Sydney Olympic Games
and Paralympics:
Australia’s biosecurity measures
This project was initiated by the Australian Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr J.G. Murray (gardner.murray@affa.gov.au; leanne.shea@affa.gov.au)

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Foreword

Australia had the privilege of hosting the Summer Games of the XXVII Olympiad and the XI Paralympic Games during September-October 2000. The Olympics is arguably the greatest global sporting event. The range of sports, tradition, spectators and wide diversity of associated activities such as tourism, conferences and trade fairs make the planning, administration, logistics and overall operational demands extraordinarily complex.

The purpose of this OIE publication is to share with readers a number of the quarantine issues that had to be considered and managed by Australian quarantine, agriculture and health authorities. Although recognising Australia has quarantine policies that are in many ways stricter than other countries given the nature of our island continent, it is hoped that some lessons may be learned from our experiences.

The publication deals with a range of issues associated with pre-border, border and post-border activities. Tremendous pressure was placed on quarantine authorities because of the vast increase in tourism and cargo, number of athletes, support staff and equipment arriving by sea and by air. Special attention had to be given to equestrian events including equine health, nutrition, husbandry and welfare. The construction and management of a world-class equestrian facility to cater for quarantine, health and welfare issues was a major undertaking.

Australian quarantine policies were not changed for the Olympics. The government determined that all efforts needed to be made to protect our animal and plant health status. We facilitated the Olympics by adopting standard risk management practices that met Australia’s appropriate level of protection. The protocols, processes and practices adopted were therefore totally consistent with Australia’s quarantine policy framework.

The participants and viewing public saw a successful Olympics. Almost all visitors and tourists recognised that quarantine controls had to be met and were very tolerant and impressed with officials and the level of professionalism shown. Behind the scenes however operations were hectic, an enormous amount of work had to go into planning for public, animal and plant health emergencies and
the Prime Minister, the New South Wales (NSW) Premier and Ministers had to be briefed on a daily basis.

Given the enormity of the tasks that had to be undertaken this account cannot cover all the details of the full range of activities. However, it was enthusiasm, professionalism and sheer hard work that made management of quarantine, animal and plant health matters a success during the Olympics.

We hope countries planning similar major events can learn from our experiences.

Gardner Murray
Australian Chief Veterinary Officer
Executive Director
Product Integrity/Animal and Plant Health
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Australia
Preface

Gardner Murray, Australia’s Chief Veterinary Officer, and I discussed some time ago the value of compiling a short book on Australia’s quarantine experiences for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games and Paralympics.

Mr Michael Taylor, the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Australia, agreed that this could be a useful tool for OIE members if they have to prepare for and manage quarantine issues associated with major international events and supported the preparation and publication of an OIE document.

This document is a result of these agreements and covers many of the biosecurity issues that Australia had to deal with. In particular it discusses the need for advanced and comprehensive pre-planning, a multidisciplinary framework and detailed risk analysis approaches. The importance of having highly trained, and disciplined quarantine services such as the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service cannot be under-estimated. Communicating requirements and conditions well in advance to competitors, travellers, participants, overseas governments, industries and the like in a professional manner was a particularly critical activity.

Although this publication is written in a narrative style, readers will be able to draw from it some very useful lessons. I am certain the information provided will be of value, not only for the forthcoming Olympic Games in the People’s Republic of China, but for all major events involving health and welfare requirements for temporary imports and the international transport of animals.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all Contributors and Editors of this document and, in particular, Gardner Murray, for having initiated this project. My gratitude is also extended to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Australia for sharing this information, the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service for providing all the illustrations and Gill Dilmitis and her staff for the editing and lay-out.

Bernard Vallat
Director General
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAHL</td>
<td>Australian Animal Health Laboratory</td>
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<td>ACS</td>
<td>Australian Customs Service</td>
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<td>AEVA</td>
<td>Australian Equine Veterinary Association</td>
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<td>AFFA</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Australia</td>
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<td>AHA</td>
<td>Animal Health Australia</td>
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<td>AHIC</td>
<td>Australian Horse Industry Council</td>
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<td>AQIS</td>
<td>Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service</td>
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<td>AUSVETPLAN</td>
<td>Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan</td>
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<td>BA</td>
<td>Biosecurity Australia</td>
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<td>CBR</td>
<td>Chemical, biological or radiochemical incidents</td>
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<td>CCEAD</td>
<td>Consultative Committee of Emergency Animal Disease</td>
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<td>CDNANZ</td>
<td>Communicable Disease Network of Australian and New Zealand</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSIRO</td>
<td>Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFAT</td>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade</td>
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<td>DIMA</td>
<td>Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECQS</td>
<td>Eastern Creek Quarantine Station, Sydney</td>
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<td>EFC</td>
<td>Equestrian Freight Consortium</td>
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<td>EMA</td>
<td>Emergency Management Australia</td>
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<td>FEI</td>
<td>Fédération Equestre Internationale</td>
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<td>FSANZ</td>
<td>Food Standards Australia New Zealand</td>
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<td>IOC</td>
<td>International Olympic Committee</td>
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<td>NEFs</td>
<td>National Equestrian Federations</td>
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<td>NOCs</td>
<td>National Olympic Committees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>Definitions</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPCs</td>
<td>National Paralympic Committees</td>
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<td>NRA</td>
<td>National Registration Authority for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals</td>
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<td>NSW</td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
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<td>OCA</td>
<td>Olympic Co-ordination Authority</td>
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<td>OIE</td>
<td>Office International des Epizooties</td>
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<td>PAQ</td>
<td>Post-arrival quarantine</td>
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<td>PEQ</td>
<td>Pre-embarkation quarantine</td>
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<td>PHLN</td>
<td>Public Health Laboratory Network</td>
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<td>PIAPH</td>
<td>Product Integrity/Animal and Plant Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>QAC</td>
<td>Quarantine Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>QDV</td>
<td>Quarantine Declaration for Vessels</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAACL</td>
<td>Sydney Airport Corporation Limited</td>
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<td>SAOVOC</td>
<td>Sydney Airport Olympics Venue Operations Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIEC</td>
<td>Sydney International Equestrian Centre, Horsley Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCOCG</td>
<td>Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games</td>
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<td>SPOC</td>
<td>Sydney Paralympic Organising Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>TGA</td>
<td>Therapeutic Goods Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIP</td>
<td>Very important person</td>
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Summary

The following is a summary of the key issues described more fully in this booklet:

Australian biosecurity policy

- The development, implementation and management of biosecurity policies require a comprehensive and cooperative approach involving Government, industry and consumers.
- Risks must be identified and appropriate quarantine arrangements put in place complemented with effective communication to all interested parties.
- Interagency management procedures need to be well developed in the case of problems arising and planning for major events such as the Olympics must take place many years in advance.
- Australia did not change its quarantine policies but rather introduced a series of risk management arrangements to take account of the circumstances.
- Major international events require the establishment of special purpose organisations to administer new legislation, to manage and coordinate overall arrangements and to facilitate the regular and frequent interchange of multi-agency information and planning activities.
- Australia’s biosecurity measures for the Olympics were designed to mitigate the risk of introducing animal and human diseases, new plant species and other plant diseases through controls that covered aircraft and vessels, food imports, animals and animal products, plants, animal feed, drugs and therapeutic goods.
- Emergency plans for animal diseases, bioterrorism, stockfeed, riding equipment, waste disposal, importing horses and disability assistance dogs (guide dogs) were put in place.
- Quarantine inspections were conducted for the arrival of international passengers, cargo, mail, animals and plants.
Summary

General arrangements for the administration of the Olympic Games

- More than 30 government departments and agencies were involved in preparations for the Olympics.
- Policy development and planning was conducted over several years.

AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

- Project planning for key quarantine activities is essential.
- The Australian key service delivery agency (AQIS) planned for and managed a series of difficult and complex projects such as equestrian events, visitor information, harbour management and quarantine security arrangements including information technology, communication, the use of detector dogs, X-ray screening and restricted items.
- The venue for Olympic equestrian events was designed to also function as a quarantine station.
- Quarantine information for visitors was provided in booklets, videos, and at websites in several languages and supported by advertising in in-flight magazines.
- Information on quarantine measures for Sydney Harbour was provided in advance to shipping agents, boating magazines, diplomatic posts, National Olympics Committees and food importers.
- Enhanced detection methods were planned for at all major Australian airports and international mail centres including the use of detector dogs and X-ray screening equipment.
- Security at airports, IT and communication operations were all pre-tested.

Border control: airports and cargo

- Items made from plants and animals were seized and all foods, teas, milk-based drinks, wooden artefacts and sporting and campaign equipment inspected.
- Between 1 August and 30 September 2000, there were 745,968 international passenger arrivals at Sydney Airport. More than 15,000 prohibited items were seized of which 3,575 were undeclared.
• The Olympics legacy has subsequently helped manage events, such as Australia’s reaction to foot and mouth disease outbreaks overseas, bioterrorism threats and visits by international heads of state.

Border control: seaports and cargo

• Eight cruise ships and more than 270 visiting yachts that were berthed in Sydney Harbour required quarantine clearance and ongoing supervision and surveillance for garbage and waste disposal.

• Each of the cruise ships could produce 20 cubic metres of garbage a day, half of which had to be treated by quarantine authorities.

• Increased offshore pre-clearance would have been an advantage.

Horses

• The safe importation of horses and successful staging of equestrian events was a result of: thorough preparation for the early detection of disease, careful animal disease and health screening techniques before departure for Australia, the fact that the Olympics involved mature horses in peak condition; and the use of back-up disease investigation facilities, flu virus detection kits and extended post-arrival quarantine.

• There were 239 horses imported, a total of 160 grooms and other staff, and 100 tonnes of equipment.

• The horses spent a minimum of 14 days in pre-embarkation quarantine.

• Effective hourly monitoring by veterinarians and quarantine officers on the long flights to Australia, and immediately following their arrival, ensured the health of the horses was maintained.

• Disposal of waste from the equestrian centre where the horses were stabled was by deep burial.

Emergency management

• Emergency management procedures should be documented with roles and responsibilities clearly defined and test exercises carried out in advance.

• Extensive monitoring was undertaken of any changes in public health through the hospital system and using selected doctors.
Summary

- Training and sensitising were seen as a priority to address the threat from bioterrorism.
- Close contact was maintained with intelligence and security agencies to complement response arrangements and to prioritise work activities.

Paralympics

- The same biosecurity principles and control measures for staging the Olympics were applied to the Paralympics.
- Additional measures had to be considered to facilitate the particular circumstances of athletes and their teams.

After the Sydney Olympics

- The highest biosecurity levels were achieved during the Sydney Olympics because of comprehensive risk management practices.
- Key factors that contributed to the success of biosecurity arrangements were planning, staffing and an improved capability to identify issues and report across regions.
- Lessons included the need to have prior contact with those providing hospitality to determine the nature and quantity of imported foods and to increase the offshore clearance of goods.
Introduction

The massive influx of visitors to the Sydney Olympics in a compact period of time posed unprecedented biosecurity risks to Australia's unique quarantine status that required the establishment of specific purpose organisations to administer legislation and more importantly to manage and coordinate overall national biosecurity arrangements. The successful staging of this foremost international event and the maintenance of the highest biosecurity levels was achieved because of comprehensive risk management practices and careful planning.

Australia is fortunate in having a highly favourable animal, plant and human health status and being free from diseases that cause major problems elsewhere in the world. It has long been a policy of the Australian government to maintain that status.

Australia's quarantine policy has been designed to protect the way of life of all Australians by preventing the entry of exotic pests and diseases, while facilitating the international movement of people and goods. Australia's quarantine and inspection regulations are among the most stringent in the world but are in place to protect primary production and the environment.

The Australian Government has been proactive in facilitating Australia's full participation in international sporting and other events. In 1956 Australia hosted the Olympic Games in Melbourne. It became apparent that there was a serious gap between the normal requirements and procedures to control the import of biological products and animals and the needs of the Olympics, in particular for the equestrian events. As a result of this difficulty, it was agreed that the equestrian events for the 1956 Olympics should be held not in Australia but in Stockholm, Sweden.

Although this compromise proved workable, it was far from ideal, and when the question of Australia once again hosting the Olympics arose in the 1980s, it was made clear by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) that arrangements would need to be made to host equestrian events as an integral part of the Games. In addition, the development of the Paralympics in parallel with the main Olympic Games meant it would be necessary to facilitate the temporary import of dogs to assist disabled contestants. Other issues that arose included the need to review arrangements for the import of animal feedstuffs and to cope with the unusually large expected influx of people and equipment for the Games.
Introduction

Australia did not change its quarantine policies for the purposes of holding the Olympics, rather it introduced a risk management approach leading to comprehensive and cooperative biosecurity measures involving governments, industry and the community. Risks had to be identified, appropriate quarantine arrangements put in place and emergency management preparations made to deal with any adverse events that may have occurred. Planning and the bringing together of cooperative arrangements commenced years in advance of the Games in order to facilitate the exchange of multi-agency information and planning activities.

Australia’s animal health policy framework provides a national structure within which Federal Government responsibility falls to Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Australia (AFFA). This Department is responsible for quarantine policy and operations and for coordinating a national response to exotic pest or animal and plant disease incursions. AFFA works cooperatively with the states and territories along with industry in the development of biosecurity policies.

In the lead-up to, and during the Games, the New South Wales Government played a leading and critical role in developing and implementing biosecurity measures. It significantly contributed to the success of staging the equestrian events and strongly supported the overall quarantine effort.

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS), an agency within AFFA, played a pivotal role in the Sydney Olympics. As the key service delivery agency, AQIS managed a series of difficult and complex projects such as equestrian events, visitor information, harbour management and security arrangements including information technology, communications, the use of detector dogs, X-ray screenings, baggage screening and the management of restricted items.

AQIS successfully played its role in the Games because of early, long-term, comprehensive and inclusive planning. A key determinant of the success achieved included the expertise of staff in maintaining a high standard of quarantine assessment and surveillance for the large volume of arrivals of people and cargo by both air and sea. Also central to its success was coordination with the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG), other border agencies and international, national, state and local organisations.

This report outlines the way in which Australia managed the biosecurity challenges posed by the staging of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2000. It outlines the policy framework prior to the IOC’s acceptance of the Sydney bid and the amendments that were made to that framework in the course of preparations for the Games. It describes the organisational and practical arrangements for handling the import of animals and biological
products, and to prevent the introduction of animal and plant diseases and pests that are exotic to Australia. It outlines what pre-planning and preparation took place and describes how the arrangements worked during and after the Games.
Australia’s Olympic bids

Australia held the Olympic Games in Melbourne in 1956, although it declined to hold the equestrian events because it was unable to meet Olympic requirements within the framework of its quarantine and other policies to control the risk of the introduction of exotic pests and animal and plant diseases. As a result, the equestrian events were held in Stockholm, Sweden.

It was apparent to all that if Australia were to hold the Olympic Games again, it would be necessary to put in place arrangements to allow the equestrian events to be held in the country. In 1981 a plan to facilitate this was prepared as part of a bid for the 1988 Olympic Games. The Australian Government did not go ahead with the bid at the time, but the impetus continued and this plan formed part of the proposal when Brisbane won the right to bid for the 1992 Olympic Games, and later Melbourne won the right to bid for the 1996 Games.

During the course of these bids various international equestrian events were held in Australia. Policies and regulations were modified, and arrangements were successfully put in place to facilitate these. They successfully demonstrated that Australia was both able and willing to meet the requirements of the international equestrian community and of the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI), and that handling of the equestrian events would not be a barrier to the country’s ability to host the Olympic Games. It was in the wake of this experience that Sydney entered a bid for the 2000 Olympic Games, which was accepted by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). It was a specific requirement of the IOC in accepting the bid that the equestrian events should be held in Sydney along with the majority of other events. At the same time, it was evident that among the many aspects of the arrangements for the Games that required careful pre-planning were the biosecurity aspects which were the concern of (among others) AQIS.
Australian biosecurity policy

Key points

- The development, implementation and management of biosecurity policies require a comprehensive and cooperative approach involving Government, industry and consumers.
- Risks must be identified and appropriate quarantine arrangements put in place and complemented with effective communication to all interested parties.
- Interagency management procedures need to be well developed in case problems arise and planning for major events such as the Olympics must take place many years in advance.
- Australia did not change its quarantine policies but rather introduced a series of risk management arrangements to take account of the circumstances.
- Major international events require the establishment of special purpose organisations to administer new legislation, to manage and coordinate overall arrangements and to facilitate the regular and frequent interchange of multi-agency information and planning activities.
- Australia’s biosecurity measures for the Olympics were designed to mitigate the risk of introducing animal and human diseases, new plant species and other plant diseases through controls that covered vessels, food imports, animals and animal products, plants, animal feed, drugs and therapeutic goods.
- Emergency plans for problems that might arise from animal diseases, bioterrorism, stockfeed, riding equipment, waste disposal, imported horses and disability assistance dogs were established.
- Quarantine inspections were conducted for the arrival of international passengers, cargo, mail, animals and plants.

Organisation

The development, implementation and management of biosecurity policies require a comprehensive and cooperative approach involving governments, industry and consumers.
Australian biosecurity policy

A risk analysis framework approach must be taken so that potential risks are identified and characterised and risk management procedures put in place to ensure effective quarantine. These approaches must be communicated to all interested parties so they are aware of requirements and there are no surprises.

No quarantine system is perfect. Therefore, well-developed and planned emergency procedures must be in place in case problems arise.

This is particularly true for major international events such as the Olympic Games. Such an event requires the establishment of specific purpose organisations to administer legislation and, more importantly, to manage and coordinate overall national biosecurity arrangements. These organisations must be established years in advance of the Games to facilitate the exchange of multi-agency information and planning activities.

Australia did not change its biosecurity framework for the purposes of staging the Olympics in Sydney. However, given the complexity and nature of the event a series of pre-planned and comprehensive quarantine arrangements were put in place to meet Australia’s acceptable level of protection.

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Australia (AFFA) is the federal government department responsible for quarantine policy and operations, as well as the management of any exotic pest or disease incursions. Within AFFA, Product Integrity and Animal Plant Health (PIAPH), AQIS and Biosecurity Australia (BA) all play critical roles. Cooperation with the states and territories, animal health services and industry is either direct or through Animal Health Australia (AHA).

PIAPH has overall responsibility for animal (including aquatic animal), plant and veterinary public health policies and coordination. Its objective is to minimise the impact of pests, diseases and contaminants on Australian agriculture, fisheries and forestry and to contribute to the health and welfare of farm animals. This is achieved by managing emergencies, facilitating the development of national policies and strategies and advancing Australia’s interests internationally.

AQIS has a pivotal role in border control and was the face and driver of Australia’s quarantine approach during the Olympics. It is responsible for national quarantine inspection systems and for safeguarding Australia’s highly favourable animal, plant and human health status. It provides quarantine inspection services for the arrival of international passengers, cargo, mail, animals and plants or their products into Australia, and certification for a range of animal and plant products exported from Australia.
Its objective is to provide an appropriate level of protection against the introduction and establishment of diseases or pests affecting humans, animals or plants, and the environment. Operations are also conducted under a policy of offshore risk mitigation.

AQIS’s core operations include:

- Providing public information on quarantine and biosecurity issues.
- Providing import permits for controlled material that is to be imported into Australia.
- Border control: carrying out inspections at entry points (particularly ports and airports) to ensure that material of biological origin is only imported into the country in strict compliance with regulations, to protect Australia’s native flora and fauna from the risk of disease, pest infestation, or undesirable competition from non-native species.
- Managing quarantine arrangements for animals imported temporarily or permanently into the country.

In an event such as the Olympics, project planning for key quarantine activities is essential. As the key service delivery agency, AQIS managed a series of difficult and complex projects such as equestrian events, visitor information, harbour management and security arrangements including information technology, communications, the use of detector dogs, X-ray screenings, baggage screening and the management of restricted items.

BA was established in 2000 to protect Australia’s animal health status through the provision of scientific advice to aid in the development and review of biosecurity policies for the importation of live animals, animal genetic material, and animal products. It is responsible for developing and reviewing Australia’s quarantine programme and for conducting technical export market access negotiations.

The NSW Premier and his Ministers along with NSW Agriculture were critical to the success of the Games including their involvement in facilitating the staging of the equestrian events, emergency management planning and in supporting and working with AQIS in service delivery.

Under Australia’s national emergency arrangements, the states and territories agriculture portfolios have responsibility for managing an exotic disease or pest incursion in the field. New South Wales, the state in which the Games were held, worked closely with AFFA, AQIS and the Olympic Committee in the development of policies to address the biosecurity risks posed by the Games.
The main risks to be guarded against in relation to the Sydney Olympics were:

**Specific animal and human diseases.** Of particular interest in this context were two equine diseases, equine influenza and piroplasmosis. Equine influenza is considered one of the most serious horse disease threats to Australia. The most likely method of transfer from a potentially infected imported horse is by people. Authorities maintain knowledge of outbreaks around the world, pay vigorous attention to vaccination history through horse passports, and rely on isolation from other horses not of the same health status to provide protection. Piroplasmosis is a malarial type of infection spread to horses by ticks. Its control requires measures to accurately determine the piroplasmosis status of each horse to be imported; to prevent the introduction of exotic ticks; and to prevent ticks already present in Australia from attaching to horses testing positive.

**New plant species.** The establishment of new species in Australia could have a devastating impact on fruit and plant industries for both domestic and export production.

**Other animal and plant diseases.** In order to control these risks, legislation controls the import of any items made from plants or animals, including human and animal foodstuffs, teas, milk-based drinks, wooden artefacts, leather goods, and even used sporting and camping equipment, to ensure that weed seeds, pests and diseases are not brought into Australia, including through soil contamination. Disease risks can be associated with saddlery and associated equipment, including leather surfaces, padding, stuffing (of animal origin), straw, and timber components. Veterinary products containing micro-organisms, such as vaccines, or containing significant amounts of dairy, egg or other animal-based material represent the greatest quarantine risk.

Existing control measures

A number of controls already exist to maintain Australia’s biosecurity status:

a) Seagoing vessels

It is mandatory for vessels that have been in international waters, excluding those that have not touched land or made contact with sea installations (for example, offshore oil rigs), to complete and send a Quarantine Declaration for Vessels (QDV) between 12 and 48 hours before arrival, and undergo inspection and clearance. Standard inspection procedures cover water treatment, food and ice production, storage, handling, cleaning materials, toxic
substances, washing facilities, laundry facilities and pest control. Food has a high quarantine risk, and AQIS encourages visiting vessels to reprovision fully. Waste is also high risk.

b) Food imports

All food imports into Australia are strictly controlled and are liable to point-of-entry inspection. Any person or organisation bringing food into Australia, as part of personal baggage, by mail, or as sea or air cargo, is subject to Australia’s quarantine and food standards legislation, which is vigorously enforced.

There are two major requirements to be met and two different, separate and distinct inspection procedures. AQIS assesses applications for, and issues, quarantine import permits and conducts quarantine inspections. It separately applies the Australian food safety standards set down in the Australian Food Standards Code, and conducts inspections of imported food.

The Australian Food Standards Code is administered by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ — Formally Australia New Zealand Food Authority ANZFA). It covers composition, additives, contamination and labelling for all types of food. The limit for food products for personal consumption imported in accompanied baggage or consigned by air or sea freight is 10 kg or 10 litres (1 kg for spices). The limit for a trade sample, provided that it will not be consumed in Australia, is 20 kg or 20 litres (2 kg for spices). All other imported foods are regarded as ‘commercial’ foods. In addition to quarantine inspection they may be inspected and tested on arrival into Australia for compliance with Australian food standards, and may be sent for analysis at the importer’s expense. The FSANZ conducts risk assessments and sets the food standards in Australia, and AQIS inspectors undertake the inspections at the port of entry. Products that do not meet the set standard are not permitted entry. AQIS conducts audits of selected products on arrival where certification arrangements have been made.

Some imported food products, particularly fresh fruit and vegetables, and products containing meat, dairy or egg ingredients, require quarantine import permits from AQIS; others are prohibited because the risk of importing an exotic disease or pest is too great. Other food products may not require a quarantine import permit: for example, processed foods such as canned products, cooked biscuits, cakes, breakfast cereals and chocolate. Foods imported in small quantities for personal use are not subject to food standards legislation, but quarantine rules still apply.
AQIS provides information about importing food to overseas and Australian importing companies, individuals and embassies, as well as technical advice to regional AQIS staff. AFFA staff at overseas posts in Japan, the Republic of Korea, Belgium and the USA also provide this information. All consignments of imported food referred to AQIS for inspection are examined for foreign or extraneous matter, integrity of packaging and compliance with relevant labelling requirements. The key issues include the monitoring of, and random inspections of, imported foods and their labelling. No exemptions can be made under this surveillance system.

AQIS food safety specialists conduct training for staff recruited for the regional offices. They also develop procedures and conduct technical reviews and import audits. Their role includes liaising frequently with FSANZ and ensuring a high standard of technical expertise.

c) Animal feed

A permit to import is required for all stockfeed containing ingredients of animal, plant and/or microbial origin. Under Australian legislation the importation of stockfeed containing ingredients of animal origin is only permitted from New Zealand.

Category 1 stockfeed of plant origin has to be heat treated and steam processed, then physically rolled, crushed or milled so that there are no whole seeds. An AQIS officer must inspect the manufacturing plant, and verifying and validating documentation must be provided, before an AQIS Permit to Import can be issued.

Category 2 unprocessed stockfeed must be irradiated at 2.5 mrad (Kgy) and not contain animal material. Any feeds from New Zealand that contain animal material, including powdered milk, animal protein and fish protein, are assessed individually. Whether they can be imported or require irradiation depends on the type and treatment of the animal material content.

Pre-arrival irradiation has to be at an AQIS approved facility, and shipments must arrive with a Certificate of Irradiation and an AQIS Permit to Import. There is arrival inspection for insects, and animal and bird faeces before quarantine clearance is issued.

d) Drugs and therapeutic goods

The Australian Food Standards Code excludes therapeutic goods. These include drugs, medicines and some dietary supplements, the regulation of which is administered by the Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA).
Applications must be made to AQIS for import permits for dietary supplements containing ingredients derived from animals, plants or micro-organisms. Vitamin and mineral preparations, fibre supplements, traditional remedies, plant extracts and herbal preparations are generally regulated as therapeutic goods.

AQIS provides import permits for veterinary therapeutics, and coordinates applications between the three agencies involved: the TGA, the National Registration Authority for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (NRA) and AQIS. The import permits list all therapeutics, with an approximate quantity for each product.

c) Quarantine policy

Australia's quarantine policy is considered here with an emphasis on horses, since it was necessary for these to be imported temporarily for the Olympic equestrian events.

Australian quarantine policy for horses is among the strictest in the world. It comprises three stages:

- Pre-export quarantine (PEQ): horses have to be resident in an approved country for two months before their departure for Australia, with the last month spent in quarantine isolated from all horses not part of the same shipment.
- Controlled shipment, by approved routes that avoid countries subject to insect-borne diseases.
- Post-arrival quarantine (PAQ): a period during which the horses are isolated in approved premises after their arrival in Australia. Among the facilities provided for this purpose is the Eastern Creek Animal Quarantine Station (ECQS) in Sydney.

Before the arrangements began to be amended in preparation for the Olympics, horses could only be imported from the United Kingdom, Ireland, New Zealand and Canada (during the northern winter only). From 1973 to 1993 most horse imports arrived in Australia on flights from the UK, with landings in Canada, Hawaii and sometimes Fiji. The journey took about 39 hours. Only two shipments arrived direct, one from France the other from the Netherlands.

Use of the shorter east-to-west route was investigated in 1991-1992, and the route was used for the first time in July 1993, using insect-proof air stalls and taking 29 hours. The Manchester–Amsterdam–Singapore route started in 1995, using the cargo holds of 747 Combi passenger aircraft on scheduled flights to transport horses for special events.
Australian biosecurity policy

International horses have been competing in racing events such as the Melbourne Cup under competition horse quarantine conditions since 1993.

From 1981 there was an increase in countries from which horses could be imported or undergo residency for pre-embarkation quarantine. Subsequently, the introduction of vaccination and testing regimes, and the strategic location of PEQ premises, allowed year-round imports. The structure of the quarantine requirements addresses the exotic diseases of major concern to Australia.

Quarantine requirements to prevent the transmission or establishment of piroplasmosis in Australia include pre-export measures to test whether horses have been exposed to piroplasmosis and to prevent the introduction of exotic ticks, post-arrival measures to keep out ticks, measures to keep domestic ticks away from overseas horses, and others to stop the possible transmission of the disease by veterinary equipment.

f) Emergency planning for animal diseases

The Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan (AUSVETPLAN) is a key component of Australia’s overall disaster planning arrangements. The plan (www.aahc.com.au/ausvetplan/index.html) is a coordinated national response plan for the control and eradication of emergency diseases and certain emerging or endemic animal diseases of national importance. The purpose of AUSVETPLAN is to provide a structure for the management of an animal disease emergency, in which each element has an identifiable place, and to provide compatibility and uniformity of operation and procedures between Commonwealth/state/territory animal health authorities and emergency management organisations.

In Australia, each state and territory has operational responsibility for the control and eradication of animal diseases, whether endemic or exotic, within its borders. Each state and territory therefore administers its own emergency service arrangements. In all cases these provide adequate powers for all essential emergency disease eradication measures. Federal legislation includes powers under the Quarantine Act 1908 that are available, where appropriate, to support the states and territories. Emergency disease planning occurs basically at three levels — Commonwealth, state/territory and local — and involves both animal health authorities and emergency management organisations. At the local level, animal health officers are responsible in conjunction with local emergency management officers for developing plans to contain the initial outbreak of an emergency disease while the state control plans are being put into effect.
The Commonwealth provides coordination and leadership of emergency disease planning and management. It has primary responsibility for international affairs. The Commonwealth Chief Veterinary Officer chairs the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD), a body comprising state and territory Chief Veterinary Officers, a representative from AHA and the Chief of the CSIRO Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL). Relevant industry groups and human health authorities also participate where public health issues are involved. The Commonwealth funds AAHL to provide expert diagnostic capacities.

At a state/territory level, animal health authorities are responsible for developing operational plans within the legislative framework of that jurisdiction to implement the accepted national strategy. These plans are made in conjunction with the relevant state emergency management organisation, and support agencies.

g) Bioterrorism

Bioterrorism is the use of biological agents to threaten the security of individuals, groups or countries. Primarily, bioterrorism constitutes threats posed directly to humans and the introduction of diseases/toxins to food products. However, it also covers threats to agricultural animals and plants in order to undermine confidence in the food supply, harm the level and value of agricultural production or reduce the marketability of agricultural products. This form of bioterrorism is known as agriterrorism.

Agricultural and public health agencies worked very closely on zoonotic (animal to human) diseases and food safety issues and, as preparation for the Sydney Olympics, developed a heightened preparedness for bioterrorist incidents.

The use of bio-agents poses unique problems for crisis managers, in addition to the political, policy and operational issues that must be dealt with as crisis management comes into play. This includes the need to provide emergency relief to those affected by the consequences of an event.

Incidents can fall broadly into three categories: a threat or hoax event, an overt event and a covert event. The lead agency for threats/hoaxes is normally the police, supported by emergency services agencies and the defence force if necessary. For overt events it is the fire brigade, supported by emergency services, the police and animal health services.

Covert events pose many difficulties, particularly because of identifying problems in the early stages. It is for this reason that early identification of the presence of a disease remains the highest priority to counter bioterrorism in the agricultural and food sectors.
h) Detector dogs

Detector dogs are used widely to detect items that might be imported illegally. Detector dog teams are trained for three months before they go into action. In the first five weeks the dogs are trained on scent detection, before progressing to training with their handlers. The dogs are trained to detect more than 30 scents, from fruit and meat to birds’ eggs and live reptiles. The ‘passive response’ detector beagles can screen large numbers of passengers and detect high-risk material. They are sourced from a variety of sources including the RSPCA, breeders and the community. AQIS has obtained a few beagles from New Zealand’s quarantine service, and occasionally assesses others that become available. Mixed breed ‘active response’ dogs are trained to work in international mail and air courier facilities. In 2000 there was one contracted trainer. Since 2001 there has been one contracted trainer for active detector dogs and another for passive detector dogs.

One of the aims of the detector dog teams is to elicit the cooperation of people whose arrival is being processed. The teams’ training includes special techniques in handling, protective techniques and contact procedures. These detector dogs also become familiar with ignoring distractions while working, including sometimes having different types of dog teams in the area.

The first 12 months in the field for each dog and handler team are critically important, and performance and effectiveness are observed, monitored and assessed. Teams undergo six-monthly validation testing, during which 80 percent accuracy has to be met to ensure consistent set standards are maintained. If this is not achieved, the teams have to undertake retraining, and are followed up and reassessed within a month. The dogs are checked daily, and have annual vaccinations and health checks.

Plans for the Olympics

The general philosophy was to further develop existing preparedness activities for the Olympics, rather than establish new systems. Detailed AQIS planning is covered in subsequent chapters, and only wider plans and policy changes are considered here.

Additional quarantine risks identified for the Olympics included a significant increase in both air and sea cargo with items of potential risk.

The Australian animal health emergency planning arrangements, were considered suitable because they had been well tested, relevant government agencies and industries were
familiar with the content and approach in the plans, and a range of non-agricultural agencies could be engaged in the planning and the management of emergencies should this have proved necessary.

The CCEAD met by telephone hook-up on a number of occasions to discuss the Olympics and general planning activities. These teleconferences were partly educational, but also to ensure that members sensitised their staff and stakeholders to potential risks so that immediate advice could be provided on suspect disease ‘situations’. The Chair of CCEAD discussed developments in related areas where other agencies had prime carriage for action if problems arose, for example the Department of Health on public health issues.

These arrangements were made principally to handle a national event, but also to support the New South Wales animal health authorities had a problem arisen at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre (SIEC).

Policy review

A number of reviews in the lead-up to the Olympics were held to enhance preparedness activities:

a) Stockfeed and riding equipment

BA conducted a review of conditions for importing stockfeed, and issued a Quarantine Assessment for the Importation of Stockfeed for the Olympics in January 2000. The existing quarantine controls were reinforced, particularly the requirements for processing and permits. However, options were incorporated to permit the import of heat-processed stockfeed of plant origin, such as pellets, by having approved overseas treatment facilities process feed pellets at an acceptable standard for import, or by having stockfeed shipped to Australia for irradiation treatment before release. The AQIS Animal and Plant Programs branch, which assesses and administers applications for permits, advised competitors to lodge applications to be examined on a case-by-case basis at least six months before the date of import. Applications had to include the country of origin of all ingredients, the plant/animal/microbial species, details of the parts of the plants used, processing details of times, temperatures and pressures, period of storage after manufacture, and the volume of packaged or bulk product it was proposed to import. AQIS advised that import conditions specified in the permits included irradiation, fumigation and heat treatment.

AQIS and BA also revised some conditions for the handling of saddlery and tack. Conditions for saddle treatment were revised for, and have continued since, the Olympics. Staff investigated the construction of saddle-trees made of wood and determined that the
Australian biosecurity policy

risk was met by standard inspection procedures. Competitors had to ensure that all saddlery and other equipment were clean and free from contamination by animal and plant matter, soil, insects and other debris. The management of disease risks associated with leather surfaces, padding, stuffing (of animal origin), straw, and timber components was covered.

b) Import of horses

An agreement was signed in mid-1999 between AQIS and the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) for the provision of quarantine and export inspection services. The agreement included the condition that freight costs for horses, canoes, kayaks, rowing shells and yachts would be met by SOCOG. The agreement covered the following:

- The equestrian horses were to complete a minimum of two weeks pre-entry quarantine (PEQ) offshore in approved premises.
- Testing and certification were required before the horses could gain entry to Australia.
- Post-arrival quarantine (PAQ) and quarantine surveillance were required while the horses were continuing their Olympics preparation.

Arrangements were required to be made for the horses to be re-exported at the end of the Olympic Games.

Although existing horse entry protocols were used for competition horses, additional work was carried out on an import risk analysis for piroplasmosis-positive horses. The scientific work included surveying the Olympics site at Horsley Park for ticks, which are the vector for piroplasmosis. Risk management measures included:

- accurately determining the piroplasmosis status of each horse that would be imported
- measures to prevent the introduction of exotic ticks
- measures to prevent ticks already present in Australia from attaching to horses testing positive, and
- preventing the iatrogenic spread of the disease resulting from veterinary intervention.

As a result of this analysis one change to standard import policy was introduced in January 2000: it was agreed to accept horses that were seropositive for piroplasmosis as temporary imports for competition purposes only. BA made amendments to the conditions for the temporary import of horses from the EU, USA, Canada and some other countries.
Horses with equine influenza have successfully been imported and managed for several years without any spread of disease. AQIS reviewed this situation and undertook extensive consultation with the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI) and veterinary authorities, internationally and nationally, before reconfirming related policy conditions.

c) Waste disposal policy

AQIS developed a comprehensive risk management strategy for waste disposal and made some policy revisions as a result. The usual clearance procedures, permits and fee for service conditions applied during the Olympics period.

d) Disability assistance dogs

AQIS and BA finalised interim conditions in April 2000 for the importation of disability assistance dogs by disabled people for the Paralympics. This covered approved rabies-free countries and countries in which dog-mediated rabies is absent, or well controlled with neutralising antibody testing completed at least six months before shipment to Australia. The documentation required before shipment included information regarding the person’s disability and the training of the assistance dog, copies of vaccination certificates, veterinary certificates and relevant laboratory reports. These conditions allowed disability assistance dogs to serve their period of post-arrival quarantine under quarantine surveillance rather than in a government quarantine station. The Sydney Paralympic Organising Committee (SPOC) was notified of conditions to be fulfilled in advance.
General arrangements for the administration of the Olympic Games

Key points

- More than 30 Government departments and agencies were involved in preparations for the Olympics
- Policy development and planning was conducted over several years

The quarantine and biosecurity arrangements made for the Olympics Games needed to fit into the wider framework of arrangements by other organisations, including long-established federal and state governmental, non-governmental and private-sector organisations, and those organisations specifically set up to provide administrative support for the Olympic Games and related activities.

Australian government objectives included facilitating the smooth movement of Olympics arrivals and of passengers and cargo through border control agencies. Other government policies and programs covered issues such as security and defence support, airport preparations, transport, communications, employment and training, an international dignitary programme in association with the diplomatic and consular corps, anti-doping initiatives and drug testing arrangements, media management, tourism, business investment, taxation, and athlete preparation. Similar policy and programme planning was conducted by Air Services Australia, the Bureau of Meteorology, the Royal Australian Mint and the Perth Mint, and by other departments in relation to the journeys for the Olympic Torch and the Paralympic Torch.

The Sydney 2000 Games Coordination Task Force was established in February 1998 as the principal point of contact within the federal government for the NSW government and organising committees. The task force coordinated security and non-security involvement in the Olympics and Paralympics. This central coordinating body also monitored federal policy and operational elements. It facilitated the flow of multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional information. Staff from more than 30 government departments and agencies were involved in the preparations for the Olympics.

An Olympics Co-ordination Authority (OCA) was set up to administer special legislation enacted for the Olympics, and new provisions and policies that met particular requirements
for the Olympics period. An Olympics Roads and Transport Authority was also established. The New South Wales (NSW) Police and the Waterways Authority provided strategic and operational support. These NSW government agencies worked with the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG), the NSW Premier’s Department, other public sector organisations and the private sector to deliver world-class and environmentally sustainable facilities, venues and events for participants, and for the community in the long term. Policy development and planning over several years also covered emergency services, health services, environmental management, local government and business, temporary overlay construction, spectator services, catering, waste management, urban domain planning, access, social impact, and final wind-up.

Among the bodies set up to handle arrangements were:

- Sydney Airport Olympic Planning Group.
- Sydney Airport Venue Management Working Group. Members of this group formed the core of the Sydney Airport Olympics Venue Operations Centre (SAOVOC) which commenced operations on 15 August 2000. The centre was a control point providing member organisations with the latest information on weather, traffic, flight schedules, dignitaries’ arrivals and security issues. It provided a hotline and multiple daily briefings. SAOVOC operated until mid-October 2000, when there were some arrivals for the closing ceremony.
- Group on Olympics Airports Development (GOAD).
- Visitor Information Campaign Committee. This developed from GOAD with representatives from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA), Australian Customs Services (ACS), the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and AQIS. It was chaired by a representative from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Port Operations Sub-Committee.
- Border Control Co-ordination Group.
- Ministerial Committee for the 2000 Games.
- High Level Officials Group.
- Olympic Equestrian Events Quarantine Advisory sub-committee, a SOCOG group.
- AQIS Olympics Management Committee.

The Olympic Media Unit of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet undertook a national approach to the management of media queries and incidents. AFFA contributed to
General arrangements for the administration of the Olympic Games

a register of possible scenarios and response procedures. Guidelines for reporting and managing potential media incidents were distributed to all AQIS regional offices.
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

Key points

- Project planning for key quarantine activities is essential
- The Australia key service delivery agency — AQIS — planned for and managed a series of difficult and complex projects such as equestrian events, visitor information, harbour management, quarantine security arrangements including information technology, communication, the use of detector dogs, X-ray screening and restricted items
- The venue for Olympic equestrian events was designed to also function as a quarantine station
- Quarantine information for visitors was provided in booklets, videos, and at websites in several languages and supported by advertising in in-flight magazines
- Information on quarantine measures for Sydney Harbour was provided in advance to shipping agents, boating magazines, diplomatic posts, National Olympics Committees and food importers
- Enhanced detection methods were planned for at all major Australian airports and international mail centres including the use of detector dogs and X-ray screening equipment
- Security at airports, IT and communication operations were all pre-tested

In order to handle a major project with the scope of the Olympics, AQIS undertook extensive planning. The early contact, planning, continuity and associated risk assessment took over nine years, and involved many AQIS staff members. The value of these activities cannot be overstated. In 1993, for example, AQIS coordinated and reviewed pre-Games arrangements for shipment of, and secure storage and access to, horses, horse equipment, rowing shells, canoes, kayaks and yachts.

SIEC Horsley Park

The Sydney International Equestrian Centre Horsley Park (SIEC) was selected and developed as the site both for the equestrian events at the Olympics and for the necessary post-arrival quarantine arrangements. It consisted of 80 hectares of scrubland at Horsley.
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

Park (Figs 1, 2). Among the aims in developing it were to rehabilitate heavily degraded farmland, accommodate the threatened Cumberland Plain Woodland and protect the headwaters of Eastern Creek.

The physical requirements to allow the facility to function as an approved quarantine station were defined at a briefing meeting with architects for the Olympics Coordination Authority (OCA) in Canberra in November 1996. Shortly after, AQIS officers inspected the Horsley Park site and participated in a public meeting to discuss the development application before it was submitted to Fairfield City Council. AQIS officers visited Horsley Park on many occasions and had regular input into planning and construction decisions with the Project Manager, Incoll. The site was also the subject of before and after surveys for exotic weeds. The 1996 brief for the facility included an equine clinic with four 14-metre stables, and an infirmary with five 14-metre stables to accommodate injured horses.

The design for SIEC was approved in September 1997, and extensions were approved in 1998. It was designed with a stable zone and an outer quarantine zone, separate controlled entry access and exits. Preservation of Aboriginal artefacts was included. Water quality management included nine water polishing ponds, a storm water drainage and wetland filtration system, and measures to minimise damage from heavy rains. Over 50,000 trees were planted from 1996. The buildings were designed to maximise natural ventilation and light, while water and energy-efficient fittings were used.
Figure 1
Site plan for Sydney International Equestrian Centre

The Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) was responsible for building and fitting-out specifications, and plans for quarantine facilities at Horsley Park, engaging all necessary personnel and contractors, general operation and management as agreed in consultation with AQIS. AQIS was responsible for clearance procedures for horses, tack, feed and veterinary supplies and for all quarantine matters. The agreement specified compliance with the quarantine requirements at all times, including perimeter security, control of access and movement, amenities and decontamination, safe disposal of bedding and waste, exclusion of other horses during quarantine, and health and security of horses during competition and afterwards to meet importing country requirements.

Tick surveys were carried out in 1997-1999 in the area of the site for the SIEC. No tick species that might be implicated in spreading piroplasmosis was found.

On 23 November 1998 three previous members of Australian Olympics teams had the first test ride on the steeplechase track and cross-country course, the first part to be completed.
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

at SIEC. The footing surface of the main arena was tested for the first time by horses jumping and riding on it on 6 January 1999.

![Location of Sydney Olympics venues and Sydney International Equestrian Centre at Horsley Park](image)

**Figure 2**
Location of Sydney Olympics venues and Sydney International Equestrian Centre at Horsley Park

There were two quarantine zones within SIEC. The main quarantine zone surrounded the stables zone, including the dressage arenas, show jumping arenas and the training tracks. A 200 metre horse-free zone surrounded the quarantine zone. The Olympics committee members visited SIEC a number of times during construction to assess the positioning of the key areas and the fencing.

In February 1999 AQIS advised SOCOG that an equine surgery would be built at Eastern Creek Quarantine Station (ECQS). Having quarantine controlled access to surgical facilities in close proximity was also preferable to using those at the University of Sydney in terms of distance and time. Special arrangements were made with the University of Sydney in relation to specialist veterinary expertise.

General quarantine arrangements for horses

There were several years of behind-the-scenes work by AQIS and BA to manage the additional quarantine risks posed by the Games. Overseas horses competing in the Games were allowed into Australia only after satisfying the strictest equine quarantine
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

requirements in the world. Overseas pre-inspection arrangements were essential in order that the horses arrived in Australia with appropriate veterinary certification to ensure they were free from exotic diseases of concern to Australia’s equine community. At the same time import conditions allowed the horses’ health and fitness for competition at the elite level to be maintained. Modern quarantine procedures, and advances in disease testing, risk analysis and management, meant that Australia was able to stage these important events while protecting the nation’s horse industry from diseases such as equine influenza and equine piroplasmosis.

AQIS was involved from September 1991, in cooperation with the Sydney Olympics 2000 Bid Ltd, in developing quarantine strategies. The Equine Working Party held its first meeting in December 1991, and in the following year considered trends in horse imports for racing and competition. AQIS established a Quarantine Advisory Committee (QAC) in November 1996. Membership of the QAC included SOCOG, AQIS, the Australian Horse Industry Council (AHIC), the Australian Equine Veterinary Association (AEVA) and the Transport Consortium.

The critical issue was to allow the horses to train while in quarantine overseas and after arrival in Australia. In summary, the following was planned:

- An expanded number of countries were approved for the pre-export residency period.
- An expanded number of countries were approved for pre-export quarantine (PEQ) (see below).
- Post-arrival quarantine (PAQ) premises were to have facilities for show jumping, steeple chasing, dressage and galloping space for training, to allow horses to remain in competition condition.
- Horses were to be flown from PEQ to Australia by approved routes that avoided countries with insect-borne diseases.
- PAQ was to be undertaken at SIEC (as discussed above), which would be operated as a quarantine station until the two-week quarantine period was completed.
- Horses could practise during quarantine, with only quarantine staff, riders and grooms allowed entry to the site.
- Risk could be minimised by grouping horses from countries with similar equine health conditions into the same facilities.
- Australia’s good animal health status would enable exports so that all horses could be returned without difficulty.
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

The French Equestrian Federation travelled to Australia two and a half-years before the Sydney Olympic Games, followed later by a group of German representatives. SOCOG representatives made early overseas trips as well.

The Commonwealth Government-state Government Memorandum of Understanding was finalised in December 1998, and the AQIS Service Agreement with SOCOG in June 1999. AQIS worked intensively as part of the quarantine sub-committee of SOCOG to ensure that the importation of the Olympic Games horses was managed safely and that all horses met Australia’s standard horse entry conditions. The nature and scope of the agreement covered AQIS overseeing the import, quarantine and export of the horses and the operation of the purpose-built quarantine station/competition venue. It included the arrival and clearance of horses and associated equipment and supplies on SOCOG-chartered flights, the maintenance of quarantine surveillance during the Olympic Games following completion of post-arrival quarantine (PAQ), and clearance for export for horses with export certificates and health certificates on SOCOG-chartered flights after the Olympics, as well as accompanying tack, feed and veterinary supplies. AQIS charged SOCOG for all services associated with the quarantining of the Olympics horses.

From mid-1999 quarantine awareness was reinforced as the number of sporting teams, Olympics and Paralympics competitors and officials travelling through Sydney Airport was growing. AQIS staff advised managers and coaches on arrival about Australia’s quarantine requirements and instructions, so that they would share the same quarantine message with their teams.

Equine piroplasmosis management risk assessments were conducted from 1995, during and after the Atlanta Olympic Games (piroplasmosis-positive horses were not admitted into Atlanta for the 1996 Games). As noted above, tick surveys were carried out in the Horsley Park area. The AQIS Import Risk Assessment on horses testing positive to piroplasmosis was completed in 1999 and came into effect in January 2000. AQIS considered that, based on the available evidence and the risk reduction measures, the risk of equine piroplasmosis being established from the temporary importing of serologically positive horses would be negligible. Australia’s horse quarantine conditions were strengthened (see page 11-12) as a result of the import risk analysis which was conducted by a panel of independent experts and also gained full support from the industry.

AQIS contributed extensively to the equine quarantine strategy developed for the Olympics bid. It consulted the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI) regarding all quarantine and transit requirements, and the FEI endorsed their effectiveness. AQIS provided the conditions and regulations to be met for the entry of horses. This was based on an estimate of 218 horses and charter capacity up to 265, approved countries of departure and routes,
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

expected new routes and types of containers. One of the main aims was to maintain the safe passage, peak condition and security of the horses.

The planning also included tight disinfection and waste disposal arrangements.

Pre-export quarantine

In April 1998 an AQIS officer met with researchers at the Animal Health Trust, Newmarket, UK, regarding testing for equine influenza for use with Olympic horses, and was shown a few of the proposed Olympic PEQ sites by the shipping agents: three in England, one in France and three in Germany. This trip included general discussions about the Olympics with veterinary authorities and other business. AQIS subsequently gave approvals for about 25 pre-export quarantine zones in Europe and the USA.

During the three years leading up to the Sydney Olympic Games there was wide distribution of information about import conditions for horses, stockfeed, tack and veterinary therapeutics. In parallel, direct contact by AQIS representatives and Veterinary Counsellors in Brussels and Washington included extensive consultation, meetings and briefings with the Equestrian Freight Consortium (EFC) members, national equestrian federations (NEFs) and certifying and other authorities to ensure that AQIS requirements were known, understood and met with full compliance. The counsellors were involved in various pre-Olympics arrangements and inspections. Challenges such as adequately informing the NEFs and SOCOG about quarantine requirements and their equal importance to the staging of competition were addressed by attendance at meetings of the FEI and strong personal representations by AQIS and the EFC representatives.

The AQIS Chief Quarantine Officer (Animals) NSW travelled to Europe in April 2000 to meet with relevant government veterinarians to ensure that they were familiar with Australia’s conditions for import of horses, and to discuss any concerns about supervising pre-export quarantine and issuing health certification for horses. He inspected PEQ premises at St Martin de Bréhal and approved minor variations to the PEQ standards of operation, and visited other PEQ premises in France, Kreuth and others in Germany, and in England, to oversee and approve pre-export facilities. He met with international experts in equine infectious diseases to discuss issues associated with post-arrival quarantine for the Olympics horses. He addressed the FEI in Germany to explain quarantine requirements and special repatriation conditions. He gave the same information at other meetings in Europe and North America. The information from this trip was useful in terms of preparation in the final four months before the Olympics.

Import permits for 232 competing horses were issued between May and August 2000.

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AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

The two months before the Olympics were the most intensive. The work of the transport consortium, Pedens Livestock and IRT was the key factor. More work was carried out intensively and concurrently in June-August 2000 than in the previous nine years of detailed planning and preparing. The legal requirements for SIEC to be gazetted as a temporary quarantine station were fulfilled. The Attorney General’s Department and AQIS worked closely together to give very thorough, high-quality attention to the documentation and procedures. AQIS covered staffing for routine service delivery by having its Sydney and NSW meat inspection veterinarians and on-site veterinarians available at various locations. The Chief Quarantine Officer (Animals) NSW ensured continuity of service delivery, and was also based at SIEC to manage the Olympics operations. Another senior AQIS officer made a highly practical trip in August 2000 to oversee the final arrangements for departures from Europe, and the associated productive coordination and reporting ensured that all quarantine requirements were met.

Information dissemination

The Visitor Information Campaign began in 1996. A Must Read for Visitors to Australia, a booklet containing information about visa, customs, quarantine and other requirements applying to all visitors to Australia, also outlined special entry provisions that applied to accredited members of the Olympic and Paralympic families. The booklets included a quick quarantine reference guide for declaring items of plant or animal origin. The booklet was first produced for the 7th General Assembly of the International Paralympic Committee held in Sydney in November 1997. Over a million booklets were distributed through DFAT, National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and the travel industry.

An import manual was produced and widely distributed in 1996-1997, then revised and redistributed in 1998. AQIS worked closely with the international equestrian teams through NOC equestrian representatives and sporting federations to ensure they became aware of horse import conditions. This information was also supplied through the Visitor Information Campaign brochures, videos and website.

A website was produced in several languages including Arabic, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Dutch, French, German, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Pidgin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Thai, Turkish and Vietnamese. This special website was a guide for intending visitors to Australia with important information about visas, customs and quarantine clearance, health issues, communications equipment and other issues that impact on all visitors to Australia. It was linked to the SOCOG, AQIS, DIMA and ACS websites.
The AQIS website featured a special Sydney 2000 Games page with import conditions for horses and equestrian equipment, therapeutic substances, foods and dietary supplements, as well as general information for travellers.

An AQIS fact sheet on disinfection of aircraft was distributed to NOCs, in VIP information packs, and was added to the other fact sheets in the Olympics section of the AQIS website.

Videos in Arabic, English, French, German, Japanese, Mandarin, Russian and Spanish were produced, and about 1,500 copies were distributed in January 2000 to all Olympic and Paralympic committees around the world, as well as all Australian diplomatic posts with Olympics liaison officers. Special full-page advertisements about arrival in Australia were placed in the in-flight magazines of key international airlines.

The border agencies actively directed material at Olympic family members, athletes, officials, international media and other visitors for nearly three years leading up to the Games. The environmental and agricultural threats posed to Australia by undeclared foodstuffs were part of a series of border entry messages for potential Olympics visitors. This educational campaign was a critical part of the strategy to develop awareness of entry requirements and quarantine risks, with the aim of encouraging overseas visitors to leave identified material behind or arrange for appropriate testing and certification in advance. Many of these information products were joint effort productions. ACS coordinated and produced the information booklets, which were translated into the same languages as the videos as well as other languages, DIMA developed and coordinated the website, and AQIS developed and produced the videos with assistance of the Australian Institute of Sport. Additional information from some other government agencies was incorporated into each of these media products. Overall coordination of the campaign passed to the Sydney 2000 Games Coordination Task Force in August 1998.

AQIS also made major contributions to SOCOG’s freight forwarder handbook, published in 1997, the NOC Freight Manual and the Chefs de Mission Dossier.

Several media releases from AQIS and its Federal Minister were released during 1999-2000 about a variety of Olympics issues. AQIS prepared media briefs and talking points for ministerial and departmental representatives. There was substantial media coverage of quarantine issues in international and national media and in the industry press.

A range of internal communications to keep staff informed was developed during the lead up to the Olympics (Fig. 3). In 1999 AQIS published some printed and electronic staff bulletins, Quarantine Matters for the Olympics, and in 2000 the Sydney office published nine issues of a monthly staff newsletter, On the Blocks.
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

Figure 3
Part of AQIS’s staff communication process — posters distributed nationally to all regional offices

Information regarding AQIS import requirements for stockfeed and therapeutic products was provided to several stockfeed manufacturers in the USA, UK, Ireland, Italy and France. An equestrian information package with instructions for team officials, grooms, riders, team veterinarians, and farriers was produced and distributed in early 2000.

Eight Australian Government Fact Sheets (see Appendices) on the following major quarantine matters were distributed on key dates:

- Entry arrangements for Olympic and Paralympic Family Members
- Importing food into Australia
- Importing human medicinal products into Australia
- Importing sports foods and dietary supplements into Australia
- Importing horses into Australia
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

- Importing stockfeed for the equestrian events
- Importing veterinary drugs
- Hospitality sites for National Olympic Committees and National Paralympic Committees
- Importing guide dogs into Australia.

The AQIS Olympics Liaison Officer and some other staff contributed to the content for lesson plans with an Olympics theme, an interactive game about bringing horses to Australia for the Olympics, and to technical meetings with the producers of an educational CD ROM, Quarantine Matters, commissioned by AQIS and distributed to schools by the Australian Science Teachers Association. It was launched in Quarantine Week in May 2000 at Taronga Park Zoo which is on the edge of Sydney Harbour. Articles on AQIS and the Olympics were written for the AQIS school website.

Harbour arrangements

Particular attention was given to arrangements for visiting vessels, including yachts for Olympic competition and cruise ships that functioned as floating hotels.

There were 150 visiting vessels at Barcelona in 1992. Fifteen cruise vessels were used to provide 7,116 beds. There were also 30 super yachts. No outbreaks of notifiable human diseases were reported at Atlanta in 1996, and no outbreaks were reported in Sydney. The occurrence of previous reported human disease outbreaks was reviewed as part of the pre-Olympics planning.

Over 4,000 copies of an information guide for visiting vessels were distributed internationally and nationally in mid-1998, and information was also included on the NSW Waterways website. An information package with two brochures and a video including quarantine regulations was issued in May 1999 to all super yachts on the registration of interest database, and to international boating magazines.

Following AQIS’s early information dissemination, over 130 registrations of interest were received by mid-1999. AQIS’s provisions for initial clearance and continuing surveillance was consistent within the relatively high risk categories into which AQIS normally classifies these vessels. As a contingency, AQIS investigated options for pre-clearance in New Zealand of some super yachts. AQIS was able to conduct partial testing of operational procedures in February 1999 when five passenger vessels were accommodated in Sydney Harbour at the same time.
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

AQIS sent quarantine brochures with letters to shipping agents responsible for cruise ships that functioned as floating hotels. It also sent letters via diplomatic posts to NOCs and National Paralympic Committees (NPCs) in March and July 2000 to remind them of its requirements for imports of food, and requested posts to follow up with NPCs regarding importing any guide dogs. AQIS analysed the rate and coverage of responses mid-year against the likely number of teams wanting to bring food to Australia for team use or NOC functions. Countries that responded in relation to food imports included Finland, Slovakia, Israel, China, Iran, Guatemala, Spain, the USA, Portugal, Russia, France, Australia, Azerbaijan, Japan, Canada, South Africa, Italy and Germany. This further contact resulted in improved communication with various committees on some AQIS issues, although concerns about and preparation for potential problems with importation of foods and dietary supplements and with entry of guide dogs continued until late October 2000.

AQIS also provided information about quarantine requirements for hospitality houses which was disseminated by SOCOG through the annually updated Freight Manual. In 2000 the manual included a questionnaire about proposed food imports, and over 200 copies were distributed via NOCs, freight forwarders, consulates and importers. AQIS also informed the NOCs directly in advance, and this prevented potential problems that had been anticipated.

Most members of the interstate AQIS seaports team to be based in Sydney completed a water safety course delivered by Customs at their Neutral Bay facility at Sydney Harbour. Sydney-based seaports staff also had some refresher training.

There was regular consultation to ensure that waste removal and treatment systems were in place and adequate, with close monitoring of waste transporters and treatment providers during the Olympics period. There were two AQIS-approved sites for disposal by autoclaving and chemical treatment. AQIS negotiated deep burial of waste with the NSW Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency as a last-resort contingency.

Sea cargo

AQIS undertook a review of current systems for screening and clearing goods imported on a temporary basis, and with Customs, introduced new arrangements to ensure that all cargo was screened for and cleared of quarantine concerns. Thus goods imported on a temporary basis were subject to the same quarantine scrutiny as commercial goods entering Australia.

A group of officers were dedicated to inspecting the cargo associated with NOCs, Olympics sponsors and SOCOG. They performed freight inspections on a broad range of goods in Sydney Olympic Games and Paralympics: Australia's biosecurity measures
venues throughout Sydney. Some were co-located with Customs officers who were engaged in similar tasks.

AQIS officers cleared over 400 containers of cargo shipped by freight forwarders contracted by SOCOG. A wide range of material arrived from late 1999 over a long period of time, as freight for clearance and as part of usual business. This included yachts, canoes, golf buggies for transport at the athletes’ village and other venues, jumps for the equestrian events, tents, marquees, seating and temporary structures. Most of the cargo was sourced from Europe, Malaysia and New Zealand, and problems encountered were soil and grain contamination, insects, and untreated timber and bark on packaging. AQIS met with the contracted supplier and the freight forwarder several times to stress that consignments had to comply with AQIS conditions for import.

By early 2000 AQIS officers had become familiar with identified associated quarantine risks and with particular problems to look for, as the rest of the cargo continued to arrive in the six months leading up to the Olympics. There were also over 80 containers of equipment shipped by broadcaster NBC. AQIS conducted some inspections at the media centre and at the Olympic Village. Olympics cargo was inspected at Port Botany where most cargo comes into Sydney. AQIS officers were also located in a number of quarantine-approved premises at Port Botany after hours, and they facilitated processing and movement of incoming cargo with minimal impediments.

There was no significant impact on other ports resulting from having vessels diverted by shipping agents. Sydney Ports Corporation and AQIS maintained the usual procedures for commercial shipping. There was a high level of preparation, liaison and coordination with industry and other agencies including the Australian Chamber of Shipping, NSW Department of Health, Sydney Waterways, ADI Garden Island, Stevedores Patrick DH, P&O Ports WB and their security personnel, some other security personnel, and with shipping companies and other non-NSW ports.

Stockfeed for the Olympics could only be imported after AQIS conducted a quarantine risk evaluation and issued an import permit stating the conditions relating to the risk evaluation. AQIS assessed applications to import stockfeed and veterinary therapeutic products following payment of statutory fees. SOCOG pre-paid for one stockfeed application (A$180), one fermented antibiotic or enzyme preparation (A$60) and one veterinary therapeutic application (A$180) for each of 240 horses travelling to Australia for the Olympic Games. The teams covered their individual additional costs. AQIS received and assessed applications to import these products up until August 2000.
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

Post-arrival irradiation at Steritech included 13 consignments of horse feed imported for the competition horses.

Security arrangements

The fundamental principles from the experiences of previous Olympics airport operations in Barcelona and Atlanta were applied at Sydney Airport, including that planning must be comprehensive and inclusive of the whole airport community. The Olympics also gave an opportunity for all the airport operations to demonstrate their strengths. AQIS Sydney Airport operations developed strategies to cater for all likely eventualities, and undertook extensive workforce planning for recruitment and flexibility. Test events and briefings were taken into account. In exercising their judgement, quarantine officers conducting inspections had access to various levels of deterrent measures to encourage passenger compliance: verbal and written warnings, Quarantine Infringement Notices, and prosecution.

Immediate quarantine risks were addressed effectively by focusing on the interception of prohibited and restricted items. The detector dog programme (Fig. 4) exercises this principle, whereby most identifications of undeclared controlled goods result in immediate seizure and a verbal warning. Increased intervention levels were planned for and carried out.

In 2000 there were 29 passive detector dog teams working with airport passenger arrivals, and four active detector dog teams working at international mail centres and air couriers, including five senior handlers. Two teams had bilingual handlers. There was a substantial increase in volume of arrivals at all the other airports where detector dogs operate, and resources were fully utilised around the country. Two handlers who usually work with active dogs on international mail clearance underwent the passive dog training programme and transferred to the airport at the beginning of the year.
The upgrading of Sydney Airport included increased facilities in the arrival halls. Early estimates from the Tourism Futures Commission were higher than the arrivals that actually occurred in 2000.

AQIS helped train NSW Police to use Rapiscan X-ray screening equipment as part of the police service’s preparations for managing security. This technology was used to screen all bags, luggage and people entering the Olympic Village at Homebush Bay. Over 10,000 athletes and officials representing 199 countries were accommodated at the Village. The same X-ray screening is used by quarantine officers to detect prohibited material carried by passengers at international airports (Fig. 5), as well as in items arriving at international mail exchanges. Police representatives visited Sydney Airport on several occasions to observe the X-ray equipment, and asked the operators to develop a training package with scenarios that police might encounter.
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

Figure 5
AQIS and Australian Customs Service staff X-raying airline baggage

Biological products

Planning for the control of products of microbial or animal origin (including animal feedstuffs, therapeutic products, fertilisers and laboratory reagents) began a year before the Olympics. Arrangements for credit card payments for import permit applications were implemented in mid-1999. AQIS relayed a key message through SOCOG that applications for import permits had to be sent to AQIS by 6 to 12 weeks before the Olympics. About 20 applications for import permits had been received by 6 months before the start. AQIS staff knew by May-June 2000 the types of likely applications still to come.

Letters were sent to NOCs in March 2000, and a further reminder letter distributed in early July to NOCs and their sponsors, to advise them of AQIS’s responsibilities to strictly control the entry into Australia of goods that might endanger the current favourable disease and pest status, and also to ensure that food imported into Australia complied with the Australian Food Standards Code.

Test events

The World Wheelchair Basketball Championships, Gold Cup 98, was useful as an early test event for airport operations planning. An international disabled athletes event in March 2000 was also used as a trial for some aspects of airport preparation. AQIS observed the preferred style of movement in groups, and noted the additional baggage that the athletes brought. AQIS prepared for all possible contingencies, and had a quarantine veterinarian
AQIS's planning for the Olympic Games

on call in case any Paralympics athletes arrived with companion dogs, with or without permits and documentation.

The 1999 Sydney Regatta, another test event, attracted 240 competing boats and 70 official vessels representing 55 countries. AQIS objectives for this event were to determine the levels of resources required for the clearance process, develop familiarity with logistic elements, and ensure that quarantine integrity was maintained. Normal procedures require quarantine entries to be lodged before the movement of cargo so that inspections can be requested. However, in this instance there were a few failures by the freight forwarder to lodge entries before requesting inspections, and this was among the problems AQIS identified with timing and the content of documentation. Urgent inspections needed to be performed (occasionally before entries were lodged), as AQIS did not want to delay competitors’ access to the equipment. One recommendation that came out of this experience was the need to ensure better coordination of team arrivals, as AQIS was concerned about replicating the same level of service, and that delays at one venue would impact upon teams waiting at the next appointment and venue. Some other problems for AQIS and Customs were identified and adjusted for 2000: these included access to the yachting site to check and clear the containers of equipment, and delays with accreditation for passes, and with Olympic Family transport.

Sydney hosted various test events in August-September 1999 to assess the simultaneous use of venues, with a deliberately heavy concentration during September when the Chefs de Mission also held a meeting. The test events gave officials and competitors the opportunity to test venues, and enabled AQIS to trial its quarantine systems and procedures. International equestrian events were held at SIEC in September, and several international federation representatives, athletes and technical officials attended these. AQIS veterinarians visited the site over a number of days during the competition period, and were generally impressed with the facility and its operation.

At the Sydney International Three Day Event (Fig. 6), one of the test events held in September 1999, two horses from the USA had a full practice run from quarantine checking at the airport on arrival, to PAQ at the Eastern Creek Animal Quarantine Station (ECQS) at the end of August before being moved to and competing at SIEC, through to health certification and re-exporting. This was also an opportunity for AQIS representatives and others to observe movement flows within the site and to recommend adjustments during final construction work.
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

In coordination with the test events, various security and airport arrangements and the SOCOG radio network were tested. The airport volunteers and IT system worked well. AQIS attended daily briefings in the airport command centre, which was established to coordinate the arrival and departure of athletes and officials during the test events. Among the problems encountered were clearing oversize and excess baggage in the passenger hall, congestion, and the effects on managing the movement of athletes and baggage away from the airport terminal. AQIS cleared boats, kayaks, canoes and rowing hulls. In one case a sailing competitor checked his boat, trailer, mast, sails and sailboard as accompanied baggage. Many competitors arrived at times other than those expected. Officials and competitors did not always comply with the requirements for medical substances and restricted equipment. This was managed during the test events, and the experience highlighted the need to do more to reinforce the understanding of importation requirements before Olympics competitors’ and officials’ departure for Australia in 2000.

AQIS’ Olympics administrative arrangements

Planning and preparation entered a different stage once the IOC had accepted the 2000 Olympic bid. There was extensive coordination with SOCOG. The AQIS Olympics Liaison Officer worked in the SOCOG office for more than three years leading up to the Olympics, providing AQIS with an essential link with SOCOG, and establishing communication networks with the other government agencies involved in coordinating all arrangements.
AQIS's planning for the Olympic Games and logistics. He also used many opportunities to sensitise those involved at SOCOG to Australia's quarantine requirements. He advised on Australian import conditions and compliance with AQIS requirements. He also advised organisations and individuals importing sea and air cargo for the Olympics, and developed and maintained extensive contact with the Sydney Airport Corporation Limited (SACL) and other airport services, and with Sydney Ports, NSW Waterways, the Department of Transport and other marine organisations.

AQIS participated in numerous planning groups leading up to and during 2000, including the Sydney Airport Olympic Planning Group, the Sydney Airport Venue Management Working Group, the Group on Olympics Airports Development (GOAD), the Visitor Information Campaign Committee, the Port Operations Sub-Committee, the Border Control Co-ordination Group, the Commonwealth Reference Group on the 2000 Games, the Ministerial Committee for the 2000 Games, the High Level Officials Group, the Olympic Equestrian Events Quarantine Advisory sub-committee, a SOCOG group. AQIS was represented in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's Olympics Task Force and other reference groups, and joined with all border agencies participating in key elements and initiatives in a whole-of-government context.

A two-day review of Commonwealth preparations for the Sydney Olympics was held in Canberra in February 2000, and AQIS participated in this. AQIS also held a planning day in mid-May 2000, with a follow up in mid-August, to ensure that it was on track with its preparations for the challenges of the Olympics. Arrangements were reviewed by NSW operational staff and central office representatives covering airports, seaports, import clearance, imported foods, animal and plant policy, and public relations.

Amended media handling arrangements applied nationally from 1 August until 31 October 2000, and AQIS Public Relations coordinated all enquiries and media management. AQIS prepared a fact sheet that was part of a set produced in a matching style for the Sydney Media Centre as reference material outlining each agency's operations. There were several interviews by overseas media with AQIS public relations representatives covering quarantine regulations, requirements, rationale and operations, with examples of items of quarantine concern.

The AQIS Olympics Liaison Officer gave presentations to about 80 percent of the Sydney-based staff, and to others in Canberra and Melbourne, from early July 2000, as well as at various SOCOG events. Sessions on issue reporting guidelines and on media requirements were included. E-mails with the information given at these sessions were sent across Australia to AQIS regional managers, to enable them to hold similar information sessions for their staff.
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

The awareness campaign included posters, banners and newsletters that were produced and distributed nationally to staff members (Fig. 3). An information session was also held to confirm accommodation arrangements. AQIS made accommodation arrangements by billeting transferred staff with Sydney staff on the basis of common work locations, to maximise efficiencies in travelling together to and from work sites. It brokered an arrangement for the staff members providing accommodation for transferred staff to be recompensed.

There were 60 extra quarantine officers and specialist scientific and veterinary staff from interstate deployed in Sydney during the Olympics period to ensure the prompt and smooth delivery of services to Olympics clients, and to maintain AQIS’s usual services to its client base. Their professionalism ensured that Australia’s quarantine integrity was fully maintained. AQIS allocated additional staff to bolster existing resources at expected pressure points such as international airports, seaports and SIEC. This included temporary part-time officers, others converted to full-time, several transferred from interstate and some former officers who were re-employed. Staff members were given advance notice of staff leave restrictions applying during the Olympics period.

The regional office in Sydney provided kits for the transferring staff, which included maps, transport information and general information about Sydney. Each operational area provided operational orientation for the interstate staff. ‘Olympics survival kits’ were given to all staff in NSW. AQIS NSW Social Committee organised social events that involved interstate staff members and helped in relieving some of the pressure they were under.

Staff providing Olympics support received a special Olympics allowance and extra time off during the following Christmas-New Year summer break. In addition to the Olympics commitment, AQIS’s service delivery obligations to its ‘business as usual’ clients prevailed. In negotiation with industry AQIS adopted flexible operating hours, particularly in Sydney, to accommodate the changes in standard cargo and passenger movements due to disruptions caused by the Olympic Games.

AQIS held a four-week training programme in July 2000 for recent recruits and former employees returning to work for the Olympics. Twelve VIP officers undertook a special training programme with Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) officers.

Many teams arrived in Australia at Adelaide, Melbourne, Brisbane and Cairns airports for pre-Olympics training and preliminary competition events, where there were passenger and cargo clearances, such as bicycle inspections. About 120 teams from 20 countries undertook pre-Olympics training in Queensland. AQIS met in Melbourne with Olympic
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

Games football representatives to plan for the arrivals of participants, Olympic family and spectators, including timing and volume. AQIS provided training for staff replacing those who were transferred to Sydney. This allowed AQIS to ensure that its most highly trained staff was available for critical Olympics duties. Some Olympics passengers also arrived at Perth Airport. An aircraft was cleared on arrival at Canberra (not a routine international clearance airport) with over 200 passengers and bicycles as well as a considerable amount of baggage.

The AQIS National Manager of Border Programmes gave a briefing to international journalists on 8 June 2000. He advised that AQIS would not be relaxing Australia’s quarantine standards for travellers visiting Sydney for the Olympics, and there would be no exemptions from normal inspection requirements. The AQIS Olympics Liaison Officer, NSW Regional Manager and AQIS Chief Animal Quarantine Officer also presented information as panel members at this event, hosted by the Foreign Correspondents Association. Two bilingual detector dog handlers gave a demonstration with their dogs of the thorough detection methods used.

Improved channels of communication and new ones established in 2000 with other organisations are some of the continuing benefits for AFFA and AQIS resulting from these processes.

The special flight carrying the Olympic torch to Australia from New Zealand landed at Yulara near Uluru on 8 June 2000. Its hold had been fumigated in New Zealand to eliminate exotic flying insect pests, and at Yulara AQIS officers made checks primarily to make sure that no food waste left the plane. AQIS officers also met the special flight when it landed at Thursday Island in the Torres Strait, a special quarantine zone within Australia, as part of its Australian tour. The torch tour had already included 13 Pacific island countries.

The AQIS Olympics Control Centre, located in the AQIS NSW Regional Office in Rosebery near Sydney Airport, opened on 1 July 2000 and operated until the end of October. AQIS also established a national reporting system, and guidelines for mandatory daily reporting. It had highly experienced staff members on duty and on standby, and a flexible quick response capability. Before the Olympics began, its operations focused on Sydney Airport and late arrivals of urgent cargo, food supplies, arrivals of athletes, officials and dignitaries.

A public open day was held at the extended Sydney airport terminals at the end of July 2000. AQIS displayed a range of information material and presented detector dog demonstrations. New signage was produced for the airport, and cargo and import awareness material was provided for key seaport areas.
AQIS’s planning for the Olympic Games

Five staff members were on duty at the AQIS Control Centre seven days a week, 14 hours a day, from 28 August to 3 October 2000. They received and monitored daily reports from all of AQIS operations in Sydney and across the country, and coordinated daily and weekly reports to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and senior departmental executives. A special internal e-mail address and dedicated fax and telephone numbers were set up. Two public relations staff members worked together each day, with four taking turns to work in pairs for three days at a time. They maintained frequent contact with SAOVOC, which was based at Sydney Airport, and the accredited media centre at Darling Harbour.

Two surveillance staff and a vehicle were based at the Olympics Logistics Centre where trucks stopped en route to Sydney Olympic Park for sanitation, accreditation and security checks.

Activity by other bodies

AFFA developed opportunities associated with Austrade’s Business Club Australia initiative to promote portfolio industries. International business, trade and government forums were scheduled for the weeks before and during the Olympics. International and national industry representatives and media representatives attended three events focusing on the food industry and natural resources, hosted by AFFA's ministers. The Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and AQIS senior executives visited staff and toured operations at Sydney Airport, ECQS and other sites.

On 16 September 2000 the Parliamentary Secretary to the Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry hosted a function, 'Clean and Green', which featured the Australian horticultural industry and demonstrations by two detector dog teams. Visual Feast images and videos formed part of the showcase of Australian industry at Business Club Australia at Darling Harbour and in material distributed through DFAT and the Sydney Media Centre.

An Environment Day was held at Sydney Media Centre by Environment Australia on 16 September 2000. AQIS representatives presented one of the sessions. Representatives of other government departments took turns in servicing the Australia Information Desk, and AFFA representatives provided this service for part of the following week.
Border control: airports and cargo

Key points

• Items made from plants and animals were seized and all foods, teas, milk-based drinks, wooden artefacts and sporting and campaign equipment inspected
• Between 1 August and 30 September 2000, there were 745,968 international passenger arrivals at Sydney Airport. 15,051 prohibited items were seized of which 3,575 were undeclared
• The Olympics legacy has assisted in managing subsequent events such as foot and mouth disease outbreaks overseas, bioterrorism threats and visits by international heads of state

Passenger and cargo processing capacity operated at maximum efficiency for the Sydney Olympic Games. Close cooperation with the other border agencies ensured minimal disruption to the flow of Olympics passengers and their equipment.

During the Olympics period, Olympics travellers displaced business travellers, rather than adding to the number of arrivals. The usual peak holiday periods for arrivals and airport operations (in terms of both volume and capacity) are late January and Easter. There were more dignitaries arriving than usual. Multiple groups of passengers transferred on arrival to the cruise ships for a few days during the Olympics, then departed on return flights.

Quarantine officers used detector dog teams, X-ray technology and random baggage checks to detect undeclared quarantine items. Any items made from plants or animals must be inspected: all foods, teas, milk-based drinks, wooden artefacts, and even used sporting and camping equipment. Some of the seized fruit, vegetables and cereals were submitted for disease screening or entomology assessment. Before and during the Olympics period, inspections of the baggage of some media representatives, officials, team members, other representatives from all continents and passengers yielded a wide variety of quarantinable items. AQIS plant pathologists identified a number of quarantinable diseases on seized material (Figs 7, 8).
An early arrival at Sydney was a representative of the Swaziland team, who brought a rawhide loincloth costume for the opening ceremony. The rest of the team were to arrive through Adelaide in August 2000, and AQIS made arrangements for all rawhide items to be irradiated and returned to team members in time for the opening ceremony.

The first large team arrived at Sydney Airport in mid-August 2000. This arrival was a useful test run, as each person’s baggage went through X-ray and all other screening. AQIS demonstrated the effectiveness of various early seizures of quarantinable items to SOCOG, some airline and airport officials, and received increased support from them in response. The role of border integrity was granted precedence over facilitation and other
pressures, and it was recognised as an important role that did not impede facilitation of arriving passengers.

Two senior staff members worked at the airport consecutively from 6 am to 7 pm for four and three days each, covering the entire week between them, and the Quarantine Manager was also on call at all times. Other staff members undertook three shifts each day. There were a minimum of three staff on duty before the 4.30 pm start of the last shift, an optimal time for two staff members to maintain data entry of daily statistics. The seven-day management arrangements, combined with additional supervisory support and dedicated duty officer positions, proved highly effective.

A full complement of 45 quarantine officers was on duty, including two of the 12 officers on each shift being dedicated to dignitaries’ clearance. A quarantine kit containing all forms and equipment required for clearance was placed in each of the VIP rooms and at Qantas Executive Services. There were no facilities there for cleaning footwear, bicycles and sporting equipment, which were treated in the AQIS treatment rooms. Designated clearance officers carried out VIP light aircraft clearance.

AQIS officers were present at charter flight arrivals to verify that disinfection requirements were met along with clearance of passengers and their baggage and stripping of quarantine waste. Non-terminal handling agents provided notice to intended arrivals of disinfection requirements, and advised them to stock the appropriate insecticide.

The success achieved by having an increased capacity was an endorsement of the thorough planning. Procedures were modified only slightly during the Olympics period when additional response flexibility was needed.

The senior staff members attended the twice-daily briefings for key agencies at the Sydney Airport Olympics Venue Operations Centre (SAOVOC) during the Olympics period. There were also two briefings a day on dignitaries’ arrivals for the VIP teams.

Pre-arrival information was a useful indicator for quarantine teams to use in preparing for each day’s operations. There were constant feedback and updates among staff. The ‘Olympics survival kits’ given in appreciation by management assisted in relieving pressure and maintaining morale. The airport team achieved an outstanding level of efficiency. The quality and effectiveness of planning, staff and operational response capability has also proved readily transferable to other situations and training programmes for increased staffing.
AQIS staff used a wide range of communication skills and their cultural awareness training to assist arriving passengers, from reading labels on therapeutics to a variety of other assistance available on-site through SOCOG. All additional inspections yielded quarantine risk material. There was comprehensive incidents reporting to SAOVOC and the AQIS Olympics Control Centre.

In early September 2000 quarantine officers detected a package containing a substance later confirmed as human growth hormone, and worked closely with Customs staff to manage the incident quickly.

Detector dogs

The full complement of Sydney’s ten detector dog teams worked during the Olympics period, plus two extra teams for three weeks and one extra team for the last week. Planning for events with high level or other special requirements included short-term transfers of teams from other airports to increase the level of inspection. Two extra handlers from Canberra worked with a dog transferred from Melbourne and one of the other dogs in the Sydney team. There were six additional back-up dogs. If it had been necessary, two additional teams from interstate would have been transferred to Sydney during this period. Through extensive training staff were aware of heightened risks and increases in emergency services staff and procedures. All Sydney staff had been advised that leave would not be available during the Olympics period.

There were 12 dogs and two back-up dogs available at the airport (Fig. 9) for each day’s operations. Most passenger arrivals occur during the morning shift, and there was a 25 percent increase in teams to meet the corresponding increase in the volume of passengers arriving. At various times one officer went ahead of the dog and handler through a crowd, and asked people to put backpacks on the floor so that each dog could check as many bags as possible as it walked around the particular baggage carousel or area. This ensured more coverage. The teams used a high level of alertness as well as care to ensure safety. All teams had significant success. During this intensive period the teams were under more pressure than usual, and handovers and debriefing sessions were productive. There was also a great degree of cooperation between the quarantine officers performing different functions within the airport. A high level of radio contact, assistance and timely information was readily available, and staff handled the increased workload affably.

Dog handlers’ training includes cultural sensitivity, and team members are able to adapt quickly to a variety of appropriate styles of informing passengers that certain items need to be checked. This occurred often during arrivals in September 2000. Coping with the crush...
of passengers and trolleys around the baggage carousels requires a great deal of alertness to ensure the safety of the small dogs that AQIS uses. Most passengers enjoyed watching the teams in action and were pleased to cooperate.

Figure 9
Quarantine detector dog and handler checking airline passengers' bags

The Sydney detector dog teams managed the arrivals for the Paralympic Games without additional teams being assigned.

The scale of airport operations in Sydney is an indicator of the impact of the Olympic Games. Between 1 August and 30 September 2000 there were 745,968 international passenger arrivals at Sydney Airport, during which AQIS seized 15,051 prohibited items. Of these, 3,575 were undeclared. This represented a 19 percent increase in undeclared seizures compared with the same period the previous year. Some significant exotic diseases that could have had dramatic consequences for important Australian agricultural industries were detected. Dog teams were also used to check incoming mail during this period (Fig. 10).
Border control: airports and cargo

Figure 10
Quarantine detector dog and handler checking mail

Air cargo

A number of sea freight containers arrived in the holds of 747 freighters, as they had missed their deadlines in European ports to make the voyage to Australia by sea in time for the Olympics. Most contained broadcast and camera equipment for the international television networks. Large quantities of ‘accompanied’ baggage that would normally arrive as air cargo required non-traditional clearances where appropriate risk assessment could be performed, often in conjunction with Customs. As this places quarantine integrity under additional pressure, this highlighted the fact that such clearance should be performed only in exceptional circumstances. The clearances were successful.

At some high-volume times, cargo was diverted to other areas of the airport than the regular offloading area, and AQIS was contacted for inspection and clearance at various points. Some cultural items for the opening ceremony were ordered into quarantine for irradiation treatment and returned to team officials. Others were ordered into quarantine for re-export, and some plant material was destroyed. AQIS staff at the Qantas Mail Handling Centre were commended by emergency services controllers for detecting and sending for analysis a number of vials concealed in two soft toys. The material was non-toxic, and the two incidents were not connected with the Olympics.

The Olympics operations were regarded as a successful exercise from Sydney Airport’s perspective. The joint airport and border agencies planning and coordination expertise continues to be very highly regarded. This continuing legacy of the Olympics since 2000
Border control: airports and cargo

has proven to be beneficial for AQIS and its airport operations for the management of other events such as foot and mouth disease outbreaks overseas, bioterrorism threats and meetings of international heads of state.
Border control: seaports and cargo

Key points

- Eight cruise ships and more than 270 visiting yachts berthed in Sydney required quarantine clearance and ongoing supervision and surveillance for garbage and waste disposal
- Each of the cruise ships could produce 20 cubic metres of garbage a day, half of which had to be treated by quarantine authorities
- Increased offshore pre-clearance would have been an advantage

Cruise ships, super yachts and more yachts

In its detailed planning for the border control of vessels, AQIS took into account advance registrations and likely arrivals, holding areas and moorings. Standard inspection procedures were planned for and undertaken. There were eight cruise ships and over 270 visiting yachts berthed in Sydney’s waterways, which required quarantine clearance and ongoing supervision and surveillance for garbage and waste disposal. The cruise ships in Sydney Harbour were used as floating hotels for some NOCs, and as hospitality venues to showcase cuisine and culture, creating further quarantine risks.

All staff were on duty during the Olympics period. Some assistance with child care during the school holidays was arranged for Sydney staff needing this. Experienced staff were transferred from all regions to Sydney. Arrangements were made to billet staff who needed accommodation, and for shared transport to and from work. Adequate numbers of supervisors and staff were also maintained in the regions.

In cooperation with the Australian Customs Service (ACS), AQIS officers maintained a 24-hour presence to carry out monitoring and surveillance activities of waterways by launch throughout the period of the Olympic Games. AQIS leased premises with Customs for a joint facility at Watsons Bay on Sydney Harbour. Using six cars and a boat hired for regional surveillance and vessel clearances, AQIS officers covered all harbour areas. AQIS contracted a small boat and a local driver, whose knowledge of and contacts on the waterfront proved to be an invaluable asset. The boat carried AQIS and AFFA signage (Figs 11, 12, 13), which also proved to be effective for promoting quarantine awareness around the harbour, reinforcing Australia’s quarantine image and reputation as a clean Sydney Olympic Games and Paralympics:
environment. AQIS conducted pre-arrival procedures and arrival inspections for all yachts (Fig. 14), covering illness, animals, food, plants and other items.

Figure 11
AQIS Quarantine vessel used for patrolling Sydney Harbour

Figure 12
AQIS Quarantine vessel ensuring cruise vessel maintains quarantine security
Border control: seaports and cargo

Figure 13
Two of the nine cruise ships used as floating hotels and a super yacht in Sydney Harbour for the Olympic Games, September 2000

Figure 14
Yacht inspection, Sydney Harbour

AQIS shipping officers were responsible for the initial clearance of the passengers who arrived with the vessels (Fig. 15), as well as the clean, responsible and safe disposal of waste from these vessels to ensure that Australia’s quarantine standards are maintained.
No additional measures to usual inspections were needed. AQIS continued to monitor the vessels during their stay.

Each of the cruise ships had the potential to produce about 20 cubic metres of garbage each day. About half of this material was garbage that needed to be treated by the quarantine authorities. Two vessels had incinerators, and on-board incineration was permitted by a special dispensation only granted for this period.

Since it has a high quarantine risk, AQIS encourages visiting vessels to strip out all food on board and fully reprovision. Four of the eight cruise ships were not domestically provisioned. For instance, when the MV Deutschland arrived in port for 21 days an inventory of provisions was taken, and only new supplies of domestic provisions were used in port. Amnesty bins and quarantine signs were positioned near the gangways, checked and cleared by AQIS daily (Fig. 16). Passengers were only permitted to take confectionery and water off the ships, not fruit or drinks containing milk. There was a high level of cooperation by shipping agents, vessels’ pursers and sponsors regarding quarantine requirements. AQIS staff members also informed passengers about Australian quarantine with skill and care, and they responded with an increased level of general awareness.
Border control: seaports and cargo

AQIS officers were prepared for smaller vessels arriving in and around Sydney Harbour, likely to carry foodstuffs and possibly having pets that would need to be ‘bonded on board’ and require thorough clearance and increased surveillance. However no pets arrived during this period. AQIS officers in Port Kembla, Newcastle and north along the coast were prepared for the arrival of some of these smaller vessels in ports other than Sydney.

![Amnesty bin for disposal of quarantine items by cruise vessel passengers](image)

**Figure 16**

Amnesty bin for disposal of quarantine items by cruise vessel passengers

Increased surveillance and quarantine boat patrols around wharves and marinas in the months leading up to the Olympics included Brisbane and outports. Brisbane operations include surveillance teams as a matter of course to undertake quarantine follow-up investigations. This surveillance was intensified, particularly around wharves, because of the number of itinerant yachts and cruise vessels arriving in Brisbane before moving on to Sydney.

There were more than 30 super yachts at the marina at Rozelle. Each had about 10 crew and 10 to 12 passengers who were cleared on arrival. Three super yachts had bonded potted plants aboard. These were checked and AQIS collected the residues. On one of the yachts it was decided to replace all overseas plants and soil with local plants. The bond conditions specified that plant materials brought aboard were under quarantine and all discarded plants, parts, and cut flowers were quarantine waste. AQIS was notified for collection of residue.
The volume of vessel arrivals was not as high as expected, and all operations were fully covered. The control centre operated highly effectively, and will be used as a model for other complex, large-scale events. New ballast water regulations that had been planned before the Olympics were introduced in 2001.

Sea cargo

AQIS liaised closely with SOCOG over Olympics-related freight, and made substantial efforts to inform NOCs and others about Australia’s quarantine requirements and their options for meeting them. It planned to use off-shore pre-clearance where it was feasible in terms of cost and risk. Most of the Sydney Olympic Games freight and competition cargo was imported into Australia on a temporary basis for the Olympics. The process for clearing this cargo through Customs differed from that used for commercial consignments, and impacted upon the way imported cargo was being reported to AQIS.

Hospitality houses

AQIS was prepared to organise arrangements for a larger number of import permits, venues and waste disposal services than were eventually required. Some cultural items were bonded for exhibit only at the particular hospitality venue, and were checked on-site and before export. Others were sent to Steritech for irradiation treatment on arrival and then used for the opening ceremony.
**Horses**

**Key points**

- The safe importing of horses and successful staging of equestrian events was a result of thorough preparation for early detection, careful screening, dealing with mature horses in peak condition, and using back-up disease investigation facilities, flu virus detection kits and extended post-arrival quarantine.

- There were 239 horses imported, a total of 160 grooms and other staff, and 100 tonnes of equipment.

- The horses spent a minimum of 14 days in pre-embarkation quarantine.

- Effective hourly monitoring by veterinarians and quarantine officers on the long flights to Australia and immediately following their arrival ensured the health of the horses was maintained.

- Disposal of waste from the equestrian centre where the horses were stabled was by deep burial.

The equestrian events were a spectacular and popular part of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, and were conducted free of any controversial quarantine episodes. AQIS ensured that the competing horses and their accompanying tack, feed and medications were able to enter and leave Australia efficiently and safely. Horses recovered quickly from their journey to Australia, and competed effectively. The members of the Equestrian Freight Consortium (EFC), in cooperation with AQIS and SOCOG staff, accomplished a smooth operation overseas and in Australia. The fact that everyone was dealing with supremely fit and healthy horses also helped make the operation a success.

A newly developed protocol for the importation of piroplasmosis positive horses enabled 15 seropositive horses to be temporarily imported for the Olympics.

**Pre-export quarantine and issuing of health certification**

Supervision of offshore pre-entry horse quarantine by the AQIS Veterinary Counsellor and other AQIS officers was indispensable. There was an early request from SOCOG for a dedicated AQIS veterinary presence in Europe in August 2000 to provide direction and assistance during the final stages of preparation, because of the complexities of a horse.

Sydney Olympic Games and Paralympics: Australia's biosecurity measures
movement of this size and the relative unfamiliarity with AQIS quarantine requirements in several of the countries involved. AQIS provided this service as part of the formal agreement with SOCOG. The AQIS Live Animal Imports Manager worked in Europe between 1 and 25 August 2000 overseeing the final preparations and the departure of the horses competing in the equestrian events. She completed and complemented the work started by the AQIS EU Veterinary Counsellor about 18 months before, and consolidated by the Chief Quarantine Officer (Animals) NSW in April 2000, to obtain full compliance with AQIS importation requirements.

There were 216 horses imported on six flights from 21 to 25 August 2000, and 22 other horses arrived at SIEC between 9 and 19 September, following the lifting of post-animal quarantine (PAQ) conditions. There were three flights from Frankfurt on 20, 21, 24 August and one from Stansted on 23 August via refuelling stopovers in Dubai and Singapore. To access the SOCOG-sponsored travel arrangements for the balance of the US horses, a FedEx flight departed from JFK New York on 22 August via Los Angeles and Honolulu. All flights were chartered by SOCOG. On 22 August KLM sponsored the Dutch equestrian team of 10 horses and 15 people on a combination charter flight from Amsterdam to Sydney, after pre-embarkation quarantine (PEQ) at Erp and Valkenswaard. Over 160 grooms and other staff, and 100 tonnes of equipment, also arrived on these flights. The flights from Europe took 36 hours, and that from the USA, 27 hours.

In all, 196 horses, representing either approved European countries or those other competing countries that qualified their horses in Europe by meeting the 60-day residency requirement, were cleared for travel to Sydney on the four SOCOG-sponsored flights from Frankfurt and Stansted. The EFC of two experienced shipping agents acting in consultation with EU country veterinary authorities, NEFs and AQIS, selected and organised the transport and pre-export quarantine arrangements for these horses. The EFC had a very high level of expertise. It drew on its direct, established contacts and had access to expert information. It did most of the documentation on behalf of each team, and ensured that all information was passed on to team members. It gave very thorough attention to all details.

Over 20 PEQ premises in Europe were used. They had facilities for training and escorted access to tracks for gallops, and the horses were able to remain in peak condition. The EFC gave advice on grouping horses at various PEQ premises, particularly regarding optimal proximity to the departure points in the UK, the Netherlands, and the rest of EU. In some cases full teams occupied particular PEQ premises, while other PEQ facilities accommodated a number of different teams. An extensive amount of direct and effective communication clarified and resolved slight differences in expectations and priorities. Random inspections of PEQ premises were made to help local authorities implement the AQIS-prescribed control measures and make appropriate judgements. Some horses had
been competing on the European circuit and had a break during some of the PEQ and PAQ period.

Before PEQ commenced, the horses received booster vaccinations against equine influenza, and during PEQ they were tested for equine infectious anaemia, for piroplasmosis, and inspected and treated for ticks. The horses spent a minimum of 14 days in PEQ before being transported to the airports. Thorough organisation by EFC members and the strong commitment of participants to the welfare of their horses were key success factors.

The AQIS Live Animal Imports Manager gave prompt and authoritative assistance to those facing operational problems with the preparation of their horses. She also enabled the finalising of certification for those teams from non-EU member countries that needed to meet entry and export requirements for the EU and Australia. She assessed each competing country’s applications relating to registered common drugs to identify similarities and differences, and issued permits. Less common products were also assessed and permits issued. Her site inspections and other work on location and with all of the people involved were essential. This ensured compliance with Australia’s requirements, as most individuals’ focus between April and August 2000 had been on other competition events in Europe. Valuable preparations were completed.

Staff employed by Peden Bloodstock managed the PEQ site at the Aachen showground. Three representatives from the German veterinary authority also had access to the quarantine area. Peden insisted that no additional gear for the horses at the Aachen quarantine could be added to the kit of any horse once the quarantine period began, unless it was new and passed inspection by the staff on duty at the gate. No other horses had been on the site for at least a month before the horses for the Olympics arrived there on 4 August 2000. The AQIS representative helped check in the horses, checking veterinary certification and vaccination details and discussing details with the government veterinarian.

The travel planning by the highly experienced horse transport companies took into account long road transport times in Europe, and included a 12-24 hour rest for all horses after arriving at Frankfurt before departure of each flight, in temporary stables at the airport. Sixty horses in PEQ in Aachen left for Frankfurt over 19-23 August 2000 in trucks provided by a single trucking company, Johannssmens. This company was used to transport almost all the horses from their PEQs (Figs 17, 18) for the three Frankfurt flights. The trucks are closed, with full metal panels apart from a few small windows at the top. The German veterinary authorities provided a declaration attesting to the cleanliness of the trucks used.
Thirty-five horses from PEQ in St Martin de Bréhal on the Normandy coast and in Fontainebleau arrived for the second flight. Horses from Italy were transported from Rome, with an overnight rest in Milan at a transit facility, which had been inspected and approved in April 2000 by Australia’s EU Veterinary Counsellor, and another overnight rest in Frankfurt after arrival and before loading on board the plane the next afternoon. The Swedish horses that were not in Aachen were transported by truck from Sweden to the Danish quarantine facility, where they were stabled overnight before proceeding to Frankfurt.
As well as resting the horses, the layover period in Frankfurt allowed time from Friday night to Sunday for confirming valid health certification, conducting tick checks, approving some permits, and finalising additional arrangements for pre-clearance of these consignments and all of the accompanying tack, gear and therapeutics by the Live Animal Imports Manager and the Senior Veterinary Officer. They had a day working at the airport to prepare for the horses’ arrival. They ensured the disinfection of the stalls and checked that the trucks were clean. They examined the horses when they arrived for their overnight stay. The grooms walked, fed and watered the horses before settling them for the night. The AQIS supervisor also assisted the grooms the night before each departure by giving them arrival details, as many had not received the SOCOG and AQIS information from their NOCs. One AQIS officer accompanied the first departure on 20 August 2000, and also ensured that topical long-acting insect repellent was sprayed at the refuelling stopovers. The AQIS supervisor continued pre-clearing tack and drug lists for the following departures. A few of the transport company’s grooms from the first flight returned with the plane and accompanied the third flight. Similarly, a few grooms from the second flight returned to also accompany the last flight.

Peden Bloodstock had transported horses for the previous four Olympics, and Lufthansa had transported horses for the previous three. IRT have transported horses to and from Australia for many years. Each flight had six in-flight crew members. The experienced Lufthansa cargo ground crew smoothly carried out synchronised loading of the stalls by forklifts onto trolleys, which were taken along to the plane and loaded into it by scissor lifts. The 17 cubic metre stalls have three compartments, and horses occupied two, with the middle one kept empty. Pallets of stockfeed for the French horses were also loaded onto the first flight.
The AQIS veterinarian also went to Stansted for pre-clearance. The Irish team’s horses spent a night in transit to Stansted at Essex Showground, and had tick inspections before arriving at Stansted. A courier collected all of the documentation from the various PEQ premises the day before departure. The AQIS veterinarian checked the certification and oversaw the arrival of the horse trucks on the tarmac and the loading of the horses, cargo and grooms during the 9 hours before the plane departed at midday. She later returned to Frankfurt to undertake final clearances for, and to accompany, the last flight. All of the work at Frankfurt and Stansted achieved its purpose of giving the best possible start to PAQ.

The horses were in peak condition before their plane trips. The design of the stalls allows good air circulation, and the in-flight air quality contributed to maintaining optimal conditions for the horses on board each flight, with low humidity and low air temperature. The horses were well hydrated on drip lines. They were older horses with long vaccination histories and had travelled many times. As a result of these factors there was a lower level of travel sickness than would normally be the case. Very effective hourly monitoring by veterinarians and quarantine officers during the flights, and after-arrival monitoring, ensured that the high standards of health of the horses were maintained. As a precaution, a large supply of influenza virus kits was acquired to take samples of the horses’ nasal secretions as an additional measure to the regular testing during quarantine.

Arrivals

AQIS worked with Sydney Airport Corporation Limited (SACL) and SOCOG to put in place the strictest possible airport quarantine and security procedures consistent with the safe movement of overseas horses. Management of those procedures was the responsibility of SACL, the equestrian team of each country involved, and the airline transporting the horses and teams.

Arrival preparations included a trial unloading at Sydney Airport in May 2000, and determining final details for the portable fencing, rubber matting, extra lighting, and protective clothing for several additional handlers and for the truck drivers. Preliminary estimates for unloading time had ranged from 1.5 to 2.5 hours. There was a practice run on 20 July 2000, an airport dress rehearsal with the media on 14 August, and on 17 August a media briefing at SIEC. There was also a logistics arrival practice run for the unloading of stockfeed and tack from trucks at SIEC at night under spotlights.

Two Australian and eight US horses were transported from PEQ at Foxhall Farm, Georgia to Lexington, Kentucky for a commercial charter flight and arrived as permanent imports on 2 August 2000 along with five grooms, a veterinarian, seven airfreight containers and a pallet with 2.5 tonnes of equipment. All of this equipment was moved to the Eastern Creek
Quarantine Station (ECQS) for clearance, as were the horses, which completed PAQ there in the standard way. A small team of AQIS officers inspected the tack and equipment and a significant quantity of veterinary therapeutics and supplements. With agreement by SOCOG and industry, and under AQIS supervision, these horses were transported by truck from ECQS to, and back from, SIEC for training after completing the first four days of PAQ in order to have opportunities for high-impact galloping. Four other grooms had arrived earlier on a scheduled passenger flight.

Following their release from PAQ, these US three-day event horses were taken for further training and acclimatisation to a farm in the Hunter Valley. This property had been inspected by a Rural Lands Protection Board veterinarian to confirm that the horses would remain in isolation, in order that they could enter SIEC with equivalent health status to the horses already on-site. When they were returned to Sydney they were re-tested before entry to SIEC. Following the US consignment’s release from PAQ, the horse quarantine facilities at Eastern Creek were kept free of horses as an emergency back-up site for the Olympic Games until 6 October 2000, in case there was an outbreak of infectious disease at SIEC, so that affected horses could be moved away quickly from the competition site. The horse surgery at ECQS was also available had it been needed for any Olympics horses. These arrangements included forgoing six weeks’ usual revenue at ECQS.

Four horses from New Zealand arrived on a routine freight flight. They were prepared against higher than normal standards in order to conform to an equivalent health status to the horses already at SIEC. Australian horses also had to meet the same standard, requiring vaccination, testing and a period of isolation before entry to SIEC.

On 21 August 2000 SOCOG and AQIS held an airport press conference at 10 pm for the first charter arrival from Frankfurt, followed at dawn on 22 August by an opportunity for a pool photographer and pool TV camera operator to film the first horses on their first morning. The restricted media access arrangements included film footage and stills photography of the horses' departure from Frankfurt. After assisting with clearance, the AQIS officer who accompanied this flight attended the press conference with the other AQIS representatives, returned to Canberra the next day and went back to Sydney to assist for a few days at SIEC.

The Chief Quarantine Officer (Animals) NSW participated in after-arrival team briefings held daily between 21 and 26 August 2000. He gave presentations with SOCOG for each group of grooms on their first morning and updates at briefings for heads of teams. He also gave briefings to team veterinarians two to three times a week, information to international media representatives at the media centre, and a briefing at the lifting of PAQ.
The focus was to ensure that arrival caused minimum distress to the horses. Portable fencing and rubber matting were set up around the plane and trucks. The grooms disembarked first, and their entry and hand luggage was cleared and shoes cleaned. The stalls were unloaded, and the grooms led the horses out of the stalls and onto one of the enclosed racehorse transports one at a time (Fig. 19), while the other gear was loaded onto trucks. Eight pallets of freight were delivered to SIEC after each flight’s arrival. This cargo consisted of stockfeed, medicines, therapeutics, saddlery and other equipment. A small team of NSW AQIS officers inspected the tack, equipment and veterinarians’ trunks on the five evenings, and ensured that import conditions were met, complementing the veterinary team inspecting the horses. There was a duty veterinarian at the airport for each of the arrivals. Forklifts were used for pallets at the airport and at SIEC. Leftover feed was removed from the aircraft and destroyed.

An AQIS officer supervised and certified disinfection of the aircraft and the horse transport containers after cleaning was completed on the night of arrival of each of the first two planes from Europe. These planes, their crews and a few of the transport consortium’s grooms went back to take on board the third and fourth shipments of horses, and after unloading in Sydney each plane was similarly cleaned, disinfected and certified. Other team members were transported in buses and collected by Olympics representatives. The same sequence at the airport and at SIEC was repeated for each of the following charters.
AQIS officers were at SIEC for each of the arrivals direct from the airport to record each horse’s temperature. There were a few delays in clearing the baggage on the first two nights, but the following arrivals went smoothly and the cargo was cleared quickly. SIEC had only been used before for the 1999 test event, and higher standards were set for the Olympics. The diligence of the grooms was recognised as an outstanding contribution to maintaining these high standards.

Temperature recording of each horse commenced on the night of arrival and continued twice daily until 8 September 2000. The morning after each flight’s arrival, a team of five AQIS veterinarians divided up the new arrivals, checking horse identities, inspecting for ticks and taking blood samples. Sera from the collected blood samples were removed in the clinical laboratory at SIEC and transferred to the National Serum Bank at the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL). The blood samples were available for reference purposes only, including recording levels of antibodies, in the event of a disease outbreak occurring. Temperature and location data were entered for each horse into the database by AQIS staff through the day and evening, by when all staff were ready for the arrival of the next plane load and repeated the whole procedure. AQIS followed up with SOCOG to have disposal bins for syringes installed in accordance with the management agreement. Within the first week after their arrival, all horses reacclimatised and training was gradually increased.

Arrangements at SIEC

AQIS veterinarians closely supervised PAQ, which continued for two weeks after the final flight arrived on 25 August 2000, and the associated quarantine security. They closely monitored key quarantine compliance issues including stable entrance/exit, waste control, clothing control, horse contact and training scheduling. Successful regulatory measures were adopted, achieving a satisfactory level of compliance. No cases of exotic diseases or any other disease of concern were diagnosed among the Olympics horses. No horse showed any significant rise in temperature, and quarantine controls were accordingly relaxed at the conclusion of the PAQ period. Quarantine surveillance began at midnight on 8 September 2000. There was continued monitoring of the horses in the separation stables by AQIS staff who maintained the horse health database, and these records were used in preparation of export health certification. AQIS staff and the horse stewards spent a lot of time monitoring separation compliance during daily training.

Before the arrival of the first Olympics horses, officers from the local Rural Lands Protection Board contacted the owners of all horses within 1,000 metres of the quarantine area at SIEC, and placed the horses under regular surveillance. Horses that were closer than the 300 metre buffer zone were relocated for agistment, to minimise any possibility of the
airborne spread of infectious equine disease agents. SOCOG paid for the agistment. The local NSW Government District Veterinarian at Camden was responsible for contacting owners and supervision. During the PAQ period he visited these properties to ensure that horses were not present, and also visited properties beyond this zone to ensure that no disease was present. This was largely a response to public concerns about neighbouring farms and to fears expressed by the horse industry.

A briefing was held for the course builders, turf and footing contractors, irrigation contractors and security commander to explain the rationale for quarantine and an intact quarantine perimeter: the AQIS requirement that each locked gate had to be relocked immediately after use, unless the gate was attended. AQIS required SIEC venue management to carry out corrective measures in late August to improve the perimeter security of the site, and they acted promptly. Because building work and other final work was still being finished, some tradesmen were using some perimeter access points. AQIS required action to ensure the security of the perimeter. All barricades to secure the southern boundary of the horse access area were installed, and the uphill gallop track was only used after top and bottom control barricades were installed and a horse ambulance and a steward positioned at the top end. Gates were locked, with a steward positioned at the most used one.

The Principal Veterinary Officer, the Chief Quarantine Officer (Animals) NSW and 28 other AQIS officers were on duty at SIEC throughout PAQ to monitor the health of the horses and to ensure compliance with the quarantine requirements. This highly experienced AQIS team from across Australia included the Chief Quarantine Officers from Victoria and the Northern Territory, a quarantine station manager from Western Australia, a facilities manager from South Australia, two senior staff members from the Canberra office and a Sydney-based quarantine officer. Computer equipment was installed on-site before lockdown, with a Microsoft Access 99 database specially designed by an AQIS officer to record health data to support reliable health monitoring and efficient export certification for the return of the horses.

Stables security lockdown was on 16 August 2000, and venue lockdown on 28 August. The Chief Quarantine Officer (Animals) NSW was on duty and on call for the first five days for 24 hours each day, and accommodated at the Eastern Creek Quarantine Station (ECQS) in grooms’ quarters. The two senior AQIS staff were joined by the Live Animal Imports Manager who had managed PEQ in Europe after she accompanied horses on two flights, and they were on duty from 8.30 am to 6 pm for the rest of the Olympics period. She and another staff member from Canberra also replaced the two senior staff when they had a few days off after PAQ was lifted. Some other veterinarians and staff were also accommodated at ECQS, and a shuttle service operated between there and SIEC.
During the PAQ period, entry to SIEC was limited to people with appropriate Olympics accreditation and a demonstrated need to have access to the site. There were two Quarantine Zones within SIEC. The whole site was designated a quarantine site, and within that there was a Stable Zone (Figs 20, 21, 22). The main Quarantine Zone which surrounded the Stables Zone included the dressage arenas, show jumping arenas and the training tracks. There was a 200 metre horse-free zone surrounding the Quarantine Zone. SOCOG Security (staff and volunteers) controlled access to the site. Entry was by passes issued by SOCOG, and SOCOG quarantine volunteers controlled access to the Stable Zone. Spectator Services and Security provided Quarantine Zone and stables access monitors, and SOCOG provided PAQ stewards. Entry/exit access at the northern and southern ends was restricted to vehicle and horse traffic during PAQ. A Quarantine Assistant administered check-ins, and another handled liaison with teams, with four staff at the main check point and two staff at each of the smaller check points for each morning and afternoon shift from 5 am to 9 pm. Site-specific training, as well as general quarantine and PAQ procedures training, was given to volunteers.

Figure 20
Stables at Sydney International Equestrian Centre during Olympic Games

Entry to the stables was limited to those people with a need to have access to the horses. The Stables Zone included the main stable block, the overflow stables, the piroplasmosis separation stables and the farriers compound. Restricted access to stable areas is a normal FEI requirement. The overflow stables and the piroplasmosis separation stables had separate entry/exit points.
One of the main quarantine management risks encountered at SIEC was the large number of people seeking daily access to the site. More than 600 people, including grooms, riders, trainers, other team officials, SOCOG staff and volunteers were involved each day. Extensive pre-event planning and logistics were involved in managing the large number of people. The number of people increased with the increasing amount of training from late in the first week through to the end of the competition period. Very close supervision by AQIS was necessary, including security and barrier checks, monitoring the piroplasmosis-positive horses and exercise sessions. Most accepted the need for the regulatory measures, and frequent reminders to trainers and others that only the grooms and riders could be in direct contact with the horses. Formal warnings about non-compliance were issued to the managers of two teams. A satisfactory level of compliance with the regulatory measures was attained.

Amenities and decontamination procedures included a checkpoint in the main Stables Zone near the western gate, where people arriving were issued with protective clothing, stables access passes and coloured plastic ID wristbands. On leaving the site, people returned protective clothing or discarded disposable protective clothing into receptacles, and washed their hands and arms with germidical soap. Footbaths were used to clean footwear with disinfectants. Supplies included 4,000 disposable dustcoats, 500 overalls with hoods for team veterinarians and farriers, and 750 tracksuits for grooms. Laundering service arrangements were made for grooms’ clothing. Riders were required to keep their riding
clothes and boots at SIEC. Veterinarians and farriers were also required to keep their overalls and boots on-site and change back into their own clothes and shoes when they left. Lockers were provided in the stables. The grooms used their own shoes around the stables and the site. The people who used the supplied dustcoats and their own shoes had to clean their footwear, particularly over the top, in the footbaths as they were leaving SIEC.

Laundry from the grooms’ quarters, and from the main stable quarantine entry/exit (which included riders’ clothing), was collected and processed by a commercial laundry contracted to SOCOG. This operation was under quarantine control for the PAQ period, according to the agreed management plan. The operation was inspected by AQIS, both at the SIEC end and at the laundry end, to ensure appropriate control of the process. Minor adjustments to the inventory system were recommended, to ensure better tracking of compliance and promote confidence in the system among users.

The 15 piroplasmosis-positive horses were housed in a separate section for additional quarantine and management control for their entire stay, to ensure that the disease did not become established in Australia and that other Olympics horses were not infected. Some of
the teams concerned elected to have seronegative competitors (20) also housed in this section as companion animals. All horses in the piroplasmosis stables were closely observed for the presence of ticks. They were also sprayed with Bayticol 1:1000 on four different occasions. The stable wristbands were colour coded to provide access to all stables or main stables only. Piroplasmosis wristbands were given to the team personnel connected with the affected horses and to SOCOG workers requiring access to the stables. The colours of wristbands were changed at the end of PAQ. Restrictions on entry to the piroplasmosis stables remained for the whole of the competition period.

On arrival at SIEC, the grooms were given their supplies, including security passes and wristbands, their other baggage was cleared, and they walked and fed their horses and settled them in the stables. The grooms were accommodated in demountable buildings close by. It was the first time that an Olympics equestrian venue had grooms’ quarters on-site.

In the case of an emergency it was considered that the site was large enough to provide areas to which the horses could be removed from the stables but remain in the quarantine zone. ECQS was empty and available had the need arisen, and transport between SIEC and ECQS would have been available on call from National Horse Transport.

Competing horses had to be declared by 11 September 2000, and the off-site US, New Zealand and Australian horses were transferred to SIEC. In September 23 more horses entered SIEC: four Australian horses on 9 September, 17 Australian, US and New Zealand horses (including one competing for Brazil) on 11 September, a Jordanian horse on 16 September, and finally an Australian horse competing for India on 19 September. The horses were grouped in teams as separately as possible in the stables buildings. Isolation stables were available if there had been quarantinable or other infectious diseases. They were used for temporary stabling of the late entry of the last horse. The US horses had been imported on 4 August under permanent import conditions. These horses were tested and rated equivalent in health status to the main group of imported horses, and they were all inspected for ticks and had blood samples taken soon after arrival in Australia. Their health was also monitored in a similar way.

In addition, about 50 Australian horses were prepared by vaccination, isolation and testing to an equivalent standard of health so that they could be displayed at SIEC in small groups on nine of the competition days. One of the senior AQIS officers inspected the isolation premises before the horses were transferred to SIEC. Preparation of these horses involved considerable AQIS coordination, with excellent assistance from the Rural Lands Protection Board and District Veterinarians in NSW and other states. Entry of these horses to SIEC also required AQIS approval and separation monitoring while on-site. As well as
demonstrating the skills of Australian stock horses, polocrosse ponies, reining horses and vaulting, these animals and their riders provided crowd entertainment at lunchtimes and after competition. During the competition phase, AQIS staff maintained a watch on the health of all the horses on-site, and continued the separation monitoring and treatments for the horses in the piroplasmosis barn.

Disposal of stable waste

AQIS conducted weed surveys of the Horsley Park site before and after the Olympics, and monitored the survey results as part of the measures to reduce the risk of a new weed establishing through weed seeds in manure. For the two weeks after the arrival of the last horse, disposal of stable waste was by deep burial, according to the agreed management plan. AQIS officers periodically monitored this operation during the PAQ period, and again at the completion of PAQ. The disposal of stable waste was executed highly efficiently. Waste was collected continually from around the grounds and stables, and deposited into skips at the end of each row of stables. The skips were covered and loaded onto trucks at least twice a day, and taken 6 kilometres for off-site deep burial at Eastern Creek Waste Station, where the waste was deposited in pits more than 2 metres deep which were then filled in to a depth of 2 metres. AQIS confirmed that all stable waste generated during PAQ had been deep buried.

Dispensations

During the competition phase, AQIS staff continued to monitor the health of all the horses on-site. One horse sustained a broken cannon bone when it landed awkwardly at the second jump in the individual cross-country event, and was destroyed. Its body was transported directly to the Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute for incineration. Two other horses received serious injuries during the individual cross-country events, but these were managed successfully on-site.

Nine dispensation requests were considered before and during the quarantine period. A US eventing horse was removed from PEQ in the USA for treatment to a leg injury without AQIS approval, and the subsequent request to return the horse to PEQ was given careful consideration but declined. Because of last-minute transport problems, the Uruguayan Equestrian Federation asked for a reduction in the length of time some of their horses had to spend in Europe. Following further discussions and careful consideration the request was also declined.

A Jordanian show jumper was granted a late entry to the competition by the FEI, and AQIS determined that the time spent in transit from Europe under AQIS supervision could count
Horses

towards the PAQ time at ECQS. The mare arrived from Paris at the Aachen quarantine at
8 pm on Friday 18 August 2000 by truck. All the gear and tack needed for the horse in
Australia accompanied it to Aachen. The horse was under AQIS supervision for the entire
period she was in transit, from PEQ in Aachen to her arrival in Australia. This time in transit
counted as part of this horse's PAQ period.

The horse underwent her 14-day quarantine period at the Aachen showground. A separate
quarantine area was set up on the showground for this horse. It was more than 100 metres
from where the other 60 horses were quarantined. Additional fences were constructed to
meet the double fencing requirements. The AQIS representative inspected the second
quarantine on 18 August 2000, and all the fences were in place, the stable block had been
thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, and a locked gate restricted access to the site. There
were no horses within 100 metres of the mare. The mare was not allowed out of the
double-fenced area to access the training facilities on the site until all the horses from the
first quarantine had left Aachen for their journey to Sydney. The site is surrounded by large
parking lots for the showground, busy roads and the town itself. There are no stables,
paddocks or opportunities for casual contact with horses through the perimeter fencing of
the showground, because of its central location in the town.

Staff employed by Peden Bloodstock stayed on the site for the entire quarantine period and
kept records of all visitors to the site. A separate locked entry gate was provided for the
second quarantine for the Jordanian horse. The personnel accompanying the Jordanian
horse only had access to the second quarantine site. The German veterinary authority and
Paden's representatives had access to both the first and second quarantines operating at
the showground. No other horses were admitted to any part of the Aachen showground
while this horse was in quarantine. The truck used to transport the horse to Frankfurt was
spotlessly clean and had been treated with a disinfectant. It left at about 11 am and arrived
in Frankfurt just before 2 pm, after taking a direct route along major highways. Major
highways also surround the air cargo terminal at Frankfurt. The area where the truck was
parked was more than 100 metres from the passing highway, and there were no other
horse trucks in the parking lot. The mare stayed on the truck while the Instone stall was
being set up. There were no other horses at the airport terminal. The horse was loaded into
the stall at 4 pm, and then onto the plane at 7 pm. The flight left at 9.30 pm.

The second PEQ was managed in exactly the same way as the first PEQ. The AQIS
representative verified the structural requirements of the second PEQ, and was present for
the transit of this mare from PEQ to arrival in ECQS. There was no contact with any other
horse after the mare entered PEQ on 18 August 2000. Once she had completed 14 days of
quarantine under direct AQIS supervision, the quarantine period for the Jordanian horse at
ECQS ended on 16 September, and she was released from ECQS to quarantine surveillance at SIEC.

During this PAQ period, a US dressage horse with severe colic was transferred with AQIS approval by horse ambulance from SIEC to ECQS for possible surgical intervention. After less than 12 hours it was clear surgery was not necessary, and AQIS approved the horse’s return to SIEC for ongoing medical management. There was some industry criticism of this AQIS decision, but effective separation between the US and Jordanian horses had been maintained. The US horse was returned to SIEC more than a week before the Jordanian horse was due to be transferred to SIEC, and there had been no sign of ill health in the Jordanian horse during the 18 days it had already spent in isolation. In due course, both horses were able to compete.

A significant number of horses had competed in trials in Aschelswang (a district in which Borna disease occurred during the preceding two years) in Germany in late June 2000, and AQIS agreed that these horses would be eligible for entry into Australia if selected for the Olympics. Due to an administrative error in Germany, an Australian dressage horse was allowed to reside in a Borna-affected district for several days. Dispensation was granted to allow this horse to enter Australia on 30 August on a KLM combination charter flight.

A request from the Australian and New Zealand federations to allow early removal from SIEC of some of their horses was declined. The owners of three Australian horses imported under temporary import conditions sought conversion to permanent import status, and these requests were granted, subject to further testing in the case of one of them. As this latter horse had resided in the separation stables, it was released into farm quarantine pending the results of further piroplasmosis tests.

A request from the Canadian team to transfer one of its horses that had sustained a fractured pedal bone to a private veterinary practice for attention was declined, on the grounds that the facilities available at this practice were no better than those available at ECQS. Also the ensuing alteration in health status would prevent the horse returning on its scheduled charter flight. After further consideration, an alternative treatment plan was instituted, which did not involve surgery.

Re-export certification (Figs 23, 24, 25)

The AQIS officer who had accompanied the first inbound flight from Frankfurt afterwards returned to Canberra and assessed, ascertained and negotiated with diplomatic contacts the conditions for certifying re-export. During the first week of October 2000 he relayed
changes of plans and specific details to the Chief Quarantine Officer (Animals) NSW who was at SIEC at the same time, preparing the documentation for the horses’ departures.

Figure 23
Unloading Olympics horses from road transport for re-export at Sydney airport

The AQIS team ensured that the visiting horses would be able to comply with returning countries’ requirements, and that export certification conditions were not compromised. After the completion of the competition, five Australian horses were released from quarantine and left the site. AQIS began preparing arrangements for re-export in late September 2000, and the process started on 2 October, with some additional certification. Thirty-nine horses were returned to Frankfurt, and one Australian horse was released. On 3 October 48 horses were returned to Frankfurt, others to Auckland, and four Australian horses released. Two flights transported 43 horses to Amsterdam and to the USA on 4 October, and two Australian horses were released. On 5 October 51 horses were returned to the UK, 18 to the USA, and an Australian horse released. On 6 October 44 horses were returned to Frankfurt on a flight that had been delayed the night before, and decontamination of SIEC started.
Each day, while one of the senior AQIS staff prepared the detailed health certification required for export of each planeload of horses and oversaw the loading of the last flight, the other senior staff member oversaw the loading of the horses at Sydney Airport for all the other flights. Dual health certification for export was needed for the horses returning to Mexico, Uruguay, Chile, Hungary and Switzerland via the EU. This entailed a great amount of additional contact through diplomatic channels, veterinary authorities in those countries and the EFC to obtain information about the extra details that had to be included. Another AQIS officer assisted with producing the certification, and it was all completed in time for each departure.

After initial slow progress by SOCOG, SIEC was cleaned and disinfected in preparation for the arrival of Australian horses used for the Paralympics equestrian competition. It was audited by AQIS. A spray unit from ECQS was used when the contractor’s equipment proved to be inadequate. The facilities at Horsley Park were cleaned, disinfected and decommissioned under the service agreement with SOCOG under AQIS supervision.
Conclusions

Clean, well-designed and purpose-built stables and high-standard facilities set in spacious surroundings, free of flies and with predominantly fine weather, were critical contributing factors to the success of the Olympics equestrian programme. The main advances in disease testing, risk analysis and management that allowed the safe importing of horses and the successful staging of the equestrian events included a combination of thorough preparation for early detection, careful screening, dealing with mature horses in peak condition, and having back-up disease investigation facilities, flu virus detection kits, and extended PAQ which was three weeks from the first to the last arrival. The efficacy of equine influenza vaccination in preventing the spread of the disease has also been a significant development. The location of the Eastern Creek contingency site 6 kilometres away was another asset. The largest single group of horses to ever undertake quarantine in Australia was successfully imported and returned. The sustained efforts of all the people involved in the planning and delivery achieved this key part of the Olympics.

Many staff members in a number of units in the Canberra office made major contributions to the success of these complex operations. They were available to provide a variety of support, underpinning arrangements that were being made, such as a great amount of additional work relating to stockfeed. They quickly prepared and sent information and documentation, and replaced or relieved other staff in order to maintain regular services.
Interstate staff took on the extra work that was diverted from Sydney. Very high levels of cooperation and response were exhibited.

Many of the international equestrian representatives in Sydney for the Olympic Games were very impressed with the purpose-built facilities. The teams also said that the quarantine conditions were workable, and that they were able to continue with training and other activities within the necessary limitations, as there was also a high level of AQIS support. The spacious areas that were available to use with the horses completely suited their needs. Many considered the arrival procedures and comprehensive on-site facilities improved upon the previous Olympics. Some changes to the training of volunteers and to the rotating roster system would have increased the effectiveness of the volunteers’ contributions to SIEC. Major developments included the piroplasmosis protocol that was established, and a new health records database system developed for the Olympics.

The expertise involved in the successful completion of horse facilities for the Sydney Olympic Games, in supplying high level veterinary care and in transporting, quarantining and returning the horses, demonstrated an outstanding capability to manage major, complex events without compromising quarantine integrity. Another key factor in this success was the highly effective and extensive, early and frequent communication between AQIS and all parties involved. Since 2000, AQIS representatives have presented information about the Olympics to various veterinary groups, including participating in a panel session with the Australian team veterinarian at Equitana in Melbourne in 2001. The SOCOG Competition Manager presented a report on the Sydney Olympics to the FEI General Assembly in 2001.

The prevention of any infection or cross-infection before arrival, as well as during the quarantine period and the Olympics, was a key achievement. The combination of shipping agents with extensive experience of conditions in Europe, and Australian counterparts with similar experience in transporting horses from and to Australia, played another key role in this success. The horses were brought to and returned from Australia safely. The extensive preparations enabled this to be achieved, and also met Australia’s requirements and those of all of the other countries involved. The increased level of consultation before and during the Olympics has continued both internationally and nationally. The success achieved in staging the Olympic Games confirmed the strength of the quarantine measures applied.
Emergency management

Key points

- Emergency management procedures should be documented with roles and responsibilities clearly defined and test exercises carried out in advance.
- Extensive monitoring was undertaken of any changes in public health through the hospital system and using selected doctors.
- Training and sensitising were seen as a priority regarding the threat from bioterrorism.
- Close contact was maintained with intelligence and security agencies to complement response arrangements and to prioritise work activities.

Major international events, such as the Olympics and Paralympics, pose significant logistical problems and increased public and animal health risks. This is because of the increased traffic of people and goods, a lack of knowledge on the part of many travellers of national quarantine requirements, and visitors staying to tour countries in which major events are held.

Preparing for emergency situations is therefore critical. The following outlines emergency management preparedness approaches for animal and public health risks, and touches on the issues of bio/agriterrorism and hoax situations.

Australia has a biosecurity capability that enables biosecurity risks to be identified, assessed and managed consistently and effectively. This ensures that the biosecurity systems are able to protect Australia’s unique biodiversity.

Quarantine at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre (SIEC)

Detailed arrangements for quarantine at SIEC are discussed on pages 24 to 28, and 56 to 76. Given the importance of equine animal health and the value of horses, the NSW Agriculture, State Equine Veterinary Officer was seconded to SOCOG to act as Quarantine Manager. A Quarantine Advisory Committee met regularly to consider management of PAQ at SIEC.
Emergency management

Had a major problem arisen, AUSVETPLAN arrangements (Australia’s national veterinary emergency management plan) would immediately have come into play. NSW Agriculture emergency plans, which form part of the NSW State Disaster Plan, would have operated. The resources of the local, district and state emergency mechanisms would have been immediately activated. Special arrangements for the Olympics reinforced these standing arrangements. Contingencies for control centre diagnostic capabilities and technical response personnel were put in place. Biosecurity arrangements were implemented at critical control points.

Public health

Arrangements for the management of public health emergencies mostly paralleled animal health planning. Emergency Management Australia (EMA), a Commonwealth body based in the Department of Defence, managed national coordination.

Preparations to handle specimens were made some time before the Olympics. This involved links between Australia’s principal diagnostic network, the Public Health Laboratory Network (PHLN), the state and Commonwealth emergency services, the Communicable Disease Network of Australia and New Zealand (CDNANZ) and the defence services.

The PHLN consists of the principal medical diagnostic laboratories in all states and territories in Australia. The Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) is a member of this network because of its role in diagnosing zoonoses and because of its biocontainment facilities to physical containment level 4 (PC4). During 1999, the PHLN carried out a survey of its member laboratories to determine the diagnostic capabilities for potential risk agents. From this the PHLN developed a comprehensive database of capabilities and contacts for the laboratories.

The PHLN linked into the emergency services through their state or territory emergency service coordinator, usually from the fire services, or through Emergency Management Australia. The key PHLN contacts for the laboratories were listed in the expert contact list maintained by EMA, and this process was coordinated by a limited number of key contacts in the PHLN. The emergency services were instructed to transport any specimens to the nearest PHLN laboratory, which would then alert the PHLN contacts and either proceed with the analysis of the specimen or transport it safely to the nearest PHLN laboratory that had the best capability for the suspect agent.

It was critical during the planning phase to ensure that the emergency services and local response teams were aware of how to handle biological specimens and the PHLN. A
PowerPoint lecture was developed concerning the safe handling of biological materials, how infections are transmitted and some details of the PHLN. Most of the groups were well practiced in addressing incidents related to chemicals and had a high level of expertise. They were reasonably well versed in radiochemical handling. However, many had little knowledge of micro-organisms and that it might be best to let any droplets settle before entering an area in order to decontaminate it. There was significant fear of micro-organisms. The production of a specialist manual regarding responses to a chemical biological or radiochemical (CBR) incident was coordinated by the Commonwealth Department of Health and EMA.

Specialist emergency services groups were trained nationally by EMA, and the PHLN provided the module related to biological material. There was also state specialist training of emergency response groups, including fire, ambulance, police and emergency team physicians.

In the weeks immediately before the Olympics and until after the Paralympics, the PHLN was on alert for any submissions that might indicate a change in normal status of infectious diseases. In addition, CDNANZ, which is responsible for monitoring for communicable diseases, held regular teleconferences.

At the local level, in Sydney, a specialist state and federal group worked with the local PHLN laboratories to monitor for any CBR incidents. The defence forces established a specialist facility near the Olympics venue and also utilised the specialist services of Westmead Hospital. In addition, the defence group carried out environmental monitoring aimed at the detection of airborne release of agents, such as anthrax. It had previously carried out monitoring in order to establish background environmental counts.

During the period there were only a small number of minor incidents. The NSW Department of Health undertook a very extensive monitoring of any changes in the population health status through the hospital system and using sentinel general practitioners. Such intense monitoring was only practical for a short period because of the resources required, but it did assure authorities that there were no significant events to be concerned about.

Bioterrorism

Agricultural and public health agencies worked very closely on zoonotic (animal to human) diseases and food safety issues and, as preparation for the Sydney Olympics, developed a heightened preparedness for bioterrorist incidents.
The use of bio-agents poses unique problems for crisis managers, in addition to the political, policy and operational issues that must be dealt with as crisis management comes into play. This also involves the need to provide emergency relief to those affected by the consequences of an event.

In preparation for the Olympics education, training and sensitising were seen as a priority. This was because response arrangements are geared to cover any disease outbreak, not only agriterrorist threats. In addition, and in the context of threat assessments, close contact was maintained with intelligence and security agencies. This preparation complemented the response arrangements and helped with prioritising work activities.
Paralympic Games

Key points

- The same biosecurity principles and practices for staging the Olympics were applied to the Paralympics.
- Additional measures had to be considered to facilitate the particular circumstances of athletes and their teams.

A record number of 122 countries — or, with independent athletes from East Timor, 123 delegations — participated in the Sydney Paralympics. The Paralympic Village was home to 6,943 people, including 3,824 athletes and 3,119 team and technical officials. In 1996, 103 countries competed in Atlanta and, in 1992, 83 in Barcelona. There were about 2,300 media representatives on-site, and the Paralympics set a new precedent through an Internet webcast. Users in over 100 countries used this service to watch events. AQIS liaised with the Sydney Paralympics Organising Committee (SPOC) from the beginning of the lead-up period for the Paralympics, and also monitored relevant airport arrivals.

The first large teams arrived on 27 September 2000. In the early stages of the Paralympics visitor arrivals, when SPOC had not started operating at Sydney Airport, the border agencies and SACL worked with continuing commitment, and demonstrated how highly effectively they worked together. By 8 October SPOC established that no Paralympics athletes or officials had declared an intention to bring a guide or assist dog to Sydney. Subsequently none of these dogs arrived. Efforts by AQIS and SPOC in disseminating relevant import regulations appeared to deter disabled athletes from bringing their dogs with them. The daily briefings were reduced to once a day during the Paralympic Games period. SPOC airport operations started on 11 October, and AQIS screening operations at the athletes’ village entry resumed until 16 October. AQIS worked in close liaison with Customs and NSW Police to facilitate the entry of athletes and officials.

AQIS, together with Customs, processed and cleared athletes and officials in the baggage carousel areas, to allow them to stay in a group and to reduce congestion in the red and green channel sectors. Mobile trolleys with lockable wheels were used as temporary inspection benches. As much baggage and equipment as possible was cleared to allow consolidation for transfer by team representatives in groups. The Sydney detector dog teams managed the arrivals for the Paralympic Games without additional teams assigned. There was significant additional baggage, as there are fewer sponsors for Paralympics.
freight than for Olympics freight. Wheelchairs were checked to ensure the wheels were free of soil contamination. There was a high level of compliance among the arriving Paralympics teams, but some seizures of fruit were made. AQIS, Customs, SACL and SPOC staff coordinated their services throughout the peak arrival days to manage the challenging combination of the volume of equipment and the extended periods the teams spent within the terminal before clearance formalities were completed. The high level of compliance impressed operation staff at Sydney Airport. Many teams were comprehensively examined and cleared without any seizures.

AQIS successfully carried out tarmac clearance of four pallets of equipment travelling with the US team, as well as other tarmac clearances. The equestrian teams used domestic horses for dressage events. However, they brought their own equipment and tack with them. AQIS applied the usual import procedures to prevent the risk of introducing disease. Some items required irradiation and other treatment on arrival but were returned in time for competition. For example, the French equestrian team arrived with a significant amount of used saddlery and equipment, and AQIS officers examined and disinfected these with minimal delay to the team’s schedule. AQIS staff endeavoured to make the arrival process as smooth as possible, while at the same time maintaining quarantine integrity. SACL conducted a comprehensive briefing session on the Paralympics departure plans a week before the events ended.

There were 40 yachts in two classes of sailing, and the yachts were ready before the Paralympics started. They had arrived and were cleared at the same time as the yachts for the Olympics. AQIS had previously received and assessed applications from some Paralympic teams for import permits for some food products and supplements.
After the Sydney Olympics

Key points

- The highest biosecurity levels were achieved during the Sydney Olympics because of comprehensive risk management practices
- Key factors that contributed to the success of biosecurity arrangements were planning, staffing and an improved capability to identify issues and for reporting across regions
- Lessons included the need to have prior contact with those providing hospitality to determine the nature and quantity of imported foods and to pursue advanced offshore clearance of goods to a greater extent

AQIS thoroughly performed its functions at a very high level through a combination of comprehensive planning and careful execution of those plans. The success of AQIS operations for the Sydney Olympic Games revolved around having the appropriate level of trained and experienced staff in the right place at the right time. Early, long-term, comprehensive and inclusive planning also contributed greatly to the success. The excellent response by AQIS staff to the additional work and expectations, the commitment given by a large number of staff during delivery of AQIS operations, and the support of interstate staff made this significant achievement possible. AQIS has benefited substantially from the quality of the staff involved who, working under high pressure, achieved all objectives.

The public profile of AQIS and its role was significantly raised, internationally, nationally and locally. This has resulted in an increased level of recognition and awareness of quarantine activities. In some cases AQIS moved control points into areas where it does not usually have a presence, such as tarmac clearance for the larger teams. Procedures like this are only ever adopted in special or extreme circumstances. The decision to enforce normal import permit requirements in relation to NOC hospitality houses avoided using additional resources to establish quarantine zones across Sydney. Cooperation between agencies is vital for operations of this magnitude, including during planning phases, and the positive relationship between Customs, AQIS and SACL was further strengthened.

No quarantine concessions were made in terms of the level of protection. AQIS and AFFA made a great effort to provide safety and flexibility through comprehensive risk management processes. The Olympics operations verified AQIS’s coordination and
After the Sydney Olympics

logistics expertise. In particular, this capability was demonstrated by the management of high-volume airport arrivals, the equestrian enterprise, and the reporting mechanisms that were developed and are continuing to be replicated for other major events. The value of the AQIS Olympics Control Centre was recognised early, and it became a model for major events which was used twice in 2001 and in crisis planning. AQIS has substantially increased its resources and operations in response to international developments since 2000. It is making greater use of permanent part-time staff than before 2000, to meet fluctuating service demands, as in its increased quarantine intervention initiatives.

The number of passengers who arrived at Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne airports in August-September 2000 was 8.2 percent higher than in August-September 1999. There were 745,968 passengers through Sydney Airport, 107,000 additional to 1999. Correspondingly there were 25,771 seizures, an increase of 19.5 percent, and 31,185 red/green channel intuitive examinations, an increase of 71.7 percent. The success of this primary screening process can be measured by the subsequent screening of 10,000 people on entry to the Olympic Village, which resulted in 13 items (0.1 percent) of quarantine concern being detected and seized. There was scientific verification of the pest and disease risk of many confiscated products. Overall, very low leakage of prohibited items occurred during the Olympics.

AQIS had good access to information and support from Customs, Sydney ports and waterways authorities and shipping companies. The level of liaison and cooperation between AQIS and Customs at co-locations such as wharf surveillance was also strengthened during the Olympics. The standard of quarantine surveillance and waste management maintained during the Olympics will add value to the effectiveness of other harbour events and ports operations.

The combination of part-time and full-time AQIS staff working longer hours, training and deployment of temporary staff, and the temporary interstate transfer of highly experienced AQIS staff provided the best balance and cost-effectiveness available to meet the additional demand associated with the Olympics. Key factors were planning, staffing and improved capability to identify issues and to report across regions. No major incidents occurred with either Olympic participants or normal business activities.

It was difficult establishing advance contact with the individual parties concerned with hospitality houses to ascertain the nature of and quantity of imported foods. Supervision was needed to ensure that these NOC host facilities adhered to quarantine provisions. This is an issue that would need further attention for other Olympics, or for Australia with similar large-scale hospitality food events.
AQIS could have pursued advance offshore clearance of goods to a greater extent than it did. When the supplier of tents and marquees to SOCOG began to ship substandard product to Sydney, with soil and grain contamination and live beehives in steel piping, AQIS could have insisted on performing equipment checks overseas. AQIS implemented a significant planning and advance information effort to reduce the number of problems associated with inadequate documentation for goods that actually arrived in Australia. The prompt clearance of Olympics-related freight posed fewer problems than clearance of passengers. AQIS also had to plan ahead to meet the significant increases in quarantine clearance and surveillance of vessels.

In addition to the Olympics commitment, AQIS’s service delivery obligations to its usual range of clients prevailed. Negotiation with relevant industry bodies resulted in AQIS adopting flexible operating hours, particularly in Sydney, to accommodate changes in standard cargo and passenger movements due to disruptions caused by the Olympics. Industry appreciated the efforts by AQIS to ensure that clients were not disadvantaged as a result of the Olympics. Through this, AQIS instituted a model for service delivery, with flexible shift arrangements extending service beyond the usual span of operating hours.

Additional staff were allocated to bolster existing resources at expected pressure points such as international airports, seaports and the Sydney International Equestrian Centre (SIEC). They included temporary part-time officers who were recruited and undertook training, others who converted from permanent part-time to full-time, those transferred from interstate, redeployed local experienced staff and former officers who were re-employed. Flexibility in staffing, especially through providing appropriate training and through the use of part-time staff, was a critical factor in the success of AQIS’s operations.

The major elements of the horse quarantine arrangements included the design of SIEC so that it could operate as a gazetted animal quarantine station for the mandatory two weeks post-entry quarantine period for all Olympics horses, immediately before the equestrian competition events started. AQIS made special arrangements for horse feed entering Australia, and undertook a formal import risk assessment for the short-term entry to Australia of horses with piroplasmosis.

AQIS has prepared for other events, such as the World Masters Games in Melbourne in October 2002, with over 25,000 participants from more than 70 countries. The 1994 World Masters Games were held in Brisbane. It prepared information for team members participating in the 2002 International Gay Games held in Sydney in November 2002. In association with Sydney Airport Corporation, it planned for 15,000 athletes and 45,000 spectators who travelled to Australia. Early estimates for the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne include over 14,000 participants from 72 countries and over...
After the Sydney Olympics

15,000 international visitors. Applications and specific import permits will need to be arranged before arrival in Australia, for food and other items of cultural significance that may be imported as part of the associated multicultural festival, or for display or consumption at international hospitality venues. AQIS regularly handles, for other large-scale events like the Adelaide Grand Prix, significant numbers of visitors to Australia and cargo such as sporting equipment and yachts.

Overall there has been significantly increased awareness of Australia’s quarantine arrangements at home and internationally. Quarantine issues were reported in the international and national media, including some of the important and unusual seizures by quarantine officers at Sydney Airport. Many news and information items about the Sydney Olympics remain accessible via the Internet, including some regarding quarantine arrangements. The Olympics period renewed and created networks between airport agencies that can continue to be built upon as an alliance in relation to media, issues management and information sharing.

From 1997, US quarantine made significant changes to its detector dogs system. Representatives from Australia, the USA, Canada, Hawaii and New Zealand quarantine detector dog services met in New Zealand in February 2001 and planned another meeting for 2002. There has been extensive recognition of the high standard of performance by AQIS detector dog teams in 2000, enhancing AQIS’s international reputation, and there was a high level of acceptance by visitors. Increases in 2001-2002 in the number of senior handlers, active detector dog teams, and some changes in the style of their training, relate to different issues including the increased quarantine intervention initiative and heightened international mail security. AQIS shares its expertise with numerous international delegations that visit Australia to obtain detailed information about selecting detector dogs, their training and operations.
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Contributors

Elaine Bagnell
John Cahill
Andy Carroll
Narelle Clegg
Roger Clement
Albert Cobb
Carson Creagh
Tony Della-Porta
Kevin Doyle
David Finlayson
Helen Gannon
Craig Hall
Jack Haslam
Rick Hawe
John Hayhoe
Michael Hibbert

Col Hunter
Dick Jane
Leonie Kearney
Erik Leilkajis
Gabrielle McNeill
Peter Maple
Caroline Martin
Robyn Martin
Gardner Murray
Jane Parlett
Tim Roseby
Angela Sharpe
Ron Southgate
Bob Stirling
Graham Turner
Phil Widders

Sydney Olympic Games and Paralympics:
Australia's biosecurity measures
Editors

Margaret Ruhfus
Howard Conkey
Keith Binnington
Leanne Shea Langdown
Andrew Cupit
Appendices

Australian Government Fact Sheet

Information for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games

Entry arrangements for Olympic and Paralympic Family Members

Olympic and Paralympic Family Members (OPFMs) coming to Australia at the time of the Sydney 2000 Games will enter Australia under unique arrangements set up specially for them by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA).

The OPFMs are people eligible to take part in, or perform an official function, at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. They include athletes, team and sport officials, Olympic and Paralympic officials, organisations holding the broadcasting rights, accredited media representatives and major Olympic and Paralympic sponsors.

It is expected 42,000 Olympic Family Members from 200 countries and 7000 Paralympic Family Members from 125 countries will take part in the Sydney 2000 Games.

Everyone who is not an Australian citizen needs a visa to enter Australia. But, under the special Sydney 2000 Games arrangements, the OPFMs will not need to lodge an application for a visa. They will be granted a special Olympic Travel Authority, valid from one month before the opening ceremony until one month after the closing ceremony of either the Olympic or Paralympic Games. This will be possible because the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) will provide DIMA with information about OPFMs when they apply to SOCOG for Games accreditation.
Accreditation

To be able to participate in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, all the OPFMs must go through the process of accreditation to identify and register those eligible to compete or otherwise take part in the Games.

SOCOG is responsible for conducting the Olympic and Paralympic accreditation process, the latter on behalf of the Sydney Paralympic Organising Committee (SPOC). There will be strict limits on the number of accreditations issued.

SOCOG will invite applications for accreditation from ‘Responsible Organisations’ – organisations which have the duty and responsibility to register participants in the Games. They include the International Olympic Committee, International Paralympic Committee, National Olympic Committees, National Paralympic Committees, International Sports Federations, other Olympic and Paralympic Games Organising Committees, rights-holding broadcasters and major Olympic and Paralympic sponsors.

DIMA’s role

To ensure smooth processing of Olympic Travel Authorities, an Olympics computer link is being established between DIMA and SOCOG. When SOCOG receives applications for Games accreditation, they will use the link to provide DIMA with details of each OPFM so that DIMA can check that he or she meets Australian entry requirements. DIMA will then grant the family member an Olympic Travel Authority (electronically) and notify SOCOG through the computer link. SOCOG will then proceed with the accreditation process.

Travelling to Australia

When checking-in for travel to Australia the OPFMs will present their valid passports to the airlines for checking against DIMA’s global computer system that they have been granted approval to enter Australia. A DIMA team will be situated at Sydney Kingsford Smith International Airport and DIMA’s Entry Operations Centre in Canberra to ensure smooth entry for the OPFMs.

Frequently asked questions

I am a member of my country’s Olympic team and will be arriving in Australia two weeks before the start of the Games. Will I need to apply for a visa?
No. As long as you have been approved for Games accreditation by SOCOG, you will not need to apply for a visa. Your Olympic Travel Authority will allow you to enter Australia on or after 15 August 2000.

I am a member of my country’s Olympic team. How will I know if I have been granted an Olympic Travel Authority?

You should ask your sponsoring or nominating Responsible Organisation. They should receive advice from SOCOG about your accreditation and entry status.

I am a member of my country’s Olympic team and intend to come to Australia in July 2000 to train and acclimatise. Will I need to apply for a visa?

Yes. If you intend to arrive in Australia earlier than a month before the start of the Games, your Olympic Travel Authority will not yet be in effect, and you will need to obtain a visa. Please contact your nearest Australian Embassy, High Commission, Consulate, airline or travel agent for further information and advice.

I am an athlete who will represent my country at the Sydney 2000 Games. Can my family and friends travel with me to Australia on an Olympic Travel Authority?

No. The Olympic Travel Authority will only be available to accredited OPFMs. If your family and friends wish to accompany you to Australia, they must obtain an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) or a visitor visa. For further information please contact your travel agent, airline or nearest Australian Embassy, High Commission or Consulate.

I am an official who will be attending the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Will my Olympic Travel Authority cover me for both Games?

If you are attending the Olympic and Paralympic Games as an accredited OPFM, you will be issued with two Olympic Travel Authorities – one for the Olympics and one for the Paralympics. These will overlap and result in you being able to remain in Australia for the period extending from one month before the Olympic Games to one month after the Paralympic Games.

Olympic Travel Authority validity periods

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<td>Paralympic Family Members</td>
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Information on Australian immigration matters is available at www.immi.gov.au or through DIMA’s fax on demand facility by telephoning 1902 242 5088.
Australian Government Fact Sheet

Information for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games

Importing food into Australia

All food imports into Australia are strictly controlled. Any person or organisation bringing food into Australia, either as part of their personal baggage, by mail or as sea or air cargo are subject to Australia’s quarantine and food standards legislation. The legislation is designed to protect the health of people, plants and animals in Australia and its unique environment.

Spending a few minutes reading this sheet will help you to understand how best you can meet Australia’s requirements while avoiding the administrative problems that can lead to delays, confiscation, inspection fees and unnecessary frustration. It is important to understand there are two major requirements to be met. The first concerns quarantine – does the import of the food pose a risk to Australia’s animal or plant population? The second is to do with food safety – does the food meet Australia’s Food Standards (including safety, composition and labelling)?

What is food?

Food means anything you eat or drink except for therapeutics. Therapeutics include drugs, medicines and dietary supplements which are dealt with in another fact sheet in this series.

Australia’s quarantine requirements for food imports

AQIS is responsible for ensuring Australia’s freedom from exotic pests and diseases. Products produced from animal or plant material have the potential to carry a variety of disease agents, including viruses, bacteria and insect pests. For this reason, AQIS assesses the risk of the introduction of pests and diseases through food products before approval is given to allow importation of food products into Australia.
Some food products, such as cheese and dairy products, meat products and fresh fruit and vegetables require AQIS import permits before they may be imported. Other products, for example, many canned goods, cooked biscuits, cakes and chocolate are considered very low risk, and do not require import permits from AQIS.

Australia’s food safety requirements

If you bring food in as accompanied baggage and it is for personal consumption within the weight/volume limits set out in the next section below, or as trade samples, you do not have to comply with Australian food standards. But quarantine rules will still apply. All other food imports (whether in accompanied baggage or consigned by air or sea freight) are regarded as being for commercial purposes and they must meet food standards prescribed in the Australian Food Standards Code (Food Standards Code, Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA), published by the Commonwealth of Australia. A copy can be obtained from the ANZFA website at www.anzfa.gov.au). Even where food is not for sale in Australia, it will be treated as though it is for commercial use if it fails to meet the personal use or trade sample limits outlined below.

Australian food standards include rules on labelling, composition, additives and contamination for all types of food. ‘Commercial’ foods may be inspected and/or tested on arrival into Australia at the importer’s expense. Products that do not meet the standard will not be permitted entry to Australia.

Food for personal consumption, trade samples

Food for personal consumption is defined as food brought into the country as accompanied baggage (e.g. when you arrive at an airport) within the following limits:

- Less than 10 kg or 10 litres except for concentrates where not more than two litres of liquid concentrate is allowed, or not more than 2kg of moisture-reduced concentrate is allowed (the exception being spices where a maximum of 1kg is permitted).
- A maximum of 20 kg or 20 litres of food may be brought in as a commercial sample provided it will not be consumed in Australia.

Food for ‘commercial’ use

All imported foods other than those brought in for personal consumption or as trade samples as outlined above are taken to be a ‘commercial’ consignment whatever the intended end use. Commercial food consignments must comply with Australian Food
Standards (labelling, composition, permitted additives, contaminants etc). In addition to quarantine inspection, they may also be subject to inspection by AQIS for compliance with Australian Food Standards. If inspection against food standards is required, this means that the labels will be checked and the food may also be sent for analysis at the importer’s expense.

What about food imported for Olympic hospitality houses?

Food imported for Olympic hospitality sites will not be treated differently to any other imported food and will be subject to Australian regulations as outlined above. Another sheet in this series deals specifically with Olympic hospitality sites.

Apply now

To bring food into Australia we recommend that by April 2000 you contact the AQIS officer whose details are shown below to get advice on what you want to bring and how to get appropriate certification if it is required. Remember all air travellers carrying food with them to Australia, must declare it on their passenger declaration form on their arrival in Australia. Ensure that you have correctly described the foods contained in any air or sea freight consignment you send to Australia.

For further information, contact:
Craig Hall: +61 2 9297 2942 (telephone) +61 2 93647340 (fax)
Postal Address:
Craig Hall
AQIS Games Liaison Officer
P.O. Box 657 Mascot, NSW 1460, Australia
E-mail: craig.hall@aqis.gov.au
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Importing human medicinal products into Australia

Medicinal products brought into Australia are subject to import controls. The Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) and the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) have developed a process to assist National Olympic Committee (NOC) and National Paralympic Committee (NPC) delegations to the Sydney 2000 Games with Customs clearance procedures. The process described below should ensure that teams hold appropriate documentation on arrival in Australia and that prohibited substances are not inadvertently carried into the country.

Import controls over human medicinal products

An import permit may be required for products containing substances such as narcotics, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, tranquillisers, amphetamines, hallucinogens, growth hormones, gonadotrophins, erythropoietin (EPO) and androgenic or anabolic steroids.

In addition, medicines with components of human or animal origin, and traditional medicines which contain, or represent to contain, protected wildlife species, may also have special import requirements or restrictions. Visitors should contact AQIS for further advice in regard to potential quarantine issues (refer to information from AQIS in this series).

Some dietary supplements, complementary medicines, alternative medicines, traditional medicines and herbal preparations may contain substances that are prohibited imports into Australia. An import permit for these products may be required, prior to arrival in Australia.

Sporting teams and visitors may bring with them limited quantities of medicines, subject to certain conditions (see below).
Sporting teams

Sporting teams taking part in the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games may bring with them medicinal products and/or medical devices required for the treatment of medical conditions or injuries in team members, if the following conditions are met:

- an official member of the visiting sporting team must be responsible for the control and custody of the medicinal products at all times while the sporting team is in Australia, and;
- carry a list in English of the quantity and type of the medicinal products brought into Australia, including the name(s) and strength(s) of the active ingredient(s) in each product, and;
- maintain a record of the use of the medicinal products while the sporting team is in Australia, and;
- produce the list or record for inspection at the request of a customs officer or other authorised officer.

Medicinal products imported by a sporting team:

- must be kept in their original packaging and clearly labelled, until used;
- must only be used in the treatment of members of that team;
- must not be supplied (sold or given) to anyone who is not a member of that team;
- any unused medicinal products must be destroyed or taken out of Australia on departure and;
- visiting sporting teams will require permits to import medicinal products that contain prohibited substances (see process described below).

SOCOG will ask NOCs and NPCs to provide a full list, in English, of all medicines, herbal preparations and traditional medicines they intend to bring into Australia. The lists should contain sufficient information to identify the contents of each product and should include the generic, scientific or botanical names of all active ingredients in each product.

The lists of medicinal products submitted via these forms will be forwarded to the TGA. The TGA will then provide SOCOG with advice about details of substances that require a permit and/or licence and/or supporting documentation from a doctor before they can be imported. Where appropriate, the TGA will issue import permits and/or import licences.
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Once SOCOG has received this information, it will be forwarded to the NOCs and NPCs. This process is designed to make sure appropriate documentation is available on arrival, to facilitate customs clearance procedures of the sporting teams and ensure prohibited substances are not inadvertently carried into Australia. NOCs and NPCs must be aware that, on arrival in Australia, Customs may wish to validate stocks of supplies against the documentation and conduct further checks as required.

Other visitors

As a general rule, visitors may bring in medicines for personal use. The medicines should not be supplied to any other person. The maximum quantity allowable is a three months’ supply. Medicines should be kept in the containers in which they were dispensed or supplied. Visitors needing to bring prohibited substances with them should check with the TGA about import permit requirements and also bring a letter from their prescribing doctor or practitioner. Visitors must not send medicines in advance through the post or as unaccompanied goods. If an individual sporting team member wishes to bring a medicine into Australia for their own personal use, these general rules apply.

For further information about the conditions applying to importation of medicinal products into Australia, contact the Therapeutic Goods Administration:
Telephone: +61 2 6232 8536; Fax: +61 2 6232 8605

For further information about the pre-clearance procedure for importation of medicinal products by NOCs and NPCs, contact SOCOG:
Telephone: +61 2 9297 2000; Fax: +61 2 9297 2019
Importing sports foods and dietary supplements into Australia

Sports foods

In Australia, products such as sports bars, sports drinks, and food supplements, including many supplements in the form of powders, are regulated as foods. Products in capsule or tablet form are generally regulated as therapeutic goods, which are regulated by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (see ‘Dietary Supplements’ below for contact details).

Food for personal consumption

Food for personal consumption may be brought into the country as accompanied baggage without having to comply with Australian food standards, but quarantine requirements still apply. (see ‘Importing food into Australia’ information sheet for quantity limits and quarantine requirements).

Sports food for ‘commercial’ use

‘Commercial’ use does not necessarily mean food for sale. It refers to any food outside the limits given for accompanied baggage – whatever the intended purpose. As explained above, quarantine requirements apply to sports food imported for commercial use (see ‘Importing food into Australia’ information sheet).

Australian food standards requirements

Australia has strict controls over some aspects of the composition of sports foods such as maximum limits on the amount of added amino acids, vitamins, minerals and some nutritive ingredients. This means that ‘sports foods’ which can be manufactured overseas may not
be allowed to be imported into Australia for ‘commercial use’. Sports foods imported for ‘commercial use’ must comply with the Australian *Food Standards Code* (Code (Food Standards Code, Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA), published by the Commonwealth of Australia. A copy can be obtained from the ANZFA website at www.anzfa.gov.au).

According to the Australian *Food Standards Code*, the label on a sports food must not include an express or implied representation that use of the food enhances athletic performance or benefits physiological effects, unless specifically permitted.

The label on a formulated supplementary sports food must include, in standard type of 3 mm, the statement – ‘NOT SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 15 YEARS OR PREGNANT WOMEN: SHOULD ONLY BE USED UNDER MEDICAL OR DIETETIC SUPERVISION’.

For more information as to whether a product is a sports food, or the requirements relating to sports foods in Australia, please contact the Monitoring and Surveillance Programme at the Australia New Zealand Food Authority: Telephone: +61 2 6271 2219 Fax: +61 2 6271 2278. Website: www.anzfa.gov.au.

Dietary supplements

Dietary supplements, including vitamin and mineral preparations, fibre supplements, traditional remedies and plant extracts in capsule, tablet and tincture form, are generally regulated as therapeutic goods (medicines) in Australia.

Supply of dietary supplements in Australia

Therapeutic goods, with few exceptions, cannot be supplied in Australia unless the goods are first included in the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods. Goods are included in the Register following application to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), provided that the goods meet Australian requirements for quality, safety and efficacy. The TGA charges fees for including goods in the Register, with the fee charged depending on the product in question. Some dietary supplements supplied in other countries may contain ingredients that are not approved for use in medicines supplied in Australia or that may not be allowed to be imported into Australia. For dietary supplements containing ingredients derived from animals, plants or micro-organisms, import permits from AQIS must be obtained prior to importation.
Dietary supplements for use by members of sporting teams

Different requirements operate for the importation of medicines, including dietary supplements, for use by members of sporting teams, such as teams participating at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Also, exemptions apply to allow importation of up to three months’ supply of most medicines for use by individuals or by members or their immediate family. These different requirements and exemptions are outlined in the ‘Importation of human medicinal products in Australia’ information sheet.

Can unregistered dietary supplements be offered to visitors at hospitality venues?

No. Dietary supplements cannot be offered to visitors to hospitality venues unless those supplements have first been included in the Register. This applies even if the goods are being offered free of charge or as part of an advertisement.

For further information about the importation and supply of medicines/dietary supplements in Australia, contact the Therapeutic Goods Administration:
Telephone: +61 2 6232 8536; Fax: +61 2 6232 8605
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Information for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games

Importing horses into Australia

General conditions

Import conditions for horses contesting the equestrian events at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games have the dual objectives of protecting Australia from the incursion of animal pests and diseases which do not occur in Australia while allowing imported horses to maintain their health and fitness for competition at the elite level.

The basic principles of the risk management strategy are:

- horses are to be protected against equine influenza virus by vaccination and will be tested for a range of other equine diseases before they enter Australia;
- horses must be isolated from all animals that are not of tested equivalent health status for at least two weeks before export. This period of isolation will be under the control of the competent authority in the country of origin. Stabling and training must only occur at approved locations;
- horses must be flown to Australia on AQIS-approved routes. Most horses will be transported on subsidised flights organised by an Equestrian Freight Consortium (EFC) appointed by the organisers of the Sydney 2000 Games. National Olympic Committees (NOCs) or National Equestrian Federations (NEFs) that wish to make their own transport arrangements must ensure they fully understand and can meet the import requirements;
- after arrival in Australia horses will be transferred to the Sydney International Equestrian Centre (SIEC) for post-arrival quarantine of two weeks from the arrival of the last horse. Excellent training and competition facilities are available at this venue;
– horse health will be closely monitored during the quarantine and Olympic competition periods;
– horses will remain under quarantine surveillance at SIEC or another AQIS-approved premise until they return home. Access to SIEC during the quarantine period will be limited to people with a direct involvement in the care and preparation of horses and will be strictly controlled and;
– each horse must have a current passport and have been issued with an AQIS Permit to Import that has been endorsed by the competent authority in the country of origin before it can enter Australia

Apply now

To begin the import process, or for further information about import conditions contact the Animal Programs Section of AQIS by April 2000 on:

Telephone +61 2 627 254 54; Fax: +61 2 62723110
Email: john.hayhoe@aqis.gov.au
Website: www.aqis.gov.au
Postal address: Animal Programs Section – AQIS
P.O. Box 858, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia

OR The Equestrian Freight Consortium

Eastern and Western Europe
Peden Bloodstock Ltd
Borough Court
Hartley Wintney
Hants RG 27 8JA
Great Britain
Contact: Michael Bullen
Telephone: +44 1252 844042
Fax: +44 1252 844043
Email: shipping@penden.co.uk

Peden Bloodstock Ltd GmbH
Im Look 9
D-45472 Mulheim/Ruhr
Germany
Contact: Martin Atock
Telephone: +49 208 37824 11-14
Fax: +49 208 37824 15
Email: shipping@penden.co.uk

Americas
International Racehorse Transport Inc.
317 South St, Geneva, IL 60234, USA
Contact: Simon Glennie
Telephone +1 630 262 1221 Fax: +1 630 262 1331
Importing stockfeed for the equestrian events

Australian quarantine legislation requires AQIS to ensure that imported animals and imported biological products do not place at risk Australia's plants, animals and the environment.

The major quarantine risks associated with stockfeed include its potential to be contaminated with exotic weed seeds, plant pests and diseases, as well as its potential to be contaminated during storage and transport by exotic insects and animal manure from birds or rodents.

**Stockfeed destined for the equestrian events at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games may only be imported after AQIS has conducted a quarantine risk evaluation and issued an AQIS import permit with conditions of importation relating to the risk evaluation.**

**Apply now**

Applications to import stockfeed for horses competing in the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games should reach AQIS by **April 2000**. The application form, guidelines and explanation of what information is required can be obtained from:

Dr Robert Heard, Dr Penny Cain, or Dr Narelle Clegg, AQIS' Biologicals Unit
Phone: +61 2 6272 4578 Fax: +61 2 6273 2097, E-mail: biologicals@aqis.gov.au
Postal Address: Biologicals Unit, Animal and Plant Programs Branch, Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, P.O. Box 858, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia
Importing veterinary drugs

Veterinary drugs brought into Australia are subject to a number of import controls. The information provided below is to help National Olympic and Paralympic Committees understand what Australia's controls are and who to contact in Australia, so that any necessary documentation is obtained before the teams arrive in Australia:

- all veterinary chemical products imported into Australia require approval from the National Registration Authority for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (NRA). The NRA issues import permits for all drugs that are not registered in Australia;
- certain drugs require import permits from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), particularly anabolics and antibiotics and;
- Australian quarantine legislation requires AQIS to ensure that imported veterinary medicines do not place at risk Australia's animals, plants and environment.

The main types of products of quarantine concern to Australia which represent the greatest quarantine risk are those containing micro-organisms, such as vaccines, or containing significant amounts of dairy, egg or other animal-based material. AQIS issues import permits for veterinary therapeutics after an assessment of the risks.

What do I need to do to comply with all these requirements?

Competitors intending to bring veterinary drugs should contact one of the officers listed below. Requests for information on entry requirements for all of the above agencies will then be circulated to the NRA, TGA and AQIS. The information requirements for each agency will then be sent to you as one consolidated reply.
Apply now

Applications to import veterinary therapeutics for horses competing in the Olympic and Paralympic games should be made by April 2000. For further information, please contact: Dr Robert Heard, Dr Penny Cain, or Dr Narelle Clegg

AQIS’ Biologicals Unit Phone: +61 2 6272 45 78 Fax: +61 2 6273 20 97
E-mail: biologicals@aqis.gov.au
Postal Address: Biologicals Unit, Animal and Plant Programs Branch, Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, P.O. Box 858, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia
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Information for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games

Hospitality sites for National Olympic Committees and National Paralympic Committees

Background

At past Olympic and Paralympic Games, National Olympic and Paralympic Committees (NOCs and NPCs) have organised to entertain their Olympic/Paralympic Family members and guests at a particular location in the host city. It has been common practice for such host facilities to serve food and drinks from their own countries and to display items of cultural significance.

For Sydney 2000 these locations will include ships on Sydney harbour as well as commercial premises in the city itself. Australia strictly enforces its quarantine and food safety laws for all food and drinks imported into the country even where the food and drink may not be for sale to the public.

To facilitate the admission of any foods, drinks and cultural items which your Committee may be contemplating bringing to Australia, you need to establish contact as outlined below so that permits to import and other necessary conditions are met. Failure to do so could result in frustration, disappointment and additional cost as your food imports are held up at the quarantine barrier or even destroyed.

Apply now

If you are considering importing food, drinks or cultural items for your host site please establish contact with the following person by April 2000. For further information contact Craig Hall: +61 2 9297 2942 (telephone) +61 2 93647340 (fax)

Postal Address: Craig Hall, AQIS Games Liaison Officer, P.O. Box 657, Mascot, NSW 1460 Australia. E-mail: craig.hall@aqis.gov.au
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Information for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games

Importing guide dogs into Australia

General conditions

The Australian continent is free of a number of serious dog diseases and for this reason all importations of dogs into the country are strictly regulated:

– Import conditions for trained guide dogs belonging to participants in the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games have recently been revised by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS);
– National Paralympic Committees are reminded that guide dogs must meet the prescribed Australian import conditions for their country of origin and that each dog must have been issued with an AQIS Permit to Import before it can enter Australia;
– At least 72 hours before the arrival of each dog, either the owner or an appropriate team official acting on her/his behalf, must notify the Chief Quarantine Officer (Animals) of the impending arrival of the guide dog;
– Each dog will be examined by a government veterinary officer as it disembarks and;
– Once the guide dogs have satisfied all the entry criteria, they may remain with their owners from the time of arrival in Australia. They will however be kept under quarantine surveillance – this means that AQIS may impose some movement restrictions on these animals while they are in Australia. These conditions will be discussed and agreed with the owner of the dog during the inspection at the airport on arrival and will be issued in writing.
Appendices

Apply now

Individual athletes or NPCs should contact AQIS to initiate the import process for guide dogs by March 2000 because there is quite a long lead time particularly for dogs from rabies-affected countries. Further information about import conditions may be obtained from the Animal Programs Section:

Telephone: +61 2 62724454; Fax: +61 2 62723110
Email: animalimp@aqis.gov.au
Website: www.aqis.gov.au

Postal address: AQIS Animal Programs Section, G.P.O. Box 858, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia
Notes