

# Minimum facilities at ports

Requirements for inspecting consignments of controlled timber and wood packaging material





## Plant Health Guide

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# Introduction

The Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005 (the 'Order') reflects at Article 12(8) the implementation of Commission Directive 98/22/EC. This Directive lays down, among other things, the minimum facilities which must be provided by Port Authorities to allow plant health inspections to be carried out effectively and safely.

As inspections have been taking place for many years, adequate facilities and safe inspection conditions have evolved over time and the requirements of the Directive are being met already at most locations. The Directive and the Order have, however, changed the status of the requirements expected of the Port Authority into statutory obligations, which must be met before an inspection can be carried out.

This Guide sets out the obligations which apply to port authorities and others responsible for the points of entry in Great Britain where controlled wood, wood products or other goods which are accompanied by wooden packaging are landed. The Guide gives advice on the facilities needed, not only to meet the requirements of the Order, but also those which are necessary to enable inspectors to perform their work. These facilities include ones which allow the appropriate action to be taken when consignments do not meet the landing requirements prescribed in the Order and steps to prevent the introduction or spread of pests become necessary.

## Obligations on Port Authorities

### **Each Point of Entry must provide 'Suitable Areas of Inspection'** [Order article 12(8)(a)]

For sawn timber and logs a suitable area for inspection is, generally, the dockside. Timber must be stacked safely with adequate space between stacks for the inspector to pass between them easily. Facilities must be readily available for the removal of packs to ground level, with adequate space and assistance on hand to open packs for closer examination where the inspector deems this necessary. For containers and lorries a 'suitable area for inspection' is an area away from moving traffic where inspections can be carried out from ground level. There must also be an operative present to open container doors and to ensure the container/lorry is not moved while the inspection is being carried out.

### **Each Point of Entry must provide 'Adequate Lighting'** [Order article 12(8)(b)]

Where consignments are stored in sheds there must be adequate lighting for inspectors to be able to move around without putting themselves in any danger. Where inspections take place, for example, at a time when the light quality is poor, the port must have adequate lighting on the dockside for the inspector to be able to work effectively and safely. The inspector will carry a torch, or other equipment, to supplement the available lighting for close up work.

## Gas checking

Where the material to be inspected remains inside a container, Port Authorities or importers must ensure that containers are gas checked by qualified personnel using the proper equipment. A gas checking record must be produced. The record must contain the operator's name, job title, the date and time of gas checking, what gasses were checked for and the results of the check. It must be dated and signed by the operator and his supervisor. A copy of the record must be

made available to the inspector before any inspection of containerised material will be undertaken. (Refer to Port Skills and Safety Guidance Note *Fumigation in Freight Containers* for further guidance. See page 3 for contact details).

## Inspector obligations under the Order

Article 31 of the Order prescribes the actions which an inspector must take where they find that the landing requirements have not been met. The article sets out the actions, which may be required by an inspector where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that material has been or is likely to be landed in Great Britain in contravention of the requirements.

The inspector may:

- prohibit the landing;
- specify the manner in which the landing is to be carried out and any precautions to be taken during or after the landing;
- require the consignment, or any part of it or its packaging, to be treated in a specified way, or to be re-exported, destroyed or otherwise disposed of in such a manner and within such reasonable time as may be specified in the notice;
- put a 'hold' on the consignment, or part of it, while samples are taken for laboratory analysis.

If destruction is ordered by the inspector the importer or agent must ensure that the material is burned on a suitable area of the dockside away from other hazards or at an incineration facility. The facility must be on or near to the dock and must not be separated from the dock by or close to any area of woodland. Destruction by burning is the most practical means of destruction however, in certain circumstances chipping or deep burial (minimum 2 metres depth) in a landfill site may be considered. This is without prejudice to the requirements of the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994.

If it is necessary to place material under quarantine detention the Port Authority must be able to provide a safe suitable area in which material can be held separate from all other wood and wood products.

## Safety

In all cases the Port Authority and/or the importer must take adequate precautions to ensure the safety of the inspector. Inspectors have been given instructions in health and safety at work and each inspector has been issued with all appropriate safety clothing and equipment.



# Further reading and useful sources of information

For information and advice on forestry plant health matters in Great Britain, or to obtain a copy of the Service Standard leaflet, visit: [www.forestry.gov.uk/planthealth](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/planthealth) or contact the Forestry Commission Plant Health team:

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## Plant Health publications

### Plant Health Guides

- Importing wood, wood products and bark (FCPH001)
- Import inspection fees for wood, wood products and bark (FCPH002)
- Export certification (FCPH003)
- The United Kingdom Wood Packaging Material Marking Programme (FCPH004)
- Importing firewood (FCPH005)
- Importing woodchip (FCPH006)
- Minimum facilities at ports (FCPH007)

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