



ISPM 15 for Exports Frequently Asked Questions

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Q1. What is ISPM 15?

ISPM 15 is the 'International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures Publication No. 15: Guidelines for Regulating Wood Packaging Material in International Trade'. The full text of this standard is available from the [International Phytosanitary Portal](#).

Q2. Why was ISPM 15 developed?

ISPM 15 was developed to address the global spread of timber pests by regulating the movement of timber packing and dunnage in international trade. ISPM 15 describes phytosanitary measures to reduce the risk of introduction and/or spread of quarantine pests associated with solid timber packing material (includes dunnage).

Q3. Who developed and endorsed ISPM 15?

The United Nations Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO) addresses plant quarantine through the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). The IPPC is an international treaty administered by the FAO and implemented through the cooperation of member governments. Australia is a member or 'contracting party' to the treaty.

As for all other ISPMs, the Secretariat to the IPPC coordinated the development and preparation of ISPM 15 over a period of time through an agreed and defined process of draft development and country consultation.

ISPMs are recognised as the basis for phytosanitary measures applied by members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) under the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the SPS Agreement). Australia has been a WTO member since 1995.

The Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM) adopted ISPM 15 in March 2002. The establishment of a Commission on Phytosanitary Measures that will serve as the global agreement's new governing body was provided for in a 1997 revision to the text of the IPPC. Members of the new Commission will be the contracting parties to the IPPC. The FAO established the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM) as an interim measure until the New Revised Text of the IPPC comes into force. As Australia is a contracting party to the IPPC, Australia is therefore a member of the ICPM.

More detailed information on the ICPM, the IPPC (including its relationship to international trade), and other international agreements is provided on the International Phytosanitary Portal, the official website for the [International Plant Protection Convention](#).

Further information on the WTO and FAO including the SPS Agreement, is available from the [WTO website](#).

Q4. What wood packaging material does ISPM 15 apply to?

ISPM 15 applies to coniferous (softwood) and non-coniferous (hardwood) raw wood packaging material. The standard does not apply to wood packaging made wholly of wood-based products such as plywood, particle board, oriented strand board, medium density fibre board or products created using glue, heat and pressure or a combination of these.

Q5. Will the adoption of ISPM 15 affect me?

If you are involved in the export of commodities of any kind into countries that have implemented ISPM 15 and use wooden packaging material in the transportation of these commodities then you will have to comply with the standard.

Q6. What countries have implemented ISPM 15 for Imports?

Many member countries of the ICPM including Australia have implemented systems to accept ISPM 15 compliant imports. A list of country implementation dates is provided on the AQIS website. Click on either of the links below to be directed to this information.

[Country implementation dates for International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures No. 15: Guidelines for regulating wood packaging material in international trade \(ISPM 15\)](#)

Alternatively the information can be obtained by going to the AQIS website located at:

www.aqis.gov.au

Simply click on the Quarantine and Export Services folder, then on “Export” and finally on “Exporting plants/grains and fresh produce” or click on the “Hot topics” section.

Please note the list of country implementation dates is provided in good faith as a guide only. Exporters are encouraged to confirm the importing country's requirements for wood packaging prior to export.

Q7. What happens if non-compliant wooden packaging material is exported?

If wooden packaging material is exported into countries that have implemented ISPM 15 and it is not marked appropriately or it shows signs of infestation then the importing country may take action such as; ordering the wood packaging material for treatment, disposal or the consignment may be refused entry.

Q8. What is the Australian Wood Packaging Certification Scheme (AWPCS)?

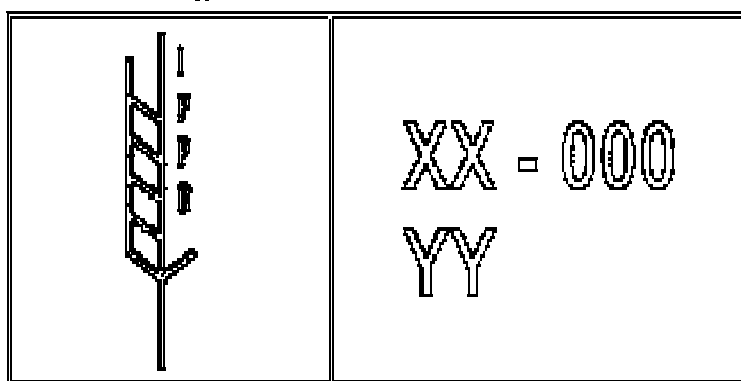
ISPM 15 specifies that the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) of the government of an exporting country is responsible for ensuring procedures and systems are in place prior to export to verify that the requirements set out in ISPM 15 have been met

The AWPCS is a certification scheme developed by AQIS to ensure that Australian treatment providers and wood packaging manufacturers produce wood packaging material that meets the requirements of ISPM 15. Under this scheme wood packaging manufacturers and treatment providers who meet the requirements of ISPM 15 will be authorised by AQIS to apply an internationally recognised mark to wood packaging material.

Q9. What does an ISPM 15 compliant mark look like? What do the symbols in the mark mean?

Wood packaging material bearing the stamp or mark below is certified as having been subjected to ISPM 15 approved treatment.

ISPM 15 mark



An ISPM 15 compliant mark must include:

- **IPPC** certification symbol
- **XX**: represents the two letter ISO country code, **AU** for Australia
- **000**: represents the unique certification number issued by AQIS to the treatment provider or wood packaging manufacturer. Inclusion of this certification number ensures that the wood packaging material can be traced back to the treatment provider and/or manufacturer.
- **YY**: is the treatment abbreviation where:
 - **HT** is the code for heat treatment to a minimum of 56° C for a minimum of 30 minutes
 - **MB** is the code for methyl bromide fumigation.

The letters 'DB' represent debarking. DB may be added to the abbreviation of the ISPM 15 approved treatment. For example, 'HTDB' represents heat treatment and debarking and 'MBDB' represents methyl bromide fumigation and debarking.

The ISPM 15 compliant stamp may also include other information as NPPOs, producers and suppliers may choose to include additional information for the identification purposes.

Q10. Who is eligible to participate in the AWPCS?

The AWPCS is available to any Australian treatment provider (either heat treatment or fumigation) or wood packaging manufacturer that can meet the requirements of ISPM 15.

Q11. Is participation in the scheme mandatory?

Participation in the scheme is not mandatory. The AWPCS is one option available to assist exporters in meeting importing country conditions of entry as they apply to wood packaging material.

Q12. How do I apply for certification under the AWPCS?

All applications for certification under the AWPCS must be lodged with a Joint Accreditation System Australia New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) accredited certification body. A list of certification bodies accredited to assess an applicant's suitability for obtaining certification under the AWPCS will be available on the JAS-ANZ Register, located at:

www.jas-anz.com.au

All application must include a quality manual that clearly details the quality systems or procedures a company has in place to meet the conditions and requirements of the AWPCS.

Q13. How much will it cost to obtain certification under the AWPCS?

The cost of obtaining and maintaining certification under the AWPCS is determined by the certification body. It is the applicant's responsibility to contact the certification body of their choice to confirm all arrangements, including the costs involved.

Q14. Where can I find a list of treatment providers and wood packaging manufacturers that are certified under the AWPCS?

All companies certified under the AWPCS will be listed on the AWPCS Register which will be accessible on the AQIS website at:

www.aqis.gov.au

Q15. Where can I get a copy of the AWPCS and find additional information?

A copy of the AWPCS and other relevant information is available on the [AQIS website](#) to access this information click on "Hot Topics". Alternatively if you experience any difficulties downloading this material or require additional information contact Leanne Payne on 02 6272 5037 or by e-mail at leanne.payne@aqis.gov.au.