



## INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES

### **Detained Goods Management – Occupational Health & Safety**

**March 2009**

**This Instruction & Guideline refers to Practice Statement:**

**2008/11 Detained Goods Management**

**Published date:** 10 MARCH 2009

**Availability:** Internal and External

**Subject:** Detained Goods Management – Occupational Health & Safety

**Purpose:** To ensure proper OHS requirements are actively applied by staff and management when dealing with all goods detained by Customs.

**Owner:** National Director Cargo

**Category:** Operational Procedures

**Contact:** Director Cargo Business Improvement (AIR)

***The electronic version published on the intranet is the current Instruction and Guideline.***

### **Summary of main points**

This document outlines the overarching Occupational Health & Safety requirements that need to be considered and practised when the Customs and Border Protection Service performs duties relating to the custody and storage of goods.

- All officers have a responsibility to ensure they follow safe work practices that comply with OHS policy
- OHS policy is to be practised in all work areas and officers need to be aware of any special requirements when commencing in any new work area
- When dealing with detained goods – the nature of this work will often mean the officer is not working in a ‘standard office’ environment.
- Customs has published various instructions and guides relating to specific use of equipment and identification of situations that may be of higher risk. Officers need to be cognisant of these instructions with an increased working knowledge when the instruction or policy relates to their work environment.
- No items should be accepted or handled unless the officer is satisfied the goods have been properly identified and are safe.
- The safety of all personnel is the highest priority.
- Where an emergency occurs the officer should ring the 000 emergency number and explain the situation with as much detail as possible to identify the proper response for the situation.
- After the occurrence of an incident – the details surrounding the incident need to be reported to the appropriate authorities on the requisite forms and time frames.

### **This I&G applies to staff in:**

- Any area that detains goods or stores detained goods

### **Introduction**

Detained Goods Management (DGM) instructions & guidelines have been developed to provide a framework to ensure the secure storage of goods and promote accountability and consistency in the operations of the DGM function.

OHS is of the highest priority to the Customs and Border Protection Service and when dealing with detained goods this awareness and knowledge needs to be at a high level to ensure any risk, hazard or injury is minimised.

While the organisation has a duty of care to all employees OHS knowledge and awareness is the responsibility of the individual. All officers need to be aware of their working environment, the possible hazards that may arise in that environment and the approved methods and processes employed to reduce the risk of any hazard occurring.

The information contained in this instruction & guideline must not be disseminated outside Customs without direct permission from DGM Policy.

## **Instructions and Guidelines**

### **General**

Line managers have a responsibility to ensure that Customs employees receive adequate information, instruction and training in the safe storage of goods taken into custody.

All officers have a duty of care and responsibility to ensure they follow safe work practises when undertaking Customs functions.

When dealing with detained goods this may include but is not limited to:

- Proper handling of consignments that are heavy or unwieldy
- Appropriate identification, handling and storing of substances including chemicals and hazardous materials
- Handling and storing firearms and weapons
- Using computers and other office equipment
- Operating vehicles, forklifts, trolleys and other machinery to assist in handling heavy and unwieldy consignments
- Releasing items to clients and handling difficult customers

All goods have the potential to cause injury or harm if not handled responsibly.

Customs has developed specific guidelines relevant to various work functions and activities. Supervisors and officers should be agreed on the guidelines applicable to their work environment and actively apply the directions contained within those guidelines

Copies of the instructions should be readily available in the work area and regularly reviewed by staff to ensure they are fully conversant with procedures for any situation.

All officers must use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) as supplied for their work area functions when handling, storing, releasing or destroying detained goods

Goods which potentially pose a health or an unmanaged safety risk should not be received into stores e.g. untreated wildlife specimens, leaking chemical canisters or dangerous goods (refer definition of Dangerous Goods below).

Advice from competent trained experts or the Fire Brigade Hazmat should be sought where any doubt exists.

### **Customs OHS Guides relevant to specific risk issues**

Customs has published instruction guides to inform and assist officers on the procedures to follow in possible OHS risk situations.

These guides can be accessed through the intranet under the icons

- “About me > Health and Safety” - this leads to specific guides on:
- Workplace Safety
  - Responsibilities
  - Inspecting workplaces
  - Identifying hazards and risk management

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- Reporting
- Safety Information
  - Manual handling
  - Office Based work
- Hazards
  - Asbestos
  - Biological hazards
  - Chemical hazards
  - Client Aggression
  - Communicable diseases
  - Confined spaces
  - Explosives and explosive devices
  - Firearms
  - Fumigants
  - Hazardous substances
  - Noise
  - Offensive material
  - Radiological hazards
  - Thermal comfort
  - Working alone
  - HIV exposure
- Accidents and Incidents.
  - Reporting
  - Investigating
  - First Aid
  - Rehabilitation
  - Compensation

Further guides are linked to OHS Practice Statement 2007/4, 2007/5 and 2008/1. They are available through the intranet icon under: “Resources > Legislation and Policy > Policy and Procedure “

Officers should regularly review these published OHS guides. Hard copies should be available and updated for reference within the work area.

### **Receiving goods into store and ensuring they are safe**

All goods received and stored by Customs should be rendered safe and compliant with any Federal and State safe storage regulations.

The area forwarding the items to the Detained Goods Store (DGS) has initial responsibility to correctly identify the items and take appropriate steps to ensure safe, secure transport and handling applicable to the specific goods. The area detecting and detaining items need to consult with the DGS on storage requirements to identify special requirements if Customs storage facilities are not suitable.

Minimising the movement of items until the proper storage facilities are identified to receive the goods will lessen any risk. Dangerous items should be referred to specialist operators and approved personnel for safe handling, transport and storage.

The DGS staff must ensure all items received have been suitably identified and are of a nature that is appropriate to store safely on Customs premises and compliant with State and Federal Regulations.

## **Quarantine**

The Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) is to be consulted immediately if goods appear to be a quarantine risk. See separate AQIS instruction & guideline listing items requiring formal approval before receipt into the Detained Goods Store.

Goods subject to quarantine will NOT be received into the DGS unless they have been cleared in accordance with the AQIS DGM instruction & guideline.

## **Dangerous Goods / Hazardous Substances**

Dangerous Goods or Hazardous Substances are NOT to be received into store unless cleared and deemed inert by a competent person. A competent person is someone with the necessary knowledge, skills, training to competently make a determination. Unsuitable goods should be transferred directly to another Department for destruction e.g. the Department of Defence or State Mines Department. Refer Customs National Policy on the "Detection of Explosives".

Transfer for destruction should be processed in DGMS as per "Release of Goods – Permanently" and the reason why the goods were transferred for destruction documented and filed.

If it appears that chemical or liquid goods may pose a health or safety risk, Fire Brigade Hazmat in your State/Territory should be consulted.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) must be obtained by the area that initially receives the goods from the manufacturer and/or the importer to assist in identification and determining the safety requirements. When goods are transferred the MSDS or advice received must accompany the goods and be given to DGS upon arrival.

Where substances are detected without labelling or MSDS appropriate control measures need to be applied to contain the risk until trained staff or expert authorities use appropriate identification methods to identify the substance. In cases where identification is uncertain, the substance is to be assumed hazardous until proven otherwise.

## **Labeling of Chemicals imported from overseas**

Not all countries use the same criteria for classification of hazardous substances and dangerous goods, or have equivalent requirements for labeling. As a consequence, some overseas labels do not meet Australian requirements. Some imported chemicals may need to be re-labeled by the importer.

Chemicals imported from overseas with labels that contain equivalent information to that prescribed in the Labeling Code of Practice should not need to be re-labeled.

## **Identifying and Reporting Hazards**

Where a hazard or potential hazard is identified it should be reported in accordance with the OHS Hazard Reporting Process.

Most importantly, all hazards are to be reported to an immediate supervisor and to the Regional OHS Coordinator on the *Hazard Report Form* where the hazard cannot be immediately eliminated or further action is required.

The Hazard Report Form is available on the intranet - "About me > Health and Safety".

## **Reporting an incident and recording the details**

In the event an incident occurs the manager of the area is responsible for ensuring the Customs Incident Reporting Centre (CIRC) is notified (see CIRC Practice Statement for reporting requirements) and, if applicable, the relevant Emergency Service, State or Territory Police should also be advised.

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There are a number of methods for reporting incidents as soon as practical to the CIRC, they are:

- **Phone 1800 303 387** to provide details of the incident. The CIRC will advise if completion of an Incident Report form is required.
- **Fax** completed Incident Report form to the CIRC on (02) 6275 5006
- **Email** [circ@customs.gov.au](mailto:circ@customs.gov.au) for non-urgent matters or to send completed Incident report.

### **Comcare**

All injuries or incidents are to be reported in the Human Resource Information Service (HRIS), to the persons supervisor and also to Comcare via the '*Notification and Report of an Incident*' form. Accessible through the intranet "About me > Health and Safety"

The Regional OHS Coordinator should also be informed.

Note: there are strict legal reporting timeframes for reporting incidents to Comcare:

- Death - within 2 hours
- Serious Personal Injury - within 24 hours
- Incapacity greater than 30 days - within 24 hours of becoming aware of duration
- Dangerous Occurrence - within 24 hours

Notify-able workplace incidents are to be reported to Comcare via facsimile: **1300 305 916**.

### **Definitions**

**Dangerous goods** are substances that may be hazardous to people, property or the environment and may cause accidents with significant consequences. Dangerous goods may be corrosive, flammable, explosive, oxidising or may be reactive with water.

**Hazardous substances** can be a solid, liquid, gas, pure substance (one ingredient) or mixtures of substances. Hazardous substances can harm the health of people exposed to the substance. A hazardous substance is a substance described in the Hazardous Substances Information System.

**Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)** is a document that describes the chemical and physical properties of a material and provides advice on its safe storage, handling and use.

MSDS include details of health and physicochemical hazards, exposure controls, personal protective equipment, safe handling and storage instructions, emergency procedures and disposal advice. MSDS are the primary source of safety information about a material. MSDS is an information source that should be used to inform/guide on a program to control hazards associated with hazardous substances and dangerous goods.

The label on the product is also an important source of safety information.

MSDS information is electronically available through the Chemwatch database via the Customs Library intranet web portal.

Suppliers/manufacturers and importers are required to provide the MSDS.

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## **Related Policies and References**

### **Practice Statements:**

- Detained Goods Management 2008/11
- OHS Policy – OHS Risk Management (HSMA 2) – 2007/04
- OHS Policy – OHS Management Information Systems (HSMA 3) – 2007/05

### **Other Instructions & Guidelines**

- Health Safety & Well Being

## **Key Roles and Responsibilities**

- Account for the secure storage of goods held by Customs in approved locations.
- Alert staff to conducting their duties while exercising Customs OHS practice and policy for a safe work environment
  
- Director Cargo Business Improvement (AIR)
- Manager Detained Goods Management

## **Consultation**

### **Internal**

The following internal stakeholders have been consulted in the development of these Instructions and Guidelines.

- Cargo - regional Detained Goods Management work areas.
- Trade Policy – Firearms & Weapons
- Cargo - National Manager Cargo Operations North
- Cargo Policy - Detained Goods Management
- Corporate Operations – Safety Health and Well Being

### **External**

- Australian Quarantine & Inspection Service

## **Approval**

<b>Approved on</b>	7 March 2009	
<b>By</b>	Jaclyne Fisher National Director Cargo	
<b>Review Period</b>	Annually	

**ATTACHMENT A**

**Work Cover contact details in each Regional area:**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Authority</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Site</b>
NSW	WorkCover NSW	131050	<a href="http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au">www.workcover.nsw.gov.au</a>
ACT	Office of Regulatory Services ACT WorkCover	(02) 6205 0200	<a href="http://www.workcover.act.gov.au">www.workcover.act.gov.au</a>
NT	NT WorkSafe	1800 019 115	<a href="http://www.worksafe.nt.gov.au">www.worksafe.nt.gov.au</a>
QLD	WorkCover QLD	1300 362 128	<a href="http://www.workcoverqld.com.au/">http://www.workcoverqld.com.au/</a>
SA	SafeWork SA	1300 365 255	<a href="http://www.safework.sa.gov.au">www.safework.sa.gov.au</a>
TAS	Workplace Standards Tasmania	Switchboard: (03) 6233 8333 Helpline: 1300 366 322 (Inside Tasmania) Helpline: (03) 6233 7657 (Outside Tasmania)	<a href="http://www.wst.tas.gov.au">www.wst.tas.gov.au</a>
VIC	Victorian WorkCover Authority	1800 136 089	<a href="http://www.workcover.vic.gov.au">www.workcover.vic.gov.au</a>
WA	WorkSafe WA	1300 307 877	<a href="http://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au">www.worksafe.wa.gov.au</a>