HITCHHIKER PEST PROGRAM

The Hitchhiker Pest Program aims to address the risk of hitchhiker pests carried to Australia via imported sea containers, their cargoes and associated packaging.

Why we are delivering this program

Global movement of containers arriving with pests on or in them is increasing.

Approximately **2.5 million** sea containers arrive in Australia each year.

It's not feasible to inspect all sea containers on arrival.

This has created a need to develop a **systematic approach to manage hitchhiker pest risks** along the container pathway.
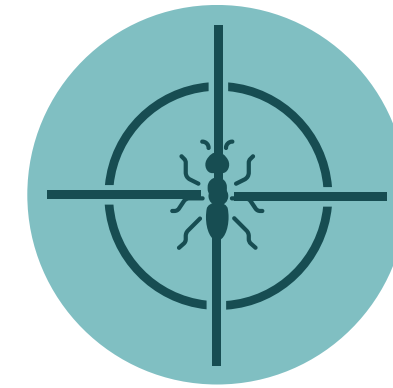
The Hitchhiker Pest Program is **critical if we are to keep pace** with the increasing volumes and complexity of freight, pests, and diseases that we are required to manage. It will provide crucial **protection for Australia's environment, agricultural industries and economy**.

Benefits of the program

Reducing risk arriving at the border

Reduced resource effort at the border & faster border clearance

Intervention is targeted at the highest risk

Enhanced biosecurity controls, ICT systems & data capture to target intervention at the highest risk

Co-regulatory arrangements

Enable re-allocation of biosecurity officers to highest risk & rapid & cost-effective management of risk through efficiencies in operations & systems

Focus areas of the program

Expanded use of offshore controls
- Re-designed containers
- Expansion of offshore quality systems & development of container hygiene solutions
- Focus on treatment assurance
- Promote industry uptake of container hygiene guidelines & codes of practice

Enabled by:
- Legislation
- Industry participation
- Assurance & verification
- ICT
- Risk understanding
- Data
- Communication & engagement

Targeted onshore risk intervention & surveillance
- DAFF inspection and surveillance focus on highest risk
- Industry inspections on lower risk including at empty container parks
- Integration of innovative technologies

Partnerships with industry, governments & research sector
- Actively participate in development of regional & global container hygiene solutions
- Application & assurance of offshore controls
- Partnering with industry for managing lower risk containers onshore
- Surveillance at high-risk sites, including partnering with states and territories post-border
- Development & trialling of innovative technologies

How we are delivering

The Hitchhiker Pest Program is being **delivered over four years (2021 - 2025) via 26 individual projects:**

The program is adopting a systematic approach to comprehensively manage this risk through 3 focus areas, as well as enabling projects:

Hitchhiker Pest Program encompasses 26 projects

Expanded use of offshore controls

3 projects

Includes Sea Container Design Improvement project + 2 others

Targeted onshore risk intervention & surveillance

4 projects

Includes Hitchhiker Risk and Control Framework project + 3 others

Partnerships with industry, government & researchers

12 projects

Includes Hitchhiker Pest Survey project + 11 others

Enabling

7 projects

Includes Container Data project + 6 others