



INTERSTATE CERTIFICATION ASSURANCE (ICA) ARRANGEMENTS INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

1. APPLYING

WHAT IS INTERSTATE CERTIFICATION ASSURANCE (ICA) ?

- A national accreditation scheme based on quality assurance principles, that accredits a business (grower etc) to operate an Arrangement and issue their own Plant Health Certificates (PHAC's) for moving produce to other States.
- PHAC's issued by ICA Businesses have same legal authority as Plant Health Certificates (PHC's) issued by Government Inspectors.

WHO MAY APPLY FOR ACCREDITATION ?

- An application must be made by the **legal entity** which owns and operates the business to be covered by the ICA Arrangement. The following legal entities may be accredited;
 - **Individuals;**
 - Partnerships
 - Incorporated companies; and
 - Registered Co-operative Associations.
- For partnerships, applications need to be signed by each partner OR one partner applies to be accredited as an individual with the other partners listed as Authorised Signatories.
- For Trusts, an application must be made in name of a Trustee acting for the trust, not in the name of the trust.
- Companies must provide either their Australian Company Number (ACN) or Australian Registered Body Number (ARBN) and a copy of Certificate of Incorporation or registration.

WHEN SHOULD I APPLY? / WHERE DO I SEND THE APPLICATION FORM?

- Application should be lodged at least 10 working days prior to date on which it is intended to commence certifying produce.
- Separate applications are necessary for each ICA Arrangement (one Operational Procedure at one Facility).
- ICA Information, Operational Procedures and Application Forms are available from the Biosecurity SA - Plant Health ICA web-page, www.pir.sa.gov.au/ica.
- Completed applications and requests for further information should be forwarded to ICA Officer, Biosecurity SA - Plant Health, 33 Flemington St, Glenside SA 5065.

FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION

- It is an offence under South Australian *Plant Health Act 2009* for a person to give false or misleading information. Penalties apply.

The following pages outline the application and accreditation processes. A list of ICA's, documents and information is available by way of www.pir.sa.gov.au/ica or by calling our ICA Officer on 8207 7814, or by faxing 8207 7844 or emailing PirsaPlantHealthMarketAccess@sa.gov.au.

2. AUDIT AND ACCREDITATION

DESK AUDIT

- New applications are reviewed to ensure completeness and accuracy (Applicant advised if additional information is required). An endorsed copy is sent to the applicant.



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INITIAL (ON-SITE) AUDIT

- Once a new application is endorsed, applicant is contacted to arrange mutually convenient time for an initial on-site audit which will verify compliance with and implementation of the requirements of the associated Operational Procedure.
- On completion of a successful initial audit, applicants are granted provisional accreditation and provided a Certificate of Accreditation and (where required) a book of Plant Health Assurance Certificates.
- ***Books of 100 Plant Health Assurance Certificates (PHAC's) are available from Biosecurity - Plant Health. A \$24 charge applies for each book, with the certificates remaining the property of Biosecurity SA - Plant Health and it is a legal requirement that unused Certificate Books (or parts thereof) be returned when accreditation ceases. It is the responsibility of the accredited business to ensure they maintain sufficient quantities of PHAC's.***

COMPLIANCE AUDITS

- Within four (4) weeks of a successful initial audit contact is made to arrange a compliance audit to verify the ICA system continues to operate in accordance with the documented procedures/requirements.
- On successful completion of a compliance audit, accreditation is endorsed (for up to a maximum of twelve months from endorsement of accreditation).
- Ongoing scheduled compliance audits will be carried out at defined intervals dependent on the procedure under which the business is accredited (usually 2 per annum).

RANDOM AUDITS

- Random audits are conducted on some accredited businesses annually and can be full compliance audits or audits of particular aspects eg procedures, certification, records.

INVESTIGATORY AUDITS

- Un-scheduled compliance audits may be conducted to investigate reported or suspected non-conformances by an accredited business.

ANNUAL RETURN (RE-ACCREDITATION)

- Each year a Business holds accreditation an Annual Return Application must be lodged prior to the due date indicated on the Certificate of Accreditation. Late penalties apply and produce certified past this due date can be subject to return by the receiving State.
- ***It is an offence for a business to commence or continue certification of produce under an ICA arrangement without possession of a valid and current **Certificate of Accreditation for an ICA Arrangement** for the procedure, produce type and chemical (if applicable) covered by the Assurance Certificate.***

3. AUDIT FEES

- An hourly fee of \$105 applies for audits, travelling time and associated services provided in normal hours. Additional charges apply for out of hours auditing/travelling/services.
- Random audits are not charged for unless non-conformance is identified by the auditor, in which case the above rate shall then apply.
- Enclosed fees applicable at 1 July 2013 and all fees are subject to annual CPI adjustment.



4. NONCONFORMANCE, SUSPENSION AND CANCELLATION OF ACCREDITATION

DETECTION OF A NONCONFORMANCE

- Non-conformance in produce, documentation or the business ICA processes or procedures will result in investigation by an officer to determine the cause.
- Business is advised in writing, the nature of the non-conformance, details of the relevant sections of the Operations Procedure and the time-frame for completing necessary corrective action to rectify the nonconformance and prevent recurrence.

SUSPENSION AND CANCELLATION OF ACCREDITATION

- It is a condition of accreditation that the accredited person must implement and operate the ICA system in accordance with the Operational Procedure referenced in the application. Accreditation may therefore be suspended or cancelled for contravention of accreditation conditions including failure to pay fees.
- **Failure to comply with the Operational Procedure may constitute grounds for suspension or cancellation of Accreditation.**
- **ICA offers year round certification flexibility along with considerable cost savings; it is a privilege not a right – non-conformance can result in suspension, removal from the scheme and fines or prosecutions.**

RECONSIDERATIONS

- When an accreditation is refused, suspended or cancelled the Business may lodge an application for reconsideration of the decision detailing the grounds to;
The Manager Food and Plant Standards, Biosecurity SA - Plant Health
33 Flemington St, Glenside SA 5065.
- A business which has had certified produce refused entry by a receiving State authority should initially contact the ICA Officer on (08) 8207 7014.

5. AMENDMENTS TO ACCREDITATION DETAILS

- Should any business details or persons listed as Authorised Signatories change during the accreditation period an application form detailing the changes must be lodged (with amendment box ticked) and submitted to the ICA Officer at the address on Page 1.

6. OFFENCES

- Any breaches of The *Plant Health Act 2009* in relation to accreditation can result in fines or penalties, which include suspension or cancellation of accreditation and loss of the benefits they provide.
- The following are offences under the Act;
 - for a person who is not an accredited person to issue an Assurance Certificate or anything that purports to be an Assurance Certificate,
 - for an accredited person not to lodge an Annual Return by the due date or return all PHAC books on request or cessation of accreditation.