

# Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS)

## Onshore Fumigation Strategy



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# Background

- As part of its role to minimise the risks posed by exotic pests and diseases to Australia's agricultural industries and environment, AQIS inspects about 1.5 million cargo containers, 180 million mail items, and screens 8 million air passengers a year.



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# Background

- Fumigation is an important part of the AQIS risk management strategy.
- AQIS uses methyl bromide fumigation treatments, performed by industry offshore and onshore, to address quarantine risks associated with many imported goods.
- Australia also uses methyl bromide to treat goods being exported to other countries.



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# What is AQIS doing offshore?

- AQIS works closely with overseas government agencies to establish training and accreditation systems to assist in meeting AQIS requirements.
- AQIS has implemented the Australian Fumigation Accreditation Scheme (AFAS) in several countries to help prevent offshore fumigation failures.



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# AFAS Objectives

- The main objectives of AFAS are to:
  - provide assistance for monitoring and registering overseas fumigation providers;
  - enhance technical expertise through training; and
  - maintain a high standard of fumigation performance and compliance.



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# AFAS Objectives

- Through training, AFAS aims to ensure that fumigation providers can meet Australian quarantine treatment requirements.
- Through monitoring, AFAS aims to ensure that the capacity to deliver effective fumigations is maintained.



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# What is AQIS doing onshore?

- Currently, AQIS accepts fumigations performed by:
  - companies that are parties to the AQIS Onshore Quarantine Fumigation Scheme; or
  - companies that are not signatories to the Scheme, but are monitored by AQIS officers.



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# Why change the system?

- First, there is a history of ineffective onshore fumigations. This has been identified through both the auditing of fumigators operating under compliance agreements and the detection of live insects after treatment.



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# Why change the system?

- Second, AQIS in its regulatory capacity has a responsibility to review its systems to ensure that they remain relevant and effective, and to make changes where appropriate.



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# Why change the system?

- Third, strengthening onshore fumigation arrangements will promote industry best practice by giving fumigators the opportunity to demonstrate that they are performing effectively against AQIS requirements.



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# Why change the system?

- Also, bringing exports into the system will demonstrate to Australia's trading partners that we are serious about exporting pest-free commodities.



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# What is AQIS doing?

- AQIS is committed to working in partnership with industry and is undertaking a number of activities to improve onshore fumigation performance, as follows:



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# Co-regulatory arrangements

- AQIS is developing a common, co-regulatory arrangement covering the fumigation of both import and export commodities.
- The revised arrangement will cover the fumigation of perishable commodities, as well as general cargo and timber, placing greater emphasis on compliance with the AQIS Methyl Bromide Fumigation Standard.



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# Competency assessment

- AQIS will conduct initial audits of fumigation performance to assess the competence of individual fumigators against the requirements of the AQIS Methyl Bromide Fumigation Standard.
- Individuals who demonstrate competency will become AQIS accredited.
- Companies employing AQIS accredited fumigators will be eligible to enter into a co-regulatory arrangement with AQIS.



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# Approved list

- Those companies that enter into a co-regulatory arrangement with AQIS will become AQIS approved onshore fumigation providers.
- AQIS will establish a list of approved providers, which is consistent with what is being done in countries that have implemented AFAS.



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# Approved list

- Each approved provider will be given an approval number. This number is to appear on all treatment certificates issued for fumigations.
- The list of AQIS approved onshore fumigation providers will be made available to the public through the AQIS website.
- Fumigations carried out by providers not on the list must be monitored by AQIS.



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# Ongoing audits

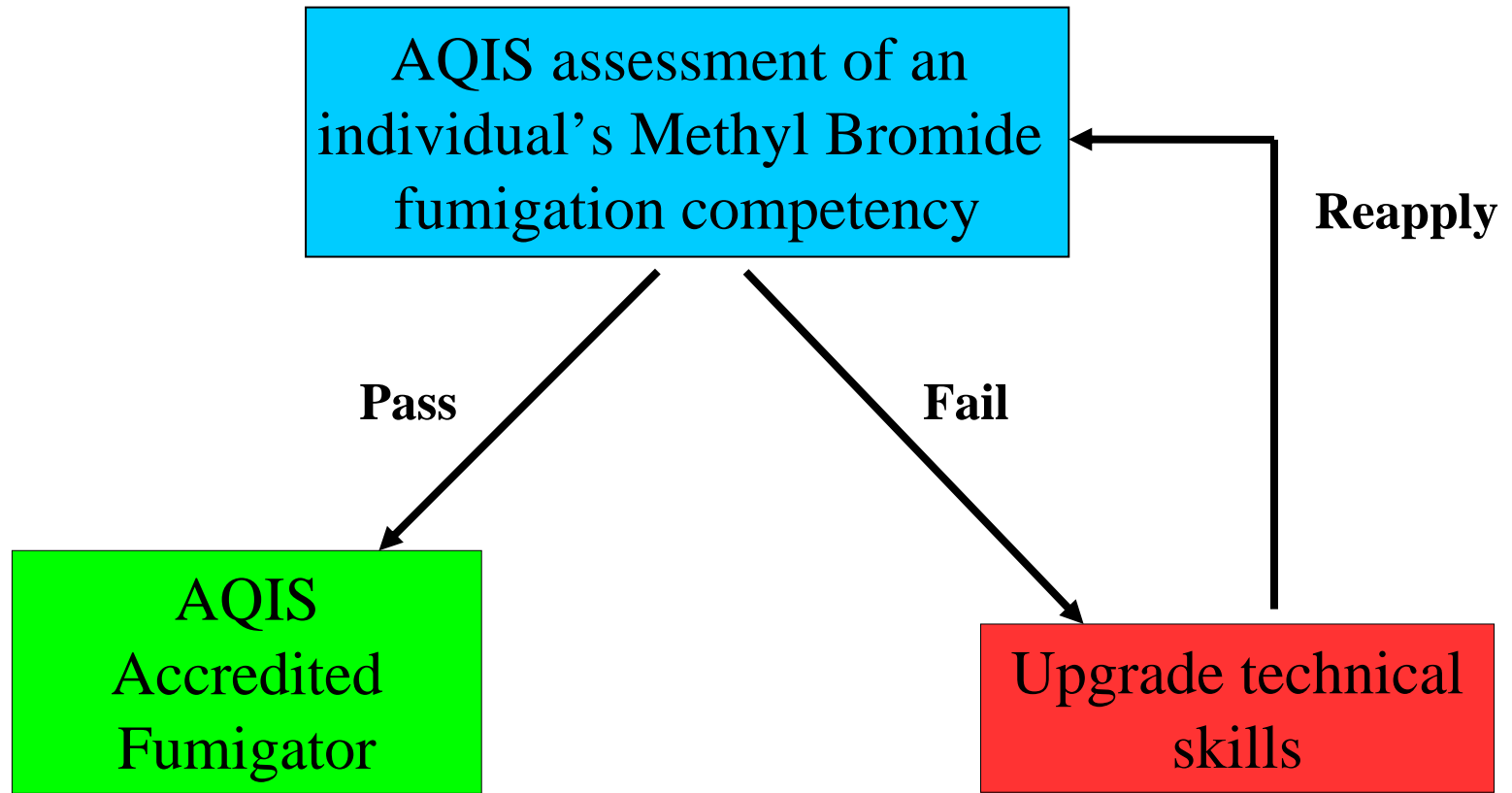
- In line with current practice, AQIS approved onshore fumigation providers will be audited to ensure that they continue to comply with the AQIS Methyl Bromide Fumigation Standard, and other requirements under the co-regulatory arrangements.



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# Onshore Arrangements



# Onshore Arrangements

**AQIS Approved Onshore Fumigation Provider**

Demonstrated on-going competency

YES

NO

Remains/reinstated  
on AQIS List

Removed from list

Competency  
re-established

Undertake Remedial  
Action



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# Training of AQIS officers

- AQIS regional staff will undertake fumigation and audit training to enable them to effectively audit industry fumigation performance.



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# Timeline

The revised onshore fumigation arrangements will be fully developed and implemented by

**June 2008**



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