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New laws affecting imports of wood, pulp and paper products – Information for customs brokers



FACTSHEET 1.3

New laws and new responsibilities

Australia has laws in place to combat illegal logging and support the international trade in legally harvested timber and wood-based products.

If your clients import wood, pulp or paper products into Australia, these laws affect them. Your clients have new responsibilities and you may need to make a declaration to the government on their behalf.

By assisting importers in complying with the laws, you'll be helping to combat the highly destructive trade in illegally harvested timber, while supporting local investment, profitability and jobs.

The new requirements

The new laws affect importers in two different ways:

- It is now a criminal offence to intentionally, knowingly or recklessly import illegally logged wood, pulp or paper products into Australia. Importers should not import the products if they believe that the wood, pulp or paper may contain illegally harvested timber.
- If importers are bringing 'regulated timber products' into Australia, they need to minimise the risk that the wood, pulp or paper in these products has been illegally logged. This process is known as undertaking 'due diligence'.

Regulated timber products are identified by their tariff codes and include most timber and wood-based products, such as sawn timber, pulp, paper products, veneer, mouldings, wood panels, flooring, medium-density fibreboard, particle board, plywood and furniture.

The role of customs brokers

As a customs broker, you are not directly regulated by the illegal logging laws. However, you may be called on to help your clients to answer the illegal logging Community Protection Question, or to source further information about the laws.

Key points

- Customs brokers are not directly regulated under Australia's illegal logging laws. However, if your clients import timber or wood-based products into Australia, the new illegal logging laws will affect them.
- Illegal logging refers to the harvesting of timber in contravention of the laws in place where the timber is harvested. This includes timber harvested illegally in Australia or overseas.
- By helping your clients comply with the laws you'll help to promote the trade in legally harvested timber.
- Your clients need to minimise the risk that the wood, pulp or paper in these products has been illegally logged. This process is known as undertaking 'due diligence'.
- Regulated timber products are defined by tariff codes and include most timber and wood-based products, such as sawn timber, pulp, paper products, veneer, mouldings, wood panels, flooring, medium-density fibreboard, particle board, plywood and furniture.
- Importers are required to make a declaration about whether they have complied with the due diligence requirements.
- Where you are answering the Community Protection Question on behalf of an importer, you can use your existing arrangements with your clients for obtaining this information.
- A range of information is available on our website: agriculture.gov.au/illegallogging and you can seek assistance via email: illegallogging@agriculture.gov.au or our phone hotline: **1800 657 313**.



Stay informed

- Our illegal logging website has a range of information and guidance: agriculture.gov.au/illegallogging
- For more about due diligence requirements, see *Factsheet 2.1—Due diligence—Guidance for importers*
- Subscribe to the E-Update to keep up with news and developments by visiting agriculture.gov.au/forestry/policies/illegal-logging/e-updates
- If you have any questions about the laws or you or your clients' responsibilities send an email to illegallogging@agriculture.gov.au or call us on 1800 657 313.

Import declaration

If a client imports regulated timber products into Australia, they need to make a declaration to the Australian Government about their compliance with their due diligence requirements. This is in the form of a Community Protection Question that is answered as part of the normal import declaration process. The question needs to be answered for each regulated timber product line in a consignment.

We recognise that you may answer the Community Protection Question on your client's behalf. In these situations, you should be able to draw on your existing contractual arrangements with your client to answer the question.

Further information on the laws

Your clients may contact you for further information about the laws. In these circumstances, you should refer them to the guidance materials included on the department's website: agriculture.gov.au/illegallogging.

Questions about the laws can be sent to our email inbox: illegallogging@agriculture.gov.au or directed to our illegal logging hotline: 1800 657 313.

