (RFP) to export and has requested the bulk vessel services via an agent for the export of their prescribed goods.
Goods	See 'prescribed goods' below.
Hold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal compartment where cargo can be stowed and carried. One of the spaces between bulkheads specifically intended for carrying cargo.
Infested residue	Residues that are infested with pests, including live or dead rodents and live insects.
Infestible residue	Residues, such as grain dust that are not currently but could become infested with pests.
Inspection AO	In this guideline, an AO accredited to inspect empty bulk vessels for export. Note: This role can be performed by departmental and external AOs.

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Term	Definition
Maritime Security Identification Card (MSIC)	A nationally consistent identification card that states the holder has undergone a background check and is cleared to work unescorted or unmonitored in a maritime security zone.
Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)	Are documents that provide critical information about hazardous chemicals and include information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chemical identity and ingredients • health and physical hazards • safe handling and storage procedures • emergency procedures • disposal considerations.
Non-infestible residue	Non-infestible residues includes scale, rust, mineral residues or other contaminating or wetting materials. Non-infestible residues that are found in association with insect infestation or infestible residues are treated as either infested residues or infestible residues, respectively.
Plant Exports Management System (PEMS)	An electronic system used to capture and store inspection information related to the export of plants and plant products from Australia.
Pest	Any species, strain, or biotype of plant, animal or pathogenic agent that is injurious to plants or plant products.
Prescribed goods	Goods that are declared by the regulations to be prescribed goods for the purposes of the <i>Export Control Act (1982)</i> . This includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) prescribed grains b) hay and straw c) fresh fruit d) fresh vegetables e) plants or plant products for which a phytosanitary certificate or any other official certificate is required by an importing country authority.
Residue	Can be either an infested, infestible or non-infestible residue.
Supporting documents	Documents provided by the client as evidence that goods are compliant with departmental and importing country requirements, including: treatment certificates, marine surveyor certificates, marine surveyor declaration, marine surveyor reports, and gas free certificates.
Treatment	Official procedure for the killing, inactivation or removal of pests from a bulk vessel, and an activity to remove or clean residues or contaminants from a vessel.

Legislative framework

The following list outlines the legislation that applies to the inspection of empty bulk vessels for the loading of prescribed goods for export.

- *Export Control Act 1982*
- Export Control (Prescribed Goods—General) Order 2005

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- Export Control (Plant and Plant Products) Order 2011
- Export Control (Fees) Order 2015
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011
- *Privacy Act 1988*
- *Public Service Act 1999*.

Roles and responsibilities

The following table outlines the roles and responsibilities undertaken in this guideline.

Role	Responsibility
Client/Bulk vessel owner or owner's agent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Part A of Bulk vessel approval record – Application for bulk vessel approval and related supporting documentation. • Request an inspection appointment. • Provide supporting documentation to inspection AOs. • Where bulk vessel approval has been suspended or cancelled, return all bulk vessel approval records to an accredited AO when requested. • Notify an accredited AO when the condition of the vessel may have changed. • Appoint a qualified marine surveyor in accordance with the legislation and provide the inspection AOs with a declaration, approved by the exporter, to that effect. • Provide assistance to the AO during the course of the inspection and in the performance of their responsibilities, including answering all questions reasonably asked by the AOs undertaking the inspection.
Exporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where applicable, determine treatments to apply to a vessel consistent with instructional material and legislation. • Approve the vessel agent's declaration regarding a marine surveyor's qualifications.

Role	Responsibility
Inspection AOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with the relevant safety and security protocols of the port of inspection. • Ensure they have the appropriate Instrument of Appointment, prerequisite qualifications and delegations to inspect empty bulk vessels. • Perform bulk vessel inspection tasks in accordance with all relevant instructional material. • Perform all empty bulk vessel inspection tasks in pairs of at least two BVI3001 accredited AOs (Buddy system) and in accordance with instructional material and WH&S requirements. • Record inspection results on the current Bulk vessel approval record (PE103) or in PEMS. • Issue, withhold, suspend or cancel bulk vessel approval in accordance with relevant instructional material and legislative requirements. • Validate supporting documents and, where applicable, upload to PEMS or otherwise retain copies for record keeping purposes. • (Departmental AO only) Issue invoices for chargeable activities to the client.
Lead crew member (LCM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an escort and assistance to the inspection AOs during their inspection of the empty bulk vessel. • Maintain radio contact with the vessel crew and master at all times.
Marine surveyor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspect holds identified for loading of consumable prescribed goods for non-infestible residues or structural damage that may contaminate the goods or lead to the contamination of goods to be loaded, in accordance with legislation. • Issue a marine surveyor certificate consistent with legislation, for holds identified for loading with consumable prescribed goods.

Role	Responsibility
Vessel master	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a safe working environment for AOs. • Provide an escort LCM and assistance to the AOs during the inspection of the empty bulk vessel. • Provide the inspection AOs with access to information relevant to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ current and previous cargoes ○ any previous vessel treatments • Advise the inspection AO before the inspection commences if there has been a change in the vessel's condition after the marine surveyor's certificate was issued. • Return all bulk vessel approval records to an accredited AO when requested, where bulk vessel approval has been suspended or cancelled. • Where applicable, determine treatments to apply to a vessel in consultation with the exporter and vessel agent, and apply them consistent with department requirements and legislation. • For all activities that occur on the vessel including the actions and behaviour of the vessel crew and any cargoes to be brought onto the vessel.

Training and accreditations

- Prior to undertaking empty bulk vessel inspections, AOs must be appropriately trained, deemed competent and appointed by the department for the job function BVI3001: Export inspection of empty bulk vessels.
- BVI3001 AOs must have acquired and maintain a number of current, nationally recognised accreditations in order to become accredited and to maintain their BVI3001 accreditation
 - RIIWHS2O4D – Work safely at heights (valid for two years from date of attainment)
 - DEFWHS010 – Identifying a confined space (valid for two years from date of attainment)
 - HLTAID003 – Provide first aid (valid for three years from date of attainment)
 - Medical assessment report testifying to the AOs suitability to work on a bulk vessel (valid for one year from the date of attainment)
- AOs must also hold current registration for operating all vehicles, vessels, equipment and machinery as required.

Work health and safety

Inspection AOs must:

- comply with applicable Commonwealth, state and territory WH&S legislation
- comply with their employer's WH&S policies and procedures
- read and be familiar with the PEOM Reference: [Work health and safety in the plant export environment](#)
- not enter work sites unless it is safe, they are wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and have considered any WH&S hazards

- comply with site-specific requirements, unless they assess the requirements as placing them at risk, in which case they must take reasonable action to ensure their safety
- continually assess the possible risks in the different areas of the vessel while performing their duties.

The following sections articulate some specific risks that inspection AOs must consider on the vessel.

Bulk vessel inspection buddy system

- At least two BVI3001 accredited inspection AOs must perform the inspection of empty bulk vessels (buddy system).
- Inspection AO's must identify their buddy and complete the activities outlined in **Attachment 1: [The buddy system](#)** prior to undertaking an empty bulk vessel inspection.
- Only one inspection AO can enter a hold at any one time. The other inspection AO must remain outside the hold and observe their buddy's inspection of the hold.

Assessing work health and safety risk

- Inspection AOs must complete the PEOM Reference: [Pre-entry hazard assessment of third party worksites including bulk vessels \(Take 5 Checklist\)](#) before boarding a vessel, prior to commencing the inspection, and when moving about on the vessel.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) for bulk vessels

- Inspection AOs must wear, and use correctly, all PPE identified in the Take 5 checklist.
- PPE must be in good order and fit for purpose.

For example:

- wearing shoes that are appropriate and likely to reduce the risk of slipping
- using a safety harness and hard hat at all times during the inspection where practicable
- having access to first aid equipment.

Care and maintenance of equipment

- AOs must maintain, store and use their PPE in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and any relevant Australian Standard and requirements of the AO's employer.
- The AO must regularly inspect the PPE and inspection equipment and remove from service if the PPE and/or inspection equipment is damaged, broken or passed its used-by date.

Go to PEOM Reference: [Plant exports guide – Equipment](#) for more information on the types of PPE needed for the inspection of empty bulk vessels.

Confined spaces on bulk vessels

- Inspection AOs must not enter confined spaces.

Note:

- Empty dry vessel holds are not classified as confined spaces. These spaces are designed for work and access by vessel personnel and have little to no likelihood of engulfment when empty.
- There are areas within holds that are classified as confined spaces, including bilge wells and void spaces. The presence of any cargo or goods in the hold, including ballast water, deems the hold to be a confined space.

WH&S when accessing a hold

Using inspection equipment and tools

- No items, including tools, are to be thrown or dropped into a hold while an AO is in the hold. Any equipment required in the hold must be lowered before the AO enters.
- Any additional items that need to be lowered into the hold are only done so with the permission of all inspection AOs present.

Using ladders on bulk vessels

- An inspection AO must visually inspect a ladder and complete a Take 5 checklist before use. If the ladder is unsafe the inspection AO must not use the ladder and must cease the inspection until a safe alternative is provided.
- Inspection AOs must wear, and use correctly, all PPE identified in the *Take 5 checklist* appropriate for climbing ladders, or at any time when a fall risk exists.

Post-fumigation inspections

An inspection AO must not commence a post-fumigation inspection or enter a space that has been fumigated until they have sighted:

- a fumigation certificate from a licensed fumigator
- a gas clearance certificate for the space issued by an industrial chemist, a licensed fumigator or a member of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA).

Important: Certification that the concentration of the fumigant has been reduced to a safe level generally only applies to the free space of a hold.

If alerted to the presence of hazardous levels of fumigant either from advice from the LCM or through the use of a gas detection device (such as a photo ionization device) the AO must withdraw from the hold immediately and must not re-enter until further airing is completed and a new gas clearance certificate has been issued.

WH&S reporting requirements

- All WH&S incidents, near misses and any hazards must be reported to the master of the bulk vessel and the department
 - departmental AOs must record all WH&S incidents, near misses, and any hazards in Aurion
 - external AOs must report any hazards, near misses or incidents to the department via plantexporttraining@agriculture.gov.au
 - any incident occurring on board a vessel must also be reported to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). Information about how to report to AMSA is available at the [AMSA website](#).

Essential inspection equipment

- Inspection AOs must ensure they have the necessary approvals that provide access to the port at which they will be inspecting the bulk vessel.
- Inspection AOs must carry an Export Identity Card, Deed of Obligations and a Maritime Security Identification Card (MSIC). They must show these to port security officers and vessel crew if requested.
- Departmental AOs must carry their departmental identity cards at all times.
- Before boarding a bulk vessel, inspection AOs must have all the necessary documentation, and the minimum inspection equipment as outlined in the relevant PEOM Work instruction: [Inspecting empty bulk vessels for export](#).
- Inspection equipment must be in good order and fit for purpose.
- Before boarding a bulk vessel, AOs must have considered relevant work health and safety requirements in relation to PPE.
- The LCM must make available any equipment and crew necessary to operate equipment and to aid with the inspection.

Go to PEOM Reference: [Plant exports guide – Equipment](#) for more information on the type of equipment needed for the inspection of empty bulk vessels.

What are the pre inspection requirements?

Requesting bulk vessel inspection and approval

The following table outlines the process for requesting a bulk vessel inspection and approval.

Stage	What happens	Responsible party
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A completed <i>Part A – Application for vessel approval</i> of a BVAR to two BVI3001 accredited AOs is lodged.• Inspection AOs are notified of the name of their inspection buddy as well as the time, date and location of the bulk vessel inspection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vessel owner, or• owner’s agent
2.	Where the goods to be loaded are consumable, an inspection by a qualified marine surveyor is scheduled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vessel owner, or• owner’s agent
3.	Any supporting documentation is submitted to the inspection AOs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If applicable and available, a marine surveyor’s certificate and a written declaration of the marine surveyor’s qualifications• treatment certificate, gas free certificate, statutory declaration or written declaration from the vessel’s master regarding applied treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vessel owner, or• owner’s agent

Marine surveyor’s certificate

When is a marine surveyor’s certificate required?

If a bulk vessel is intended to carry prescribed goods for consumption, a qualified marine surveyor must issue a certificate stating the relevant holds of the bulk vessel are suitable for loading the prescribed goods.

When is a marine surveyor's certificate not required?

A marine surveyor's certificate is not required:

- if the prescribed goods to be loaded into a hold are non-consumable, for example woodchips or logs.
- for the holds of the vessel that are not intended to be loaded.

What are the requirements for the marine surveyor?

- The marine surveyor appointed to survey the vessel must be qualified as per Schedule 1 of the Export Control (Plants and Plant Products) Order 2011
 - The vessel owners or owner's agent must provide a written declaration to the inspection AO that the marine surveyor is qualified
 - Note:** This may be in the form of an email.
 - The name of the marine surveyor on the issued certificate must match the name on the written declaration
- The marine surveyor must have a different employer to the BVI3001 accredited AOs conducting the inspection.

What are the requirements for the marine surveyor certificate?

- The marine surveyor's certificate must be provided to and validated by the inspection AOs before the AOs can issue bulk vessel approval.
- The BVI3001 AO must validate the certificate in accordance with PEOM Work instruction: [Validating supporting documents for plant exports](#). The details of the certificate, including the name of the marine surveyor, must be recorded on the BVAR or in PEMS before the AO issues vessel approval for those holds that are both
 - listed on the marine surveyor's certificate
 - passed for loading by the AOs at inspection
- Holds of a vessel that were issued a marine surveyor's certificate prior to being put under ballast, do not require a new marine surveyor's certificate once emptied, unless the AO finds that the hold does not comply with the legislation.

What are the inspection requirements?

Bulk vessel inspections are complex due to the size and variation between bulk vessels. Inspection AOs must have a comprehensive understanding of the relevant bulk vessel inspection instructional material and adapt to the wide range of circumstances encountered during a bulk vessel inspection. This will support a thorough inspection of the vessel for infestations, residues and contaminants that could contaminate or infest prescribed goods to be loaded.

- All areas of the bulk vessel, except holds under ballast and holds already loaded, must be inspected during inspection, as far as it is appropriate to do so.
- Bulk vessel inspections must occur during daylight hours.
- Inspection AOs must not use artificial light clusters, such as wharf lighting, as an alternative to daylight.

Note: Even with maximum daylight, AOs will be required to inspect structures and areas of the vessels that are in semi-darkness or shadow using a torch.

Inspection at a port other than the loading port

Bulk vessels may be inspected and reinspected at any Australian port nominated by the bulk vessel owner or owner's agent, even if it is not the port where loading will take place, as long as there are two inspection AOs available at the port.

Two or more ports loading prescribed goods

Bulk vessels may complete loading at a second or subsequent port in the same or another State or Territory if a complete empty bulk vessel inspection occurs at the first port of loading or at another port nominated by the vessel owner or owner's agent and:

- where applicable, a marine surveyor's certificate is issued for bulk vessel holds intending to carry prescribed goods for consumption
- bulk vessel approval has been issued for all holds or other additional areas identified for loading prescribed goods that were specified in the marine surveyor's certificate.

The vessel owner or owner's agent at the port where inspection occurred, must forward a copy of the completed BVAR to the appropriate personnel at the second or subsequent port.

Is further inspection required at a second or subsequent port?

On arrival at a second or subsequent port, further inspections of the bulk vessel's holds or additional areas is not required, unless:

- inspection of a hold that was previously under ballast is required
- an inspection AO suspects the condition of the vessel has changed since the last bulk vessel approval was issued.

Note: A BVI3001 AO operating at the second or subsequent port can suspend or cancel the bulk vessel approval issued at the first port, as necessary and appropriate.

Boarding the bulk vessel

The following table outlines the process to be followed when the inspection AOs board the vessel.

Stage	What happens	Responsible party
1.	The inspection AOs identify themselves to the vessel crew, master, the agent and the other surveyor(s) as applicable.	Inspection AO
2.	A pre-inspection interview is held between the AOs and the master. Note: Further information on the pre-inspection interview is in the PEOM Work instruction: Inspecting empty bulk vessels for export .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspection AO• Vessel master, or• other vessel representative
3.	A lead crew member (LCM) is nominated to accompany the inspection AOs. Important: The LCM should have appropriate English communication skills and must maintain radio contact with the rest of the crew at all times.	Vessel master

Opening hatch covers

- The master or LCM must organise lifting and supporting, turning over, or opening and closing hatch covers section by section, to aid a thorough inspection by the AOs.
- Hatch covers must be opened and closed by the vessel's crew to such an extent that the following requirements are met
 - there is sufficient natural light in the hold to allow the inspection AOs to inspect the empty hold
 - there is sufficient view of the framework and beam structures below the hatch covers to allow the inspection AOs to inspect these sites

- the hatch covers are open for a sufficient time to allow ventilation prior to an AO entering the hold to perform an inspection.

Timber components on vessels

If the vessel contains timber components, the inspection AOs must inform the LCM that sufficient planks of timber and woodwork must be lifted by the vessel's crew to aid bulk vessel inspection. For example, the removal of timber bulkhead sheathing to facilitate inspection behind the sheathing.

What are the requirements for the inspection of empty vessel holds?

- An inspection of a bulk vessel includes an inspection of all empty vessel holds intended and not intended for loading with prescribed goods.
- A number of common sites and structures typically make up a vessel hold and must be inspected by the inspection AOs where present, including
 - hatch covers
 - bulkheads
 - coamings
 - deck beams and under deck beams
 - exposed metal surfaces
 - cable casings
 - pipe casings
 - wing tanks
 - hold ribs
 - tank top ceilings
 - manhole covers
 - bilges and bilge wells (bilge wells are confined spaces and AOs must inspect each with a torch without inserting any part of the body into the bilge)
 - ventilation trunking.
- Inspection AOs must be alert to variations in the structure of the vessel holds that create areas where infestations, residues or contaminants may be found.
- AOs must inspect all parts of a bulk vessel hold consistent with the PEOM Work instruction: [Inspecting empty bulk vessels for export](#) and related reference material.

Inspection of vessel holds

The following table outlines the process for inspecting vessel holds.

Stage	What happens	Responsible party						
1.	<p>From the hold opening, prior to entering the hold, all structures and viewable areas of the hold are inspected.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>When the inspection AO...</th> <th>Then...</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>suspects a structure may harbour infestation, residues or contaminants</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the LCM is directed by the AO to rectify any potential non-compliance identified, or the LCM or vessel master provides evidence to alleviate the AOs suspicions continue to stage 2 </td> </tr> <tr> <td>does not suspect any harbour infestation, residues or contaminants</td> <td>continue to stage 2.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	When the inspection AO...	Then...	suspects a structure may harbour infestation, residues or contaminants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the LCM is directed by the AO to rectify any potential non-compliance identified, or the LCM or vessel master provides evidence to alleviate the AOs suspicions continue to stage 2 	does not suspect any harbour infestation, residues or contaminants	continue to stage 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspection AO Lead crew member Vessel master
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does not suspect any harbour infestation, residues or contaminants	continue to stage 2.							
2.	<p>The vessel hold is inspected.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>When...</th> <th>Then...</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>infestible residues are detected</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the LCM is directed by the AO to knock down residues and sweep them into piles on the tank top the AO inspects the piles for evidence of infestation the LCM or vessel master arranges for treatment as appropriate continue to stage 3. </td> </tr> <tr> <td>infestible residues are not detected</td> <td>continue to stage 3.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	When...	Then...	infestible residues are detected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the LCM is directed by the AO to knock down residues and sweep them into piles on the tank top the AO inspects the piles for evidence of infestation the LCM or vessel master arranges for treatment as appropriate continue to stage 3. 	infestible residues are not detected	continue to stage 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspection AO Lead crew member Vessel master
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infestible residues are not detected	continue to stage 3.							
3.	<p>The hold is passed or failed, taking into consideration inspection requirements set out under Section: When does a vessel pass or fail inspection? and the PEOM Work instruction: Inspecting empty bulk vessels for export.</p>	Inspection AO						

What are the requirements for the inspection of other areas of the vessel?

Other areas of a bulk vessel must also be inspected by inspection AOs to ensure these areas do not pose a risk of cross-infestation or cross-contamination to prescribed goods that will be loaded into approved holds or onto the vessel.

Other areas of the bulk vessel include:

- forecastle (fo'c'sle) lockers

- mast house and deck stores (inspection AOs must not enter stores identified as paint lockers and must conduct a visual inspection using a torch from outside the locker)
- dunnage, including the surface of the vessel underneath the dunnage
- bulk vessel stores and general galley areas
- weather deck
- the hatch covers of loaded vessels or holds under ballast
- deck structures, including frames and supports, mooring ropes and brackets.

Other areas of the bulk vessel that are outside the scope of the bulk vessel inspection are:

- sleeping, duty and recreation rooms
- sanitary and lavatory facilities
- hospitals
- office accommodation.

When moving between areas of the vessel always inspect for evidence of infestation, residues and/or contaminants.

Inspection of weather deck and deck structures

- Deck structures must all be thoroughly inspected by the inspection AOs where they are present on the bulk vessel.
- If required, the inspection AO must request that the LCM direct vessel crew to move any items on the deck impeding a thorough inspection of the weather deck and deck structures.
- Following inspection the weather deck may be approved for loading non-consumable prescribed goods if requested by the vessel owner or owner's agent and it meets the requirements in the legislation ([go to Section: Approval for loading non-consumable goods onto other areas of the vessel](#)).

Inspection of spaces adjoining holds

A bulk vessel may have access points from vessel holds into adjoining lockers or storage spaces, particularly on general cargo vessels. Unless the spaces are permanently sealed, the spaces must be opened by the LCM and inspected by the inspection AOs to assess the risk of cross-infestation or cross-contamination.

Inspection of bulk vessel stores and general galley areas

Bulk vessel dry stores must be inspected by the inspection AOs for insect and rodent infestations. Areas of the vessel where stores are handled and food is prepared only need to be inspected if:

- substantial infestations have been detected during the course of inspection of dry stores
- suspected *Trogoderma* spp. have been detected.

Wet stores and refrigerated or chilled stores

Wet stores and refrigerated or chilled stores only need to be inspected if there is reason to believe these areas may have become infested with pests.

Note: Before entering these areas of the vessel, inspection AOs should ask the LCM whether there are any potential WH&S risks.

Inspection of loaded holds

- Where a hold already contains cargo (is not empty), inspection AOs must inspect and determine, as far as practicable, the risk of cross-infestation or cross-contamination consistent with the PEOM Work Instruction: [Inspecting empty bulk vessels for export](#) and taking into consideration the cargo that is loaded according to the vessel ledgers or manifests.

- Inspection AOs must not enter a loaded hold and must inspect all parts of the hold hatch covers that are visible from on deck.
- The hatch covers of the loaded holds must not be opened.
- The inspection AO must verify that the hold is sealed.

Inspection of ballast holds

- Where a bulk vessel is compelled to berth with ballast water in a vessel hold, and the ballast water cannot be discharged until a weight of goods have been loaded into the vessel holds, inspection AOs must inspect for risk of cross-infestation or cross-contamination consistent with the PEOM Work Instruction: [Inspecting empty bulk vessels for export](#).
- Inspection AOs must not enter a hold under ballast to perform inspections and must inspect all parts of the hold hatch covers that are visible from on deck.
- Bulk vessel approval may be issued for all other holds approved for loading, excluding the holds under ballast.
- A vessel owner or owner's agent must lodge a new completed Part A – Application for vessel approval of a BVAR to request and book a subsequent inspection of a vessel holds previously under ballast, and intended to be loaded with prescribed goods.

Important: Inspection must not occur until the ballast water has been discharged and the hold is clean and dry.

Note: A marine surveyor's certificate may also need to be issued for the hold if it is intended that prescribed consumable goods will be loaded.

When does a vessel pass or fail inspection?

- Where a bulk vessel does not meet departmental or legislative requirements, bulk vessel approval must be withheld or cancelled until treatment and a reinspection occurs.
- If infestations, residues or contaminants cannot be rectified at the time of inspection
 - the affected holds or other areas of the bulk vessel must be failed and bulk vessel approval must be withheld or cancelled
 - the vessel master must be notified and advised to consider the appropriate treatment requirements for bulk vessels set out in this guideline
 - the inspection AO must detail the reasons the holds or other areas of the vessel failed inspection.

Changes in vessel condition following bulk vessel approval

- Where an inspection AO receives information that the condition on a vessel has changed following bulk vessel approval, they must confirm the information and suspend the bulk vessel approval until the bulk vessel has been reinspected in line with bulk vessel inspection requirements.
- Where loading of the bulk vessel has already commenced the loading must cease.
- Based on the results of the reinspection, the inspection AO may cancel the bulk vessel approval, or revoke the suspension and reinstate the bulk vessel approval.
- Where loading of the vessel has already commenced and the bulk vessel approval is cancelled, the vessel agent must contact the department's [Grain and Seed Exports Program](#) for further instruction.

Passing or failing an empty vessel hold or other areas identified for loading goods

The inspection AOs must withhold or cancel bulk vessel approval if they note the presence of the following in a hold identified for loading:

- live insects specified in [PEOM Volume 6A: Pests, diseases and contaminants of grain and plant products](#) and [PEOM Volume 8B: Commodity inspections – Forest products](#) or such that would pose a risk of contaminating goods to be loaded
- evidence of live or dead rodent infestation (rat (*Rattus* spp.) and mice (*Mus musculus*))
- infested or infestible residues
- non-infestible residues or contaminants, including mineral residues, scale and water that may contaminate the prescribed goods or impede a thorough inspection by the inspection AOs
- structural damage that may harbour infestation(s), residue(s) or contaminants or impede a thorough inspection by the inspection AOs.

Non-infestible residues where non-infestible residues are found and they impede a thorough inspection, the inspection AOs must:

- document the details of the non-infestible residues in the comments section of the BVAR or in PEMS, including the type and amount of non-infestible residue detected
- fail the hold or other area, and withhold or cancel bulk vessel approval until the risk is eliminated.

Important: This process must be followed even if a marine surveyor has previously certified the hold.

Insects flying into holds

- When insects are flying into bulk vessel holds in large numbers, bulk vessel approval must be withheld or suspended as applicable.
- Where loading of the bulk vessel has already commenced the loading must cease. The vessel agent must contact the [Grain and Seed Exports Program](#) for further information.

Passing or failing holds or other areas not intended for loading prescribed goods

In determining whether to pass or fail a hold or other area of the vessel not intended for loading prescribed goods, inspection AOs must be satisfied that these areas do not pose a risk of cross-infestation or cross-contamination to any prescribed goods.

The following table outlines the factors for determining whether to pass or fail a hold not intended for loading or other area of the vessel.

When...	And...	Then...
infested residue is found	there is a risk of cross-infestation or cross-contamination to prescribed goods	the AO must fail the hold, or other area, and withhold or cancel bulk vessel approval until the risk is eliminated.
infestible or non-infestible residues are found	there is no risk of the residues cross-contaminating prescribed goods	there is no requirement for treatment before the AO passes that hold, or other area, and issues bulk vessel approval. Important: This hold(s) is not passed and approved for loading.

What are the treatment requirements for bulk vessels?

- Where vessel approval is being withheld the exporter, in consultation with the master or agent, may choose to treat the non-compliance and schedule a reinspection following treatment.
- Inspection AOs must not specify the type of treatment required unless suspected *Trogoderma* spp. are detected (**go to Section: [Treatment of Trogoderma spp. infestations](#)**).

- The choice of treatment for non-*Trogoderma* spp. infestations and other residues or contaminants is the responsibility of the master in consultation with the exporter.

Note: AOs may draw the master's attention to specific treatment considerations that should be taken into account (**go to Section: [Advice to vessel master regarding treatments](#)**).

For more information on treatments **go to [PEOM Volume 12: Treatments](#)**.

Treatment of *Trogoderma* spp. infestations

If any suspected *Trogoderma* spp. are found in any part of the bulk vessel during an inspection, the infestation must be treated with the following specifications:

- Fumigation with methyl bromide at a rate of 80g/m² for 48 hours at 21°C and above at Normal Atmospheric Pressure (NAP) with an end point concentration at 48 hours of 20g/m².

Advice to vessel master regarding treatments

Where treatment of hold or other area of a bulk vessel is required, except where suspected *Trogoderma* spp. are detected, AOs must recommend that the master considers the following:

- the treatment must be of a type that can effectively treat the type of infestation
- treatments must be administered in accordance with their registered label, the relevant Safety Data Sheet(s), and must be registered for use in Australia with the Australia Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA)
- treatments must be administered in accordance with the relevant state/territory legislation
- if the treatment is a chemical, the master is responsible for ensuring the chemicals applied are within the importing country's Maximum Residue Limits and are applied by an operator conforming to state/territory legislation
- the treatment must be acceptable for the importing country (except where the treatment is to be applied to the bulk vessel's stores and general galley areas)
- the treatment must be approved by the exporter (except where the treatment is to be applied to the bulk vessel's stores and general galley areas).

Treatment of dunnage

- Where treatment of dunnage has occurred, AOs must check that every individual piece of dunnage was sprayed on every side.
- When fumigation of a vessel hold occurs, the dunnage may be included in the fumigation treatment and may be transferred into the appropriate hold to facilitate this.

Treatment of infested residues

- Residues infested with insects must be treated as an insect infestation.
- Where the infested residue was found in a vessel hold, the residue must be retained, and treatment take place, in the hold where the infested residue was detected.
- Infested residues must not be removed from the hold until, through reinspection, the inspection AO is satisfied that the infestation has been eliminated.

Note: Other infestible and non-infestible residues may be treated through a quarantine compliant disposal method.

Quarantine compliant disposal of residues

Residues that are not infested must be disposed of in a manner that complies with the legislation and any relevant quarantine protocols. There are two acceptable methods for the disposal of residues:

Disposal in suitable containers

- The residue must be placed in suitable containers.
- The containers must be filled with sea water so the residue is completely immersed.
- The containers must then be stowed on the upper deck of the vessel.

Removal of the residue from the vessel

- The inspection AO must contact the [Grain and Seed Exports Program](#) to establish the correct protocol for removal of a residue of the type encountered.
- The protocol must be adhered to by the vessel crew under the direction of the master.

What are the requirements for the reinspection of bulk vessels?

- Reinspections must be conducted consistent with this Guideline, the PEOM Work instruction: [Inspecting empty bulk vessels for export](#) and [related reference material](#).
- Where bulk vessel approval has been cancelled the bulk vessel must be inspected in full.
- When reinspecting a vessel the inspection AOs must reinspect holds or other areas of the vessel that have previously failed inspection.
- Inspection AOs are not required to reinspect holds or other areas of the vessel that have been passed, unless
 - the bulk vessel approval has expired (**go to Section: [Expiration of bulk vessel approval](#)** and a complete reinspection of the vessel is required)
 - the hold or other area of the vessel was previously passed for risk of cross-contamination or cross-infestation, but was not passed and approved for loading, and a subsequent inspection and approval for loading by an inspection AO has been requested by the vessel owner or owner's agent
 - the AO suspects or has been informed that the condition of the vessel or the condition of a part of the vessel may have changed since the previous inspection, such that the departmental and legislative requirements for approval are no longer met.

Note: In determining whether the condition may have changed in a hold or an area of the vessel, AOs should consider the possibility that pests may have been deflected from one area of the vessel to another as a result of the application of the treatment.

Reinspection of a vessel following treatment

- When performing reinspections of bulk vessels following the application of a treatment, inspection AOs must perform a full assessment of the effectiveness of the treatment, including that
 - the treatment has been carried out if indicated on the original BVAR
 - evidence of treatment has been provided in the form of a relevant treatment certificate, statutory declaration or a written declaration from the vessel's master
 - the vessel complies with the requirements of the legislation
- AOs must consider the possibility that pests may have been deflected from one area of the vessel to another as a result of the application of the treatment when determining the extent to reinspect a vessel following treatment and whether conditions on the vessel may have changed following the application of a treatment.
- If, during the reinspection, it is found that the bulk vessel does not comply with the standards required, the AO must fail the holds or other areas of the vessel, and must withhold bulk vessel approval. Further treatment and an additional reinspection of the bulk vessel hold or other area by inspection AOs will be required.

Reinspection of timber sites

- Where timber has been lifted to permit inspection and the removal of residues, further timber components should be dismantled only if it is necessary for the inspection AOs to be satisfied the degree of cleaning has been achieved.
- When dismantling timber is required during reinspection, the AO must select the planks that will be lifted and must remain well away from the sections that were removed during the initial inspection.

Reinspection following treatment of rodent infestation

- Where a rodent infestation was detected and baiting has occurred, reinspection must not commence until the period specified on the Safety Data Sheets has lapsed.
- Reinspection must ensure that all unused baits have been removed and that rodent carcasses have been disposed of appropriately.

What are the requirements for bulk vessel approval?

Recording bulk vessel inspection results and approvals

- Inspection AOs must document the conditions of the bulk vessel inspection and all findings, including
 - all non-compliances, including structural damage, infestations, residues and contaminants encountered during the inspection
 - any treatment undertaken by the vessel crew during the course of the inspection to address a non-compliance
- AOs must record all inspection findings and results, and issue bulk vessel approval using Part B – *Vessel approval of an approved BVAR (PE103)* or electronically on PEMS.
- The inspection results of any subsequent inspections, or reinspections, must be recorded on a new BVAR or as a new inspection record created in PEMS.
- Where multiple manual BVARs are used for a vessel, the BVARs must be numbered chronologically to simplify traceability of the bulk vessel throughout the inspection and approval process.

Issuing bulk vessel approval

Bulk vessel approval must only be issued once the inspection AOs have inspected all holds and other areas of the vessel as far as necessary and appropriate, and the AOs are satisfied that the vessel complies with the requirements of the legislation:

- at least one hold has been passed for loading, unless the bulk vessel approval is only being issued for loading of non-consumable goods onto other areas of the vessel (**go to Section: [Approval for loading non-consumable goods onto other areas of the vessel!](#)**)
 - the AOs must clearly specify which holds or other areas of the vessel have been passed and approved for loading prescribed goods
- the AOs are satisfied that all other holds and other areas of the vessel are passed for risk of cross-contamination or cross-infestation to the prescribed goods
- where consumable prescribed goods will be loaded, the marine surveyor's certificate for the bulk vessel has been issued and sighted for the holds passed for.

Important: If an AO is in any doubt as to the suitability of the bulk vessel to loading prescribed goods, the AO should contact the department's [Grain and Seed Exports Program](#).

Approval for loading non-consumable goods onto other areas of the vessel

- Bulk vessel approval may be issued for non-consumable goods to be loaded onto other parts of a vessel, such as the vessel deck or hatch covers, as long as the bulk vessel complies with departmental and legislative requirements.
- Where bulk vessel approval is issued for loading onto other areas of the vessel the AO must clearly specify on the bulk vessel approval which other areas are passed and approved for loading.
- The AO may issue bulk vessel approval only for loading of non-consumable prescribed goods onto other areas of the vessel, or approval for loading onto other areas of the vessel may form part of a general bulk vessel and hold approval.
- Where prescribed non-consumable goods will only be loaded onto the vessel deck and hatch covers the AO must still inspect and pass all other areas of the vessel as far as necessary and appropriate in order to issue bulk vessel approval for loading onto other areas of the vessel.

Expiration of bulk vessel approval

- Bulk vessels that are inspected and passed as export compliant remain compliant for 28 days from the date bulk vessel approval is issued.
- Where the 28 day compliance period is exceeded prior to loading, inspection AOs must perform a full reinspection of the bulk vessel as far as practicable and appropriate before issuing bulk vessel approval.
- A new bulk vessel approval can be issued on the basis of the original marine surveyor's certificate if the AO is satisfied that the condition of the bulk vessel has not changed since the original marine surveyor's certificate was issued.

Exceptional circumstances

- In exceptional circumstances, the compliance period for vessel approval can be extended beyond the 28 days. To extend bulk vessel approval the exporter must provide details supporting the request to the department's [Grain and Seed Exports Program](#) before the 28 day expiration period ends.
- The exporter must supply
 - details of the exceptional circumstances for which an extension is required
 - a justifiable period of extension
 - information that gives assurance that the condition of the vessel has not changed and the phytosanitary status or security of the vessel has not been compromised since the bulk vessel approval was issued.

Suspension of bulk vessel approval

- Bulk vessel approval may be suspended if an AO suspects the conditions on the vessel have changed following the issuance of the vessel approval.
- Where loading of the bulk vessel has already commenced the loading must cease.

The following table outlines the process for suspending bulk vessel approval.

Stage	What happens	Responsible party
1.	The clients to whom bulk vessel approval was initially issued is notified that bulk vessel approval has been suspended.	Inspection AO

Stage	What happens	Responsible party
2.	The bulk vessel approval records are surrendered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> paper versions and any copies are returned to the inspection AO, and/or all electronic versions are deleted. 	Client

Revoking the suspension of bulk vessel approval

- Following the suspension of bulk vessel approval, AOs may re-inspect the vessel to see if the conditions have changed (**go to Section: [What are the requirements for the reinspection of bulk vessels?](#)**).
- Following re-inspection, if the AOs are satisfied that the suspension and approval is no longer justified the AOs must revoke the suspension.

The following table outlines the process for revoking the bulk vessel approval suspending.

Stage	What happens	Responsible party
1.	The clients to whom bulk vessel approval was initially issued is notified that bulk vessel approval has been reinstated.	Inspection AO
2.	The surrendered bulk vessel approval records are returned to the clients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> paper versions and any copies are returned, and/or approval is provided electronically. 	Inspection AO

Cancellation of bulk vessel approval

- Bulk vessel approvals may be cancelled where the vessel conditions that lead to the suspension of approval have not been rectified and the vessel no longer complies with legislative requirements.
- Where there is a change in vessel condition to a specific hold or other area of the vessel following approval, such as where a hold is re-ballasted following approval, the approval for that specific hold or other area may be cancelled in isolation of the rest of the vessel approval. In these circumstances the inspection AOs must be satisfied that the vessel still complies with legislative requirements and the specific hold or other area does not pose a risk of cross-infestation or cross-contamination to the goods to be loaded.
- Where the AOs believe that bulk vessel approval must be cancelled in full or in part, the AOs must notify the clients to whom the bulk vessel approval was initially issued.
- Following cancellation of approval, the master may choose to treat the non-compliance and apply for bulk vessel reinspection and approval (**go to Section: [What are the requirements for the reinspection of bulk vessels?](#)**).
- Where loading of the vessel with prescribed goods has already commenced, the vessel agent must contact the department's [Grain and Seed Exports Program](#) for further instruction.

Record keeping

Clients and AOs must retain documentation in relation to receivals, inspections, audits, registration, accreditation and export certification for a period of at least two years.

Note: If inspection records and supporting documents are available in PEMS, the documents are automatically archived and do not need to be retained by AOs.

Related material

The following related material is available in the [Plant export operations manual \(PEOM\)](#) on the department's website:

- Volume 6A: Pests, diseases and contaminants of grain and plant products (excluding horticulture)
- Volume 8B: Commodity inspections – forest products
- Volume 12: Treatments
- Work Instruction: *Inspecting empty bulk vessels for export*
- Reference: *Bulk vessel terms and definitions*
- Reference: *Pre-entry hazard assessment of third party worksites including bulk vessels (Take 5 Checklist)*
- Work Instruction: *Validating supporting documents for plant exports*
- Reference: *Work health and safety in the plant export environment*
- Reference: *Bulk vessel approval record (PE103)*
- Reference: *Plant exports compliance, approval and running records user guide*
- Reference: *Plant Exports Management System authorised officer user guide*
- Reference: *Plant exports guide – Equipment*

The following related material is available on the IML for departmental AOs:

- Guideline: *Managing fatigue*
- Guideline: *Managing hazardous manual tasks*
- Guideline: *Personal protective equipment*
- Work instruction: *How to report a health and safety hazard*

Work instruction: How to report a health and safety incident.

The following related material is available online:

- the [AMSA website](#).

Contact information

- Authorised Officer Program: PlantExportTraining@agriculture.gov.au
- Grain and Seed Exports Program: Grain.Export@agriculture.gov.au

Document information

The following table contains administrative metadata.

Instructional Material Library document ID	Instructional material owner
IMLS-12-3064	The Director, Grain and Seed Exports Program, Plant Export Operations Branch

Version history

The following table details the published date and amendment details for this document.

Version	Date	Amendment details
1	6/11/2017	First publication of this guideline.

Attachment 1: Buddy system

Note: For the definition and policy relating to the use of the Buddy system, go to Section: [Work health and safety](#).

The following table outlines the activities and discussions that two or more BVI accredited AOs engaged in the buddy system should perform prior to undertaking an empty bulk vessel inspection.

Step	Activity	Description
1.	Identify work activities	Activities that are inherently hazardous and where safety can be improved by application of the Buddy System are identified.
2.	Discuss the hazards	AOs working together as Buddies discuss the hazards inherent in the work they are going to do.
3.	Identify the type of help one Buddy can give to another	Buddies agree who will do what, to whom and when they will do it to increase the safety of their buddy.
4.	Start the work	The buddies are to carry out the work and provide support to each other in the way they have previously agreed.
5.	Contingency planning	If one buddy is unable to continue to act as a buddy for any reason, the buddy informs the other AO of that fact.
6.	Emergency help	In the event of harm occurring to an AO, their buddy raises the alarm and provide whatever help is possible until the AO at risk has been assisted and the situation has been normalised.
7.	Stopping work	When the work is completed or the buddies agree to stop working, this is communicated to all buddies involved in the work.