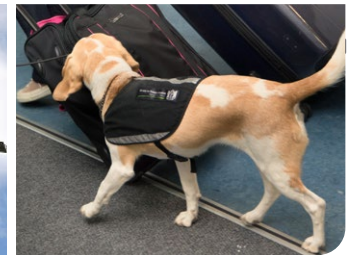




The BorderSpace



Working together to secure New Zealand's borders from biosecurity threats

Issue 46 | August 2022

More border restrictions as FMD spreads to Bali

Travellers and goods arriving from Indonesia will receive greater scrutiny at the border as that country's foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) outbreak spreads further.

The animal disease was confirmed last month in Bali – a popular holiday destination for New Zealand and Australian travellers. Indonesia first announced an outbreak in two provinces in May.

Quarantine officers are carefully questioning arriving passengers to determine their risk profile. Travellers who have visited Indonesia face further questions and baggage checks. There is a strong focus on detecting and disinfecting dirty footwear that may have been used on farms. To help with this, we have introduced disinfectant mats at New Zealand's main international airports.

In late July, our regulations people placed a temporary ban on personal consignments of meat and meat products from Indonesia. This even includes meat-based stock found in instant noodle packets. Previously, travellers from Indonesia could bring in declared cooked or treated meat.

In addition, there is an alert in place for cargo arriving from Indonesia. Sea containers from Indonesia cannot be opened or unloaded at transitional facilities without the presence of a quarantine officer. Our officers have also been visiting supermarkets to ensure that imported meat products are compliant with biosecurity requirements.

The actions are part of a wide-ranging response to ensure FMD does not enter New Zealand. Other border-related initiatives include holding all mail from Indonesia to ensure it undergoes both x-ray and detector dog screening.

FMD protection: rules for travellers

- Declare all goods, shoes, farming equipment, and food that could carry unwanted pests or diseases into New Zealand.
- Declare if you have been in contact with livestock or at a farm overseas.
- Ensure footwear, clothes and other items are clean on arrival.
- Stay away from farms or livestock for a week after your last contact with animals or infected places overseas.

The process is similar to what we do with Christmas mail from Germany, where there is a tradition of posting conifer materials such as pinecones. We've also stepped up our efforts to inform arriving passengers of what they need to do to protect New Zealand from FMD. This includes inflight and arrival hall announcements, information fliers and new airport signage and banners. There are also digital advertising and a social media campaign targeting air passengers arriving from or travelling to Indonesia.

Biosecurity NZ is also working with primary sector groups to spread the word that anyone arriving from a country with FMD should not go onto a New Zealand farm or have contact with susceptible animals for at least a week.

...continued overleaf

**Declare if you:
Have been in contact with livestock
Have any animal products, meat or farm equipment**



Ensure shoes, clothing and equipment are clean

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Biosecurity New Zealand
Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua

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Biosecurity NZ and its Aussie counterparts are watching the situation very closely. We are prepared to introduce stronger measures if necessary.

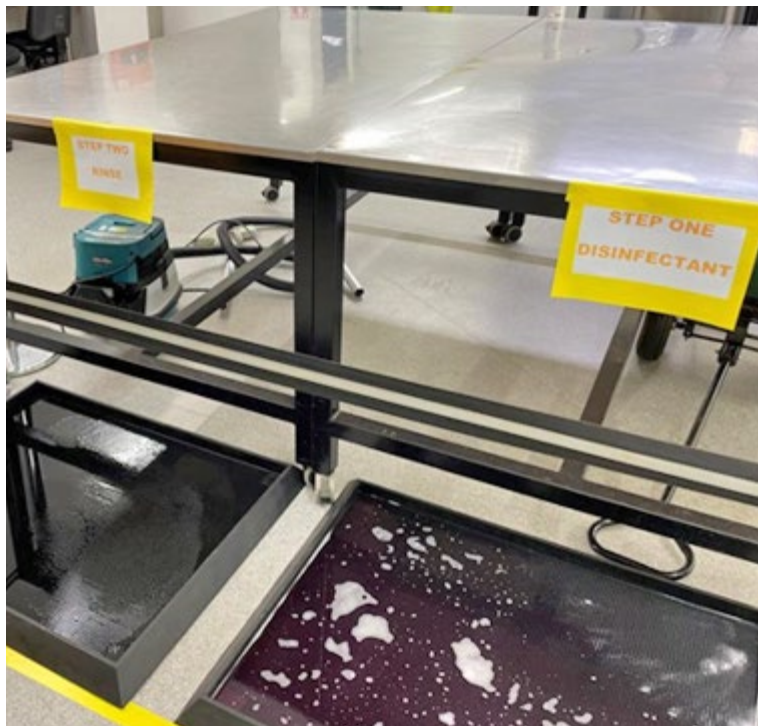
The good thing is the risk of FMD entering New Zealand remains very low. There are currently no direct flights between New Zealand and Bali. Many holidaymakers will already have undergone biosecurity screening by Australian officials before arriving in New Zealand.

New Zealand has some of the strongest biosecurity border controls in the world. For example, we are the only country that requires electronic screening of all baggage carried by travellers.

FMD is established in many countries, including Malaysia and China. It is considered one of the most serious livestock diseases in the world, affecting cloven-hoofed animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, deer and pigs.

FMD can be spread by animal products, clothing and footwear, and contaminated equipment.

Footwear disinfectant mats in place at Christchurch Airport.



Mail compliance close to 100%

Our latest survey shows we are continuing to protect New Zealand from biosecurity threats arriving in mail.

Similar to previous years, more than 99.9% of mail items checked in the survey were compliant with our biosecurity requirements after passing through biosecurity checks at the International Mail Centre in Auckland.

The compliance rate of 99.7% was slightly lower than last year's 99.92%. This can be attributed to the removal of bulk mail from the survey. Bulk mail has always tested at 100% compliance.

The survey involved checking 3386 mail items between 30 May and 10 June.

Small parcels (smaller than a shoebox and weighing less than 2kg) were the highest performing mail item with a compliance rate of 99.89%.

The survey detected 13 non-compliant risk items – chicken bones, pork crackling, handicrafts with insect infestation, moss-covered bark, whole beans and seeds (seven instances).

Speaking of compliance surveys, we're hoping to resume collecting data on arriving passengers in October. This performance check has been on hold since the start of the pandemic, mainly because there haven't been enough travellers to survey to get meaningful results.

Mail compliance results

Year	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Compliance rate	99.94%	99.92%	99.70%



Home straight for performance-based verification

We're on the home straight for rolling out our new auditing and reporting approach for transitional facilities (TFs).

Following recent training workshops for officers, we expect the new performance-based verification (PBV) system will be introduced nationwide by early September.

At the time of writing, more than 350 TFs have undergone PBV. Of these, the majority (80%) achieved an acceptable outcome. The 20% that achieved an unacceptable outcome now face additional verification visits from officers and must undertake corrective action to fix problems.

PBV is already identifying issues that may have fallen between the cracks in the past, as the customised approach makes it very transparent what individual facilities have to do to meet their requirements. Under PBV, the responsibility for compliance with TFGEN is squarely placed on the TF operator.

Internal auditing deficiencies have been a common issue among those facilities with unacceptable results. There have also been issues related to staff training and hygiene management (for example, not keeping container areas free of weeds and debris).

Many TFs are embracing the new approach. As mentioned in the previous issue of **The Border Space**, we have received a lot of positive feedback about the level of detail in the PBV reports. TFs are telling us they understand their biosecurity requirements much better than before, especially as they are now tailored to their own operations.

TFs provide a secure location to hold, unload and inspect uncleared goods. Operated by third-party organisations involved in importing cargo, they are authorised and audited by Biosecurity NZ.



PBV recap

Performance-based verification (PBV) replaces traditional transitional facility (TFs) inspections with an audit approach. This ensures there are appropriate biosecurity controls in place for imported cargo.

It is part of a wider programme of work to ensure everyone involved in sea cargo supply chains is meeting their biosecurity responsibilities.

PBV enables a customised approach for individual TFs, stepping away from a one-size-fits-all, checklist. It provides clear information on whether a TF

is compliant with regulatory requirements, ranking performance as acceptable or not. It also sees our officers engage more with individual facilities to improve biosecurity for New Zealand.

Strengthened biosecurity management can lead to fewer verification visits. The approach incentivises good performance by TFs. Those that don't make the grade face more visits and are required to prepare and implement a corrective action plan.

Further information on PBV is available on the [Biosecurity NZ website](#).

What a high-performing TF looks like

As a new era begins for managing biosecurity risk from imported cargo, it is clear that some transitional facilities perform better than others.

We see this in their audit results, their well-trained and engaged staff, their early detection and correction of issues and their secure and well-maintained facilities.

Such facilities are also likely to have the following features:



Strong relationships with officials

The highest performing facilities have strong relations with biosecurity officers right up to the boardroom level.



Clear biosecurity expectations

All TF staff have defined roles and responsibilities. There are regular meetings to build biosecurity awareness, work through issues and discuss options for improving processes and practices.



Quality management systems

Top performing facilities have their biosecurity management approach (as outlined in their operator manual) integrated into a quality management system. Such systems ensure biosecurity audits, actions and other related information has oversight at the highest level of the organisation.



Commitment to protecting New Zealand

High-performing facilities have a clearly defined commitment to biosecurity over and above regulatory requirements. Examples include having biosecurity as a standing agenda item for board meetings, becoming a **Biosecurity Business Pledge member** and giving operators financial delegation to address issues.

Specialist auditors for TFs

Specialist auditors will help provide assurance that transitional facilities are delivering on their biosecurity responsibilities.

We're looking to trial six new biosecurity specialist auditors who will be based in Auckland, Christchurch and Hamilton.

The new biosecurity auditors will focus on verification of TFs that pose the greatest threat based on import volumes and risk. Some 14% of TFs match this profile, accounting for nearly 65% of imports.

In addition to verifying high-risk facilities, the new auditors will:

- Verify facilities that are not making the grade (rated as "unacceptable" in at least two previous visits). This may include conducting unannounced audits.
- Ensure appropriate enforcement action to deal with complex compliance issues.
- Build relationships with TF management and staff.
- Conduct compliance audits for future health and safety requirements.

The Biosecurity Business Pledge is a partnership helping all New Zealand businesses take a proactive approach to their biosecurity practices.

Biosecurity protects your business, the environment and the economy.

Join now: thisisus.nz

Hubbing crack down continues

We're continuing to crack down on unauthorised sea container movements.

This should come as no surprise to industry and keen readers of **The Border Space**. We have made no secret of our plans for stronger enforcement action following the introduction of new rules allowing temporary container storage at authorised “hubbing” sites.

We have followed up on 56 transport companies and freight forwarders known to move sea containers from ports. As a result of this work, and many other companies coming forward, there are now 84 transitional facilities nationally approved to hub sea containers. So far, we have received seven tip-offs regarding potentially illegal container storage on unauthorised sites. These sites will be investigated further with unannounced visits. We are finding compliant operators are very eager to do in those who are not following the rules.

We have already referred three transport operators to our compliance team for further investigation and possible prosecution. One of the investigations resulted from the discovery of containers stored in a paddock at the back of a property. We understand shipping containers have been regularly parked at the property. Such practice is likely to expose New Zealand to serious biosecurity risk.

Another company was found to be illegally storing a large quantity of containers at an unauthorised site. The company and transport operator in question were directed to move all the containers to an approved TF.

We have also suspended a number of TFs.

Looking further ahead, Biosecurity NZ is considering the introduction of specific biosecurity requirements for transporters. As it stands, transporters generally do not know the contents of containers they are moving, whether the container is imported or domestic, and whether the facility they are delivering to has been authorised to receive the container. However, many transport companies have sophisticated systems for tracking the transport of goods. Biosecurity NZ is working with industry to investigate whether these systems could be used for biosecurity purposes.

And, as mentioned in previous issues of **The Border Space**, we are looking at increasing the biosecurity responsibilities of agents and freight-forwarders by introducing a registration scheme. Registration would likely require biosecurity training and certification.

Hubbing refresher

Introduced last year, authorised hubbing sites provide a storage option for transporters when they are unable to take sea containers directly to the transitional facility nominated in clearance instructions.

The sites speed up supply chains, including allowing containers to be shifted from crowded ports as quickly as possible.

Illegal hubbing hinders our ability to trace

the movement of sea containers. In addition, unauthorised sites may not have appropriate biosecurity controls for uncleared imported goods.

At the time of writing, there were 84 authorised hubbing sites in New Zealand.

Please contact a **local Biosecurity NZ office** if you need any assistance to get approval for a hubbing site.



Container reporting review

It's been more than a year since we required transitional facilities (TFs) to report on all containers that pass through their gates – a move intended to provide a more complete picture of the biosecurity threat posed by sea cargo.

We've just completed a review of eight months of reporting by TFs. Here's a quick rundown of the review's main findings:

- Most TFs have embraced 100% container reporting. We currently receive reports on 88% of full containers. We are aware that many of the containers identified as missing are the result of system glitches and other factors (such as vessel delays). We are working to address these issues.
- Averaging at around 29%, reporting on empty containers is much lower than full containers. This reflects the

workload associated with manually entering details for operators that deal with high container volumes. To ease this burden, we are working with some of the larger players to automate the reporting. The Nelson port company is a case in point. Its reporting of inspections carried out on empty containers has been 100% since adopting an automated approach. We're hopeful for a similar result from work underway with the Port of Otago.

- There are some 2400 unauthorised container movements each month. Our regional offices follow up each incident on a case-by-case basis. We are looking at ways to better manage this huge workload for our officers, particularly in Auckland. To this end, we are working on an automated email reminder to the accountable TF when a container has not been reported in our Container

Check Portal (CCP) system for longer than 40 days after being first recorded as entering New Zealand. If the TF fails to enter the results of the container check after this reminder, compliance action will follow.

- Contamination reporting is lower than expected for some facilities. Officers are checking that full reporting is being carried out during site visits to carry out performance-based verifications.

We are aware of the frustration some TF operators feel about not being able to access reports logged in the CCP (the system is restricted to accredited staff). The reporting tool was only ever intended as an interim solution until the introduction of more substantial changes to our IT systems. The new reporting system will allow operators to log on and view information related to their facility.

88%

REPORT RATE ON
FULL CONTAINERS

SOME **2400**
UNAUTHORISED
CONTAINER MOVEMENTS
EACH MONTH



Sea container changes proposed

Biosecurity NZ's Invasive Species team has completed public consultation on proposed changes to the import health standard for sea containers.

After working through a small number of submissions, the team plans to release the finalised standard on 19 August. This will be ahead of the next brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) season, which starts on 1 September. The proposed changes include:

Permanent measures for Italian containers

Emergency measures to stop BMSB entering New Zealand from containerised Italian imports are proposed to become permanent between 1 September and 30 April of every year. Introduced in 2018, the measures require containers and their contents to be treated before arriving in New Zealand during the BMSB season. We continue to detect BMSB on a wide range of Italian goods but, due to the treatment requirements, they are mostly dead on arrival. BMSB detections from other risk countries are mainly associated with vehicles, machinery and parts.

Trans-shipping requirements

The proposal is to require all containers that are trans-shipped through New Zealand to arrive clean and free of pests. Under current practice, some trans-shipped containers are unloaded in New Zealand prior to travelling to their final destination. The proposal reduces the risk of regulated pests entering New Zealand from dirty containers sitting on the wharf or from cross contamination aboard the vessel. The proposal aligns with current trans-shipping requirements for vehicles, machinery and parts.

Clean and free of regulated pests “on arrival”

The addition of “on arrival” to the wording in the standard will provide greater clarity for importers that containers should be free of contamination when they make landfall in New Zealand. It also aligns with Biosecurity NZ's policy of managing pests and contamination offshore where possible.

Sensitive goods listed

The proposal is to list commodities considered to be too sensitive to undergo treatment in the standard itself (they are currently listed in a separate document). Such goods require inspection on arrival. Having the schedule in the standard will make it easier for importers to check what goods are excluded from treatment requirements. The list of goods has been reviewed to ensure that these goods are not associated with increased BMSB contamination.

BMSB call for TFs

A new poster will remind and motivate transitional facility (TF) staff to keep their eyes peeled for brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB).

The poster aligns with new signage at New Zealand's international airports. It features a simple and clear call to action, asking TFs to catch and report any suspected BMSB.

It follows recent research showing TFs don't always know how to identify the unwanted pest and are unsure how to report it.

The research also suggested the “help protect New Zealand” strapline would motivate action.

The poster, pictured below, will be distributed to TFs around the country.

KŌ TĀTŌU THIS IS US

Biosecurity New Zealand
Ministry for Primary Industries
Heiwhaitiri

IF YOU FIND BROWN MARMORATED STINK BUG

Look for white stripes on the antennae and sides of the body

It is about 2 cm long or about the size of a 10 cent coin

CATCH IT. REPORT IT.

HELP PROTECT NEW ZEALAND
0800 80 99 66 | biosecurity.govt.nz/stinkbug

Partnering to protect our environment and industries from brown marmorated stink bug. Join us in helping to protect New Zealand.

Early signs of passenger recovery

We're starting to see new life in the passenger pathway as travel restrictions ease.

Volumes are already meeting the most optimistic predictions for growth following the COVID-19 pandemic.

If the recovery continues to track at this rate, we could get back to 80% of the pre-pandemic volumes of 2019 in a year's time.

Returning airlines provide further evidence of a travel recovery. In 2019, there were nearly 30 airlines flying into New Zealand. There are currently 23. Since June, Cathay Pacific, United Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines have resumed services. We expect to see American Airlines and Air Canada return to New Zealand later

this year. And Air Asia recently announced new flights between Auckland and Kuala Lumpur, starting in November.

We are very mindful that increased passenger volumes mean greater biosecurity risk. We are already seeing a jump in both the number of risk goods seized from arriving travellers and infringement notices issued for declaration failures (see May/June border activity on page 11).

The previous issue of **The Border Space** touched on some of what we are doing to address increased threat levels. This includes introducing new officers and training more detector dog teams (see following page). There will be more developments to come as we firm up our planning for what could be a very busy summer.



Back to the future?

Here's what a return to pre-pandemic passenger traffic could look like, based on 2019 figures:

30
airlines
flying into
New Zealand

22,000 daily arrivals at Auckland Airport during the summer

7 million passengers visiting New Zealand

Cruise schedule confirmed

Cruise ships will return in force to New Zealand under a recently confirmed schedule for the 2022/23 season.

It will be the first full cruise season for more than two years following closure of New Zealand's maritime borders in April 2020.

We're expecting 44 vessels to make 928 port calls across New Zealand.

The first confirmed arrival will be the *Pacific Explorer*, which can carry up to 2000 passengers. Some crew members and passengers are expected to disembark when the vessel stops in Auckland on 12 August. The earlier-than-expected visit will give us an opportunity to carry out a trial run of our Recognised Cruise Line Programme. This will involve checking that documented processes to manage biosecurity risk aboard the vessel are working as they should.

The season will begin in earnest with the arrival of the *Majestic Princess* in Auckland on 16 October.

The *Ovation of the Seas* will be the largest arrival of the season. This massive vessel can carry up to 4905 passengers.

Based on the current schedule, our officers will clear some 23,000 passengers disembarking vessels permanently. They will interact further with up to 100,000 day-trippers throughout the season to ensure biosecurity risk items do not make it ashore.

The Ovation of the Seas will be the largest cruise ship to visit during the 2022/23 season.



Detector dog boost

We welcomed three new detector dog teams (handler and beagle) to the biosecurity fold in June.

The new teams will be based in Auckland, performing biosecurity duties across the passenger, mail and cargo pathways.

The graduation ceremony saw Gizmo, Ginny and Otis and their new handlers show off their detection skills in front of family and staff at our Auckland training facility.

Otis is the first member of O-litter to graduate from training. Avid readers of **The Border Space** may recall the birth of O-litter in 2020, a product of our specialist breeding programme. Otis was one of seven beagle/harrier puppies.

The new teams are already doing their part to protect New Zealand. Ginny and her new handler Jess, in particular, had a great first day on the job. They intercepted two incorrectly declared packages at the International Mail Centre in Auckland. One contained a live plant and soil. The other had dried flowers with seed heads.

We are continuing to introduce new detector dog teams as passenger volumes rise. We recently advertised for new Auckland-based handlers and are hoping to launch another recruitment drive in September.

Another handler started training for Queenstown at the end of July. This will double our detector dog team capacity for this region.

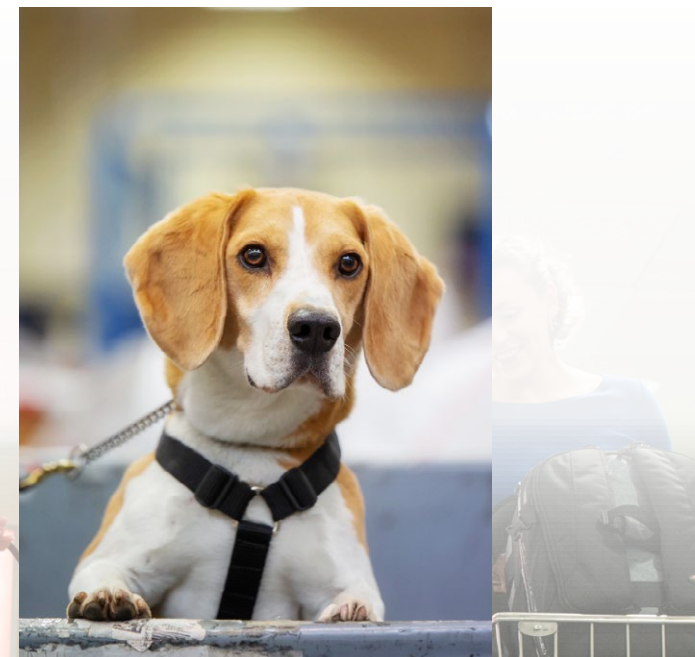
There are now two handlers operating in Christchurch following completion of refresher training by an existing officer.



Detector dog Ginny sniffed out dried flowers with seed heads on her first day of work at the International Mail Centre.



Detector dog Otis.



Detector dog Gizmo.



Detector dog Ginny.



From the frontline

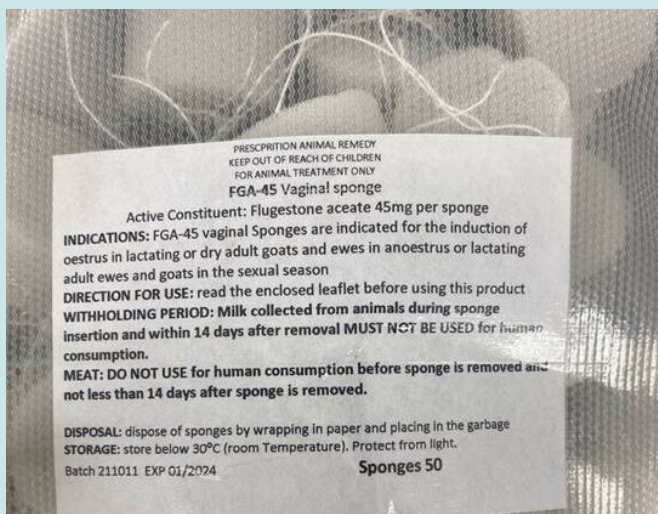
A selection of interesting interceptions and other border activity...

Breeding trial on hold

Vaginal sponges for sheep and goats rank among our more unusual seizures so far this year.

That's what a vet returning from Australia recently declared at Christchurch Airport. He was apparently planning to use them for a breeding trial.

Unfortunately for him, the sponges are not a registered veterinary medicine, so the trial is on hold for now.



Ice treatment

Detector dog Ice's sniffing prowess resulted in a \$400 fine for an air passenger arriving from Cameroon with undeclared food.

Arriving at Auckland Airport in June, the traveller vaguely admitted carrying "dried vegetables" when questioned.

An inspection of the passenger's baggage revealed dried herbs, seafood and 1.4kg of dried beef.



Fab four pass mail checks

These four giant beetles (long horn and sabretooth long horn specimens) passed biosecurity checks at the International Mail Centre in June.

They arrived dead. After being checked for contamination, they were released under import rules for non-viable animal specimens.

They were also okay to go under restrictions in place for trade in endangered species.



Yak tails destroyed

The air passenger who brought these yak tails from Nepal for religious purposes opted to have them destroyed. The passenger declared them to officers at Christchurch Airport in late June but was unable to provide a veterinary certificate or other evidence of treatment.

Interestingly, they were farmed yak tails, which can be imported under CITES rules (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species). Tails from wild yaks are a different story.



Biosecurity lesson for Danish adventurer

A maritime traveller recently likened entering New Zealand to breaking into a maximum-security prison.

We'd like to think it was even harder than that for vessels that pose obvious biosecurity risk from biofouling.

The Danish adventurer was attempting to visit every country in the

...continued overleaf

From the frontline continued

world without using air transport when he boarded a cargo ship (*Toronto Trader*) heading to New Zealand.

Presumably unknown to him, the vessel had been identified with excessive marine growth on its hull by a dive survey during a previous visit to New Zealand. As a result, the vessel was later issued with a notice of direction restricting it from re-entering New Zealand until it had been cleaned.

The vessel operator decided to hire a dive team to undertake deep sea cleaning outside New Zealand waters. It took nearly two weeks for calm weather to arrive and allow the divers to start scraping. This left the adventurer stranded aboard the vessel, wondering if he would ever make it to New Zealand. At one stage, it looked like the vessel would need to return to Australia.

Anyway, to cut the story short, he eventually arrived in Auckland in late June, hopefully with a greater appreciation of just how seriously we take biosecurity in this country.

PoFA rules out for consultation

Biosecurity NZ is consulting on draft changes to the biosecurity rules for ports and airports that are approved as places of first arrival (PoFAs) in New Zealand for international voyages and flights.

Last updated in 2018, the draft standard is intended to maintain high levels of biosecurity, clarify requirements, and be fit for purpose for New Zealand's 34 PoFA sites.

The new standard will act as a single source of clear information for PoFAs, bringing together all updated operational requirements and guidance.

The proposals include new measures for managing third-party service providers that carry out biosecurity work for port and airport companies. The measures are intended to increase understanding of biosecurity responsibilities and reduce compliance issues.

The draft incorporates recent feedback from operators and industry groups, along with information from PoFA compliance audits.

The consultation is open from 13 July to 5 September. **Full details of the proposed changes are available on the MPI website.**

Border activity for May/June 2022

	May-21	May-22	June-21	June-22
Passenger				
Total arrivals	91,590	169,159	85,359	206,394
NZ/Australia	84,031	127,410	76,833	161,911
Rest of world	7,559	41,749	8,526	44,483
Risk items seized	1,025	2,065	1,017	2,693
Risk items treated or destroyed	995	1,896	1,048	2,461
Infringement notices	87	122	90	208
Mail				
Mail items screened	1,471,033	1,311,315	1,389,086	1,183,919
Mail items requiring further inspection	3,584	2,166	4,234	1,864
Risk mail items treated or destroyed	627	425	682	337
Sea Containers				
Sea containers arrivals	62,182	70,248	64,875	64,105
Sea containers inspected	2,716	2,985	3,065	3,181
Cargo				
Cargo lines of interest to MPI	20,665	19,620	22,378	18,122
Cargo lines inspected	6,030	5,721	6,801	5,665
Cargo lines treated, reshipped or destroyed	1,452	1,426	1,607	1,217



Steve Gilbert
Central/South Regional Commissioner
Biosecurity New Zealand



Mike Inglis
Northern Regional Commissioner
Biosecurity New Zealand