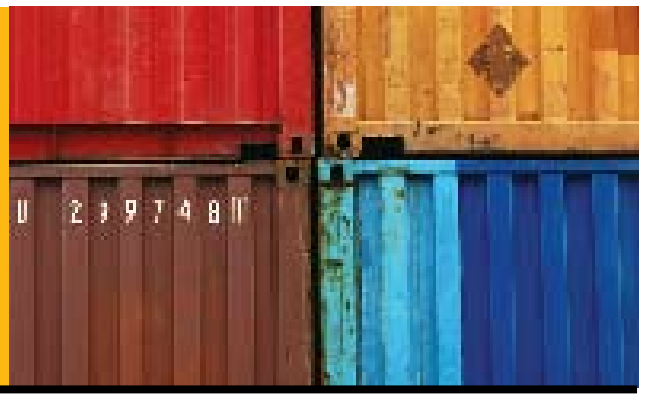


# CTF BULLETIN



CONTAINER AND TRANSITIONAL FACILITY BULLETIN

ISSUE 3 • SEPT 2009

## Welcome to CTF Bulletin

Welcome to another edition of the CTF Bulletin. These past months have been very busy for MAF Biosecurity New Zealand (MAFBNZ), importers and TFs alike. Following public consultation, the revised Import Health Standard for Sea Containers has been released which will mean a few changes in the way MAFBNZ manages sea containers. More information is provided in this issue.

This edition also focuses on the invasive pest, the Red Imported Fire Ant (RIFA), which has the potential to cause serious harm in New Zealand if rigorous control measures are not put in place. We also take a look at a number of interesting pests intercepted at the border, which would now be making their home here if not for the work of some skilled Accredited Persons and MAFBNZ staff. Threats to our border are constant, and it is the responsibility of us all to remain vigilant and keep our country free from pests and diseases.

Thanks to those who provided comments on this publication. Your feedback is most appreciated and will go towards informing future issues. If there is a topic you think needs highlighting please send suggestions and comments through using the contact details provided. Happy reading!

Liz Phillips, Adviser, Operational Standards and Facilities Group, Border Standards, MAFBNZ

Why would any business willing to accept its share of responsibility and compliance costs be prepared to sit by and say nothing while the small group of “free riders” thumb their nose at the system, and go their own way? This was also made very clear to us during the road shows, late last year. At that time, MAFBNZ promised to do something about the issue. We are now developing a tool that, when finalised, will allow us to readily identify sub-standard performers and apply greater resource to sorting these facilities out. This will include better education and working with industry groups to develop good practices. It will also involve increasing the involvement of the MAF Enforcement Group in investigating persistent or serious non-compliance. Depending on the circumstances this may result in prosecutions or summary fines. Our aim is to assist willing companies to comply, but at the end of the day, biosecurity requirements are the law. On one hand we will be rewarding superior performance with lower audit regimes (in the process cutting your compliance costs); on the other hand the message to the persistently non-compliant is that free riding will not be tolerated. Their performance will move up within a reasonable time – or they’ll be out.

We will keep you advised of progress and, in the meantime, if you’ve any ideas on how things can be improved (across the board) please contact myself or Tania Marinas ([clive.gower-collins@maf.govt.nz](mailto:clive.gower-collins@maf.govt.nz) or [tania.marinas@maf.govt.nz](mailto:tania.marinas@maf.govt.nz)).

## MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSITIONAL FACILITIES

Recent reports received from MAFBNZ Inspectors have highlighted issues with sea container check reporting and container log sheets submitted to MAFBNZ. Last year MAFBNZ instigated a change requiring facilities to only send a container log sheet when contamination/pests or non-compliant wood packaging are found. This is known as exception reporting. However some facilities are failing to report at all, or are not keeping a record of their checks as per requirements.

All container checks conducted by Accredited Persons (APs) must be recorded, either by filling out and keeping log-sheets or by recording the details of the check, the AP, and the container on a spreadsheet. A log sheet must be sent to MAFBNZ when contamination is found. This is a “must” for all facilities receiving sea containers and records will be checked at the time of MAFBNZ audit.

## Transitional Facility Focus

### TF COMPLIANCE PROJECT UNDERWAY

*By Clive Gower-Collins, Group Manager, Operational Standards and Facilities Group, MAFBNZ*

For some time MAFBNZ has received industry feedback that suggests we’re not being tough enough with non-compliant facilities. This is understandable.

Failing to do so will result in a non-compliance being issued.



Report all contamination – such as this birds nest at the back of a cool-tainer

## OPERATOR AND ACCREDITED PERSON TRAINING

There is some confusion over the difference between training for transitional facility Operators and AP training. Training for Operators focuses on the Operator's role as head of the transitional facility, and their associated responsibilities. The AP training teaches people how to check sea containers for biosecurity risks and pests.

If you need to book either AP or Operator training, please ensure you are booked on the correct course and confirm this with the training provider. There have been cases reported of people turning up and realising they have been booked on the wrong course by mistake. For information on training refer to the following links: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/border/transitional-facilities/sea-containers/current-ap-training-providers> and <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/trans/req>

# MAFBNZ STANDARDS FOCUS

## UPDATED SEA CONTAINER STANDARD APPROVED

MAFBNZ has revised the existing Import Health Standard for sea containers from all countries. This document was released for public consultation earlier this year and was approved for use on 22 July 2009. The new requirements, which will be implemented in various stages, can be found with a user's guidance document and an implementation plan at: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/imports/non-organic/standards/seaco.htm>.

## REVIEW OF PLACES OF FIRST ARRIVAL STANDARD

The standard requirements for places of first arrival (POFA) are currently undergoing a review, with a new draft standard likely to be released for public consultation towards the end of the year. The POFA standard outlines quarantine requirements for New Zealand international sea ports and airports. For more information on the standard contact Senior Adviser Mike Tana, ([tanam@maf.govt.nz](mailto:tanam@maf.govt.nz)).

# Front Line Focus

## HEINZ WATTIE'S AND MAFBNZ WORKING TOGETHER

MAFBNZ works closely with a number of transitional facilities (TFs) around New Zealand who import specialist products, have unique needs or a high container throughput. A good example is Heinz Wattie's Ltd, who make a wide range of products for human and animal consumption. They operate five TFs in New Zealand with large premises in Hastings and Auckland, importing around 2500 containers a year. Due to the special processing requirements and high volumes of products being imported there MAFBNZ and Heinz Wattie have needed to work closely to manage biosecurity risks whilst enabling the company to meet its business needs.



The Heinz Wattie's Hastings Team (L-R): Margaret, Mel, Rachel, Larissa, Jo, Charlotte and Karen.

Heinz Wattie's have been very proactive and committed to a positive engagement with MAFBNZ around biosecurity issues and this has led to a better understanding and a good working relationship, which both parties are keen to maintain.

## WORLD MOVING AND STORAGE COMMITTED TO BIOSECURITY

World Moving and Storage Ltd (WMS) operates a large removals-based facility in Auckland that is also a Customs-bonded facility. They operate a cleaning facility for cars and receive personal effects and other items that may require decontamination prior to being cleared for entry. These items are frequently found with associated biosecurity risks.



The World Moving and Storage team on the job

The WMS team is very proactive in looking for, finding, and reporting, risk material and pests to MAFBNZ. Recently two containers of goods (one from Australia and one from the USA) were found with ant and spider infestations. Due to the diligent work of the WMS team they were spotted and the containers fumigated.

Like some other companies in the industry, the WMS team use special software to ensure MAFBNZ clearances for risk goods and items of interest to NZ Customs are obtained as fast as possible. The use of this software has led to cost savings and increased the speed and efficiency of clearances – a positive outcome for both WMS and government agencies. MAFBNZ are pleased to see the commitment to biosecurity displayed by WMS and thank them for a job well done. For information on receiving electronic clearances visit: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/cont-carg/inbound-messaging>

## SPECIALISED CONTAINER SERVICES SHOW THEIR SKILLS



Duane Glentworth and Matt Churchill of Specialised Container Services

A key employee at SCS is Accredited Person Matt Churchill who has been with the company for ten years. Over the years Matt has found black widow spiders, geckos, huntsman spiders and ants. Ants are especially difficult to spot as they are small, fast moving and will hide if disturbed. Some of the more unusual discoveries for Matt were a common Asian toad from Australia that had been missed by the initial importer, and six yellow Asian paper wasps in a container from Fiji.

None of these pests are welcome in New Zealand and without the help of Matt and other APs like him it is possible that many would find their way into the country. MAFBNZ would like to commend Matt and the team from SCS on their great work.

## COMBINED EFFORT NAILS REPTILES IN DUNEDIN

MAFBNZ Inspector Trudi McDonald was recently called to Port Otago by Brent Osborne from the South Freight Facility (SFF) after pests were discovered in a container holding a boat imported from Australia. Bobby Moeroa, an Accredited Person at the facility, had spotted fresh spider webbing at the front of the container. It turned out the container held more than the boat and a few spiders. Greg Wilkinson (MAFBNZ Detector Dog Handler) accompanied Trudi to help with the inspection. After Greg found a dead gecko and some sticky webbing under a seat Trudi decided to have the container fumigated immediately.



A family of geckos and a frog, all found in one consignment from Australia

Re-inspection was done by Ed Bickerstaff (Dunedin MAFBNZ Inspector), who presented the importer with more finds – despite his claims that the boat had been steam cleaned for four hours. In total, the boat and container yielded five geckos, whole and broken gecko eggs, and a frog. These were identified as common Asian house geckos and an Australian red/desert tree frog. We would like to express appreciation for the excellent work and notification by the SFF team from Port Otago and quick action by the Dunedin MAFBNZ Team - well done!

## Recent Pest Interceptions

APs and TF operators have a vital role to play in protecting New Zealand's biosecurity, by calling MAFBNZ and reporting pests they find.

Since the last issue we have had reports of interceptions of 25 geckos, eight skinks and two frogs found in or on containers or imported cargo at the border and TFs. There are also numerous reports of insects, which generally result in container fumigation or get sprayed with insecticide. Most insects are not formally identified unless there is a good reason to do so (such as for ants or fruit flies). However, if you find any of the following, dead or alive, please phone MAFBNZ as we like to have these identified: lizards, snakes, mammals, mosquitoes and fruit flies. The following are some recently intercepted pests.

### GECKOS GALORE!

An Asian house gecko (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) was found in a container of ceramics imported from Malaysia recently by Dave Von Schreven. Dave works for the Rolleston, Christchurch branch of The Warehouse Ltd, and on finding the lizard told Rhys Johnson who supervises the container devanning team there. This was followed by a call to MAFBNZ. Although a common interception from tropical areas around the Pacific and the Asian region, these geckos could possibly introduce parasites to New Zealand native lizards. MAFBNZ would like to extend thanks to Dave, Rhys and the team at The Warehouse – a real biosecurity bargain!

A dead flat tailed gecko (*Hemidactylus platyurus*) was found in a container of rubber mats from Indonesia in July. This consignment was imported by Numat Industries in Oamaru and the gecko found by Tony Judd while unloading. Although dead, reptiles can still carry parasites and we would like to thank Tony for his vigilance and calling us about the find.

And finally two more Asian house geckos were found in a wooden crate of helicopter rotor blades from Brisbane going to the Royal New Zealand Air Force in June. The crate was inside a container that arrived in Auckland, and was taken to the TF by Tapper Transport where it was unloaded. The wooden crate was then trucked to the Ohakea RNZAF Base in the Manawatu where Corporal Lee Jenkins opened it up and found the lizards. He reported his find to Sergeant Lee Capper who contacted MAFBNZ. We would like to salute the RNZAF team for protecting the country from imported pests – well done.

# Invasive Pest Focus

## THE WORLD'S WORST INVASIVE ANT

*Solonopsis invicta* or Red Imported Fire Ant (RIFA), is thought to be the world's worst invasive ant species. Originally from South America, RIFA has now established in Australia (Brisbane), China (Guangdong), the Port of Hong Kong, the Philippines, the Port of Singapore, Taiwan and the USA (south and south eastern states). It is more aggressive than most other ant species and, when a nest mound is disturbed, they attack in large stinging swarms. People can have severe allergic reactions to stings and 90 people are known to have died as a direct result. RIFA can survive in many habitats and have negative effects on agricultural production, animal husbandry and can make every day activities very difficult. Just mowing a lawn can become a hazardous task, requiring long pants and boots sprayed with an insect repellent and a contact insecticide!



Photo courtesy of Alex nWild



MAFBNZ has intercepted live RIFA only three times in the last 30 years at the New Zealand border. These were on an aluminium yacht mast, a consignment of fresh peaches and in a tent. Between 2001 and 2009, MAFBNZ also found and eradicated RIFA incursions at Auckland airport, the Port of Napier and most recently, at Whirinaki (Hawke's Bay) in

April of this year. These eradication and management activities have cost over \$13 million so far, and \$600 000 is spent annually on RIFA surveillance programmes.

RIFA could enter New Zealand in air or sea containers from any country where it is established. It is critical that APs and all importers keep an eye out for ants in consignments in and around TFs. Don't try and identify ants yourselves. Contain them and call MAFBNZ immediately on **0800 80 99 66** and we'll respond as a priority. This is one pest that we do not want to establish here ever!



## Border Bungles

### SPIDER MAN CAUGHT IN WEB OF DECEIT

An Auckland arachnophile (or spider lover) was recently found guilty of illegally trying to import an unknown species of tarantula into New Zealand from the Philippines. A package, intercepted by MAFBNZ Inspectors at the International Mail Centre in Auckland, was found to contain seven very much alive, bright orange juvenile spiders in foam containers. Unfortunately for the importer, his contact details were clearly shown on the package and MAFBNZ investigators had no trouble finding him. After questioning he admitted ordering the spiders stating that he intended to keep them as pets. The spiders were identified by experts as a previously unknown species of tarantula. These spiders can be quite dangerous as some have hairs that may be toxic causing serious skin rashes, allergic reactions and even anaphylactic shock. The spiders could also bring in diseases or parasites that could be transferred to native spiders if they managed to escape from captivity. MAFBNZ strictly controls all imports of live animals into the country to prevent this situation occurring.

The importer was charged and fined \$4 000 plus court costs of \$630 and the spiders were humanely euthanised. MAF Investigations Manager – Greg Reid said that the prosecution sends a clear message about how seriously MAFBNZ takes these issues and biosecurity in general.

## Changes proposed to Import Health Standard for Wood Packaging

Proposed modifications to the current Import Health Standard (IHS) for Wood Packaging Material (WPM) are available for public consultation. These have been placed on the MAF Biosecurity New Zealand website: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/biosec/consult/draft-ihs-wood-packaging-material>

Under the current standard, issued in June 2006, all WPM (thicker than 6 mm) imported into New Zealand must be heat treated, fumigated or treated with specific chemicals acceptable to New Zealand. Wood treated in ways approved by the International Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measure Standard No.15: Regulating Wood Packaging Material in International Trade (ISPM 15) must also be stamped with the official ISPM 15 mark.

The most significant change will be the mandatory requirement for MAFBNZ inspection of all WPM identified within containerised cargo that has not been marked with the ISPM 15 stamp, or treated accordingly. Submissions on the draft import health standard close

on 5th of October 2009 and it is anticipated that any proposed changes will come into effect from **1 November 2009**.

MAFBNZ Adviser Shane Olsen says “the change has been designed to better manage the biosecurity risks associated with imported WPM that does not immediately meet the requirements of the IHS. Our surveys have shown that WPM without ISPM 15 markings is much more likely to be associated with regulated pests and contaminants than WPM with ISPM 15 markings”.

Shane says MAFBNZ does not currently act on all non-compliant WPM within containerised cargo. In effect, Accredited Persons at Transitional Facilities have been responsible for reporting to MAFBNZ on biosecurity risks associated with non-compliant WPM.

“We are working to ensure stakeholders are aware of the proposed changes to the current IHS which may affect their business. A four week public consultation period on the amended IHS began on the 8 September and we encourage all interested parties to let us know their views on the proposed changes.”

“We want all importers to be aware of the need for compliance with the ISPM 15 prior to this date. All non-compliant WPM identified by MAFBNZ profiling will require MAFBNZ inspection at the border as from 1 November 2009.

Stakeholders also need to be made aware of the possible increases in charges which will be levied for additional MAFBNZ inspections with regard to this type of non-compliance.”

Shane says these changes are another important step towards managing the biosecurity risks of WPM in an appropriate fashion by focussing on those importers and suppliers who are non-compliant – “the international standard and New Zealand’s import health standard have been in place for several years now, so everyone should be aware of the importation requirements.”



## New Contact Information

### NEW MAF PHONE NUMBERS

MAF General Inquiries:	0800 00 83 33
Biosecurity Import Clearances:	0800 22 20 18
Climate Change Inquiries:	0800 25 46 28
Entomology Lab:	0800 66 61 22
Exotic Pest and Disease Hotline:	0800 80 99 66
Imported Animal Service:	0800 62 35 55
International callers number:	64 04 894 0100

### USEFUL WEB LINKS AND CONTACTS

MAFBNZ web site: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/>

General Import Health Standards: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/ihs/search>

Importing Animals/Animal Products: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/imports/animals>

Importing Plants/Plant Products: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/>

Information on Animal or Plant import permits and inquiries should be directed to the following contacts:

Animal/Animal Products Imports Team: Ph: (04) 894 0459; Fax: (04) 894 0662; Email: [imports@maf.govt.nz](mailto:imports@maf.govt.nz)

Plant/Plant Products Imports: Ph: (04) 894 0832; Fax: (04) 894 0662; Email: [plant.imports@maf.govt.nz](mailto:plant.imports@maf.govt.nz)

Postal Address for Animal or Plant Imports: Border Standards, MAF Biosecurity New Zealand, Pastoral House, 25 The Terrace, PO Box 2526, Wellington 6140.

For story ideas, questions or more information on articles contact Senior Adviser, Dave Nendick ([dave.nendick@maf.govt.nz](mailto:dave.nendick@maf.govt.nz)) or Liz Phillips ([elizabeth.phillips@maf.govt.nz](mailto:elizabeth.phillips@maf.govt.nz)).