

GTA MARKET NOTIFICATIONS



Notice 2 of 2022 • 24 March 2022

TOPIC: Outcome of the Grain and Plant Products Export Industry Consultative Committee Meeting 9 March 2022

DISTRIBUTION: GTA Members – primary contact list. Please circulate to all appropriate internal parties.

1. Status Update

- Grain Trade Australia is a member of the Grain and Plant Products Export Industry Consultative Committee (GPPEICC) representing the interests of GTA members.
- The GPPEICC is the principal forum for the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) to consult with the grain, fodder, nuts, seed and timber industries on export inspection and certification, export market access and other relevant issues.
- The most recent meeting was held on 9 March 2022 and issues of relevance to GTA members are outlined below.

2. Meeting Outcomes

DAWE Finance and Budget Issues

- Industry debt levels with DAWE continue the trend of reducing. Where required, DAWE work collaboratively with industry to manage overdue debts.
- Given the large export program, volumes have increased over those forecast and expenses have decreased due to industry use of third-party AOs to undertake export inspections.
- The review of the grain fees and charges, termed the Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) outlining DAWE fees and charges for each year, is being undertaken for the 2022/23 year.
- It is unclear when industry feedback will be sought, although an industry/DAWE working group is expected to meet in May 2022.

Operational Matters

- The COVID outbreak continues to limit audits of facilities in regional areas due to travel restrictions. It is hoped that site visits will increase in the near future. Similarly, it is hoped that audits of AOs will also increase from recent levels.
- Of those audits conducted, the most common form of non-compliance identified have been:
 - Incomplete record keeping
 - Pest control
 - Hygiene
- Authorised Officers with the empty bulk vessel inspection job function have started recording every bulk vessel inspection using helmet mounted cameras for audit purposes. The department has commenced assessments of the video footage. Video footage is requested at random and viewed by auditors on secure networks.
- Due to ongoing issues with shipping delays and congestion at ports around Australia, DAWE have again changed the 28-day export validity period (currently extended to 56 days) that was due to expire on 28 February 2022, until the end of May 2022. Industry is encouraged to liaise with DAWE where issues are identified.
- A number of projects are occurring under the Busting Congestion program, including:
 - Development of a Grain Storage and Assets Management Standard. A draft Standard has been developed and options for an audit and assurance framework outlining how regulatory intervention can decrease when industry adopts the Standard are being developed. Piloting of the Standard in 2022 is currently being planned and industry will be kept abreast of plans as further details are developed.
 - Harmonisation of government regulatory activities across the domestic and export sector.
 - Discussions continue on developing a framework for the adoption of new technology for assurance, including verification processes.
- Various amendments to the Export Control (Plants and Plant Products) Rules 2021 have recently occurred. A communications strategy is being developed with the Australian Institute of Marine Surveyors. Three engagement and information sessions are planned, and further information will be provided by DAWE shortly:
 - 22 March 2022 for industry (including shippers and shipping agents).
 - 11 April 2022 for marine surveyors.
 - May 2022 for bulk vessel inspection authorised officers.

Documentation and IT System Issues

- The overall rate of documentation resubmissions has increased in recent months. The DAWE Regional Assurance Managers (RAMs) have been working with industry to attempt to reduce re-submission rates.
- As noted in previous reports, the primary reasons for resubmission have been relatively unchanged and industry is encouraged to continue to focus on these matters when dealing with DAWE:
 - AO Paperwork – incomplete/errors
 - RFP details – incomplete/errors
 - Supporting documents – incomplete/errors
 - Lodgement error
- PEMS updates continue, and further releases are being planned.
- E—phyto is planned to be released by December 2022. Extensive analysis of this development has occurred and as a consequence, modifications to Exdoc will be needed and are being planned to be done.
- Many updates to MICOR have occurred to reduce duplication and recent suggestions for improvement provided by GTA are being considered.

3. Further Information

- Contact GTA to seek further information on any of the above issues.
- Further information on GPPEICC and its membership can be found at <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/partnerships/consultative-committees/gppeicc>