

CUSTOMS, IMMIGRATION AND QUARANTINE (CIQ) PROCESSING

(Prepared by ACBPS for AIDS 2014 delegates – 13 May 2014)

Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS)

ACBPS is responsible for facilitating the legitimate movement of people, goods and aircraft into and out of Australia, while detecting unlawful activity at the border.

ACBPS performs an intervention role in airports on behalf of other law enforcement and government agencies including the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), the Department of Agriculture, the Australian Federal Police (AFP), the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and jurisdictional police.

Prior to the Entry Control Point (ECP) and in the baggage reclaim area, ACBPS officers assess travellers for risk to the border. Officers establish a person's bona fides through document checks, questioning and interpretation of behaviour.

At the ECP, passengers' travel movement and entry status are verified on behalf of DIBP and other law enforcement agencies.

At the exit points from the baggage reclaim area, ACBPS officers ensure passengers of interest to border agencies, or those who have declared items of interest, undertake appropriate secondary examination.

Items That Must Be Declared

Declaration of the items (below) is made via the customs and the quarantine and wildlife related questions on the Incoming Passenger Card (IPC), which is to be completed by each passenger. There are penalties for not declaring prohibited and restricted goods and for making false declarations on the Incoming or Outgoing Passenger Card.

Goods that must be declared on arrival include (but are not limited to):

- Certain medicinal products
- Quarantine items (refer Department of Agriculture section below)
- Steroids and performance enhancing drugs
- Veterinary products
- Firearms, weapons, ammunition and prohibited items
- Currency, Australian or foreign, of \$A10,000 or more in value
- Protected wildlife and items produced from protected wildlife
- Goods in excess of duty free concessions
- Commercial goods
- Gifts in excess of duty free concessions
- Food, plants, animals and biological goods¹
- Items that may carry pests or diseases²

¹ This includes certain food items, plant material, animal items, equipment used with animals, biological materials, soils and sand. Food, plant material and animal items from overseas could introduce serious pests and diseases into Australia, devastating the valuable agriculture and tourism industries and unique environment.

² Examples include drums, other musical instruments and costumes made from materials such as rawhide, feathers, fur, skins, seeds, nuts, wood, bark or other plant material.

To help you experience a hassle free arrival you should consider sourcing the restricted/banned articles in Australia and/or shipping them to Australia well before the event.

If your articles need to be treated on arrival in Australia, allow several weeks (fees may apply).

If you have had items treated overseas you need to ensure you carry the necessary documentation and verification for review.

Goods that must be declared on departure include (but are not limited to):

- Defence and strategic goods
- Currency, Australian or foreign, of AU\$10,000 or more in value
- Heritage items
- Firearms and ammunition (refer Prohibited Items and Firearms section below)
- Protected wildlife and items produced from protected wildlife (refer CITES section below)

Prohibited Items and Firearms

Under the *Customs Act 1901* (Customs Act), all Prohibited Items including firearms and weapons must be declared on arrival to Australia, irrespective of whether the items are to be carried into the country or intended to remain on board a private/State aircraft.

Prohibited items include, but are not limited to, ballistic vests, capsicum sprays, real or imitation firearms, ammunition, extendable batons, tasers or other electric shock devices, knives and daggers including ceremonial knives and daggers, and other weapons. Import permissions are required for prohibited imports and prohibited imports may be seized if the appropriate permit is not produced on arrival. Information about other prohibited imports is available from www.customs.gov.au.

It should be noted that this Policy only refers to the ACBPS importation requirements with regard to prohibited items and firearms. State or territory Police may also have domestic policy and legal requirements applying to the possession and use of weapons, firearms and other goods (e.g. handcuffs) in Australia.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

CITES is an international agreement between governments to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants (or their parts and derivatives) does not threaten their survival.

Some items of a quarantine nature may also be subject to CITES, which controls imports of endangered animals and plant material (ivory, coral, skins, plants etc). CITES is enforced by ACBPS.

Enquiries about the status of the import and export of wildlife and wildlife products, including permit arrangements, should be directed to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPaC) who are the CITES Management Authority in Australia on telephone: (02) 6274 1900 or email: wildlifetrade@environment.gov.au.

Medicinal Products

Medicines brought into and taken out of Australia may be subject to controls under the *Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956* or the *Customs (Prohibited Exports) Regulations 1958* (the Regulations). In some cases, the import and export of such medicines may be prohibited unless written authorisation issued by the Department of Health and Ageing or another agency is held. In other cases written authorisation is not required however the importation is still subject to certain conditions.

Many other medicines and therapeutic goods such as 'prescription only medicines' are not controlled under the Prohibited Imports Regulations, but are controlled under the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989*. These are also able to be imported providing the passenger meets the conditions outlined above.

Participants carrying medications such as aspirin, paracetamol or Australian over-the-counter medications do not need to declare these to ACBPS on arrival.

Medicines containing biological materials or derived from biological materials may be prohibited from import without permission from the Department of Agriculture. Human and animal vaccines are examples of such products. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Department of Agriculture on telephone: 1800 020 504, email: biologicals@DAFF.gov.au or website: www.daff.com.au.

Participants should also be aware that some complementary medicines, including traditional and herbal remedies, dietary supplements or natural remedies, may require a permit or a prescription or letter from a medical practitioner before the goods will be allowed entry into Australia if they contain a controlled substance (for example, Yohimbe or DHEA). Some herbal or traditional medicines/remedies can also contain CITES listed species. Enquiries regarding complementary, herbal, natural traditional medicines should be directed to email: info@tga.gov.au and/or email: eps@tga.gov.au, and for medicines containing CITES listed species to email: wildlifetrade@environment.gov.au.

Further information on **carrying medication into Australia** is available at www.aids2014.org.

Duty-Free

Most personal items such as new clothing, footwear, and articles for personal hygiene and grooming (excluding fur and perfume concentrates) may be brought into Australia in accompanied baggage, free from duty and tax.

Personal goods are free from duty and tax if they are:

- owned and used by you overseas for 12 months or more
- imported temporarily (a security may be required by ACBPS).

For other goods, duty-free limits apply. These include goods that are purchased overseas and goods that are purchased in Australia duty or tax free (that have been previously exported), or from an inwards duty-free shop on arrival into Australia. Also included are goods for which a Tourist Refund Scheme (TRS) claim has been made. (Further information on the TRS appears below).

On arrival into Australia, the following duty-free limits will apply to participants:

General Goods

If aged 18 years or over, a participant can bring up to AU\$900 worth of general goods into Australia. If they are under 18 years of age there is a AU\$450 limit. General goods include gifts, souvenirs, cameras, electronic equipment, leather goods, perfume concentrates, jewellery, watches and sporting equipment.

Alcohol

If aged 18 years and over, a participant can bring 2.25 litres of alcohol duty-free into Australia. All alcohol in accompanied baggage is included in this category.

Tobacco

If aged 18 years and over, a participant can bring 50 cigarettes or 50 grams of cigars or tobacco products duty-free into Australia. All tobacco products in accompanied baggage are included in this category, regardless of how or where they were purchased.

Families travelling together can pool their duty free concessions

As per arrangements for all travellers, if a participant exceeds the duty-free limits, duty and tax will be charged on all items.

Tourist Refund Scheme (TRS)

As per other travellers to and from Australia, participants may be able to claim a GST and Wine Equalisation Tax (WET) refund under the Tourist Refund Scheme (TRS). The TRS only applies for certain purchases where:

- The value of the goods purchased is AU\$300 or more and are purchased from the one retailer. Travellers can submit more than one tax invoice to make their claim, as long as each is a valid tax invoice from the one Australian Business Number retailer;
- Those goods were purchased no more than 60 days before departing Australia;
- Those goods are worn or carried as hand luggage to the departing aircraft;
- Tax invoices, together with the goods, passport and international boarding pass, are presented to the TRS facility on departure.

Large items can be sighted in the ACBPS Office of the departing airport, just prior to luggage check-in.

Other resources

ACBPS have developed a Guide for Travellers which prepares travellers for their trip and provides information on what to expect when arriving or departing through ACBPS at an international airport or seaport.

The Guide for Travellers is available in the following languages: Arabic; Chinese; French; German; Greek; Indonesian; Italian; Japanese; Korean; Malaysian; Spanish; Thai and Vietnamese.

To find out more visit: www.customs.gov.au/knowbeforeyougo/default.asp.