

New Biosecurity legislation implemented for Queensland

Queensland's new biosecurity regulation has come into effect, which has important implications for the Australian sugarcane industry. By Matt Reynolds, Adoption Officer, Mackay

July 1 has seen the implementation of the *Biosecurity Act 2014* and the *Biosecurity Regulation 2016*, which will impact the way biosecurity and particularly the movement of sugarcane plant and machinery occurs within Queensland.

The new legislation brings into effect the 'General Biosecurity Obligation', requiring all Queenslanders to take all reasonable steps to ensure they do not spread a pest, disease or contaminant.

The commencement of the new legislation replaces all existing powers of the *Plant Protection Act 1989*, *Plant Protection regulation 2002* and the *Plant Protection (Approved Sugarcane Varieties) regulation 2003*. The new legislation brings a number of changes relevant to the movement of sugarcane and sugarcane machinery:

- 1) Sugarcane biosecurity zones replace pest quarantine areas (PQAs);
- 2) Movement of sugarcane plant material or machinery;
 - a. Requires a Plant health assurance certificate (PHAC)
 - b. All previous inspectors will require accreditation to become authorised inspection persons under the new act.
- 3) General biosecurity obligation (GBO) affects all Queenslanders.

Sugarcane Biosecurity Zones SBZs replace PQAs

Previously, pest quarantine areas (PQAs) represented the boundary for plant and machinery movement within a region. These areas allow potential and present biosecurity risks to be managed through restricting their spread. Under the new act, the PQAs have been replaced with sugarcane biosecurity zones (SBZs).

The changes have seen a slight reduction in the number of biosecurity zones. The new map includes generic zones (e.g. Far Northern Biosecurity zones) and industry specific biosecurity zones, with each industry defining zones relevant to their industry. The key changes for the sugarcane industry are:

- The addition of the far northern biosecurity zones 1 and 2, which relate to all industries.
- The merging of the previous PQA2 and PQA2a to form the sugarcane biosecurity zone 1 from Coen to Townsville.
- The modification of the two most southern biosecurity zones to now capture Rockhampton to Victoria point (Sugarcane Biosecurity zone 4) and Victoria Point to the NSW/QLD border (Sugarcane biosecurity zone 5).

The sugarcane biosecurity zone map can be viewed at www.sugarresearch.com.au.

Movement of sugarcane plant material or machinery

The movement of machinery between SBZs requires a plant health assurance certificate (PHAC) from an authorised inspection person. Under the new legislation, all existing powers to inspect machinery have ceased with the removal of the *Plant Protection Act 1989*.

All machinery that has come in contact with sugarcane plant material or soil used for sugarcane production will require a PHAC to move between zones. The machinery will need to be free of any cane trash or soil and be accompanied during transport by a PHAC before being moved between zones.

To arrange an inspection contact your local accredited productivity services officer or Biosecurity Queensland on 132 523.

To move sugarcane plants (stalks, leaves, potted plants) between sugarcane biosecurity zones contact Biosecurity Queensland on 132 523.

General Biosecurity obligation

The general biosecurity obligation requires every Queenslanders to take all reasonable steps to ensure they do not spread a pest, disease or contaminant.

This is important to remember when moving not just between sugarcane biosecurity zones but also between farms.

Biosecurity at a farm level is important to manage across a range of areas from the movement of vehicles onto the farm, the management of pests and weeds on the farm, and even with the selection of varieties.

There are a number of ways an individual can ensure they meet their General Biosecurity Obligation and it's all around ensuring reasonable steps are taken to reduce the risk.

In the event that you believe the risk associated with the spread of pest, disease or contaminant is not being appropriately managed, contact Biosecurity Queensland on 132 523.

If you suspect an exotic pest or disease, contact the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881 and report to QDAF or your productivity services organisation.

More information

www.sugarresearch.com.au

Matt Reynolds

Adoption Officer – Biosecurity

0431 100 062

mreynolds@sugarresearch.com.au



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Sugarcane Biosecurity Zone Map



- All appliances (harvesters and other sugarcane machinery) moving between sugarcane biosecurity zones must:
 - > be free of cane trash and soil
 - > be inspected by an authorised inspection person who will issue a Plant Health Assurance Certificate (PHAC)
 - > be accompanied during transportation by the PHAC.
- Machinery inspections can be arranged by contacting the local Productivity Service organisation.
- To move sugarcane plants (stalks, leaves, potted plants, etc) between biosecurity zones contact Biosecurity Queensland (13 25 23).