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The Stink Bug Season Is Here Again!

September marks the start of the risk season for Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs in Australia and New Zealand and this year, China and the United Kingdom have been identified as ‘emerging stink bug risk countries’. This means that vessels carrying certain goods shipped from the two countries will be subject to random onshore inspections when they arrive in Australia.

Why is the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug a problem?

The Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB), or *Halyomorpha halys*, is an agricultural pest that feeds on, and can severely damage, fruit, and vegetable crops. The pest has spread from its native range in East Asia to form established populations in North America and Europe but is not yet present or widely established in countries such as Australia, New Zealand, and Chile. Like the [Asian Gypsy Moth](#), the BMSB is considered a ‘hitchhiker pest’ that can spread via oceangoing vessels in international trade. When BMSB adults seek shelter from cold weather during the winter months, they tend to find their way into shipping containers, vehicles, machinery, parts, and similar types of cargo.

The BMSB requirements primarily target importers of goods. They cover the importers’ responsibility to ensure that certain types of cargoes have been properly treated and certified prior to being shipped from countries with established BMSB populations. However, as ships infested by stink bugs may be refused entry into certain countries, it is also important that ship operators and their crews are familiar with the BMSB seasonal measures applicable at any given time. Crews must stay vigilant to the presence of BMSB and other exotic insects onboard and report any onboard detections to the quarantine authorities at the ship’s destination.

Not sure if the insect onboard your vessels is a Brown Marmorated Stink Bug? [Click here to find out.](#)

New Zealand and Australia have joined forces to keep the bug out

In response to the rapid expansion of BMSB throughout Europe and North America, New Zealand and Australia continue to enforce seasonal measures to keep the bugs out of their countries. The two countries have also worked closely together to align their requirements as much as possible and at the time of writing, their list of ‘targeted risk countries’, approved treatment options and offshore treatment providers, are identical. However, there are still differences in requirements and port-of-entry procedures between the two

countries due to sovereign regulations and policies and all stakeholders in the import and shipping industries, including ship masters and crew, must therefore be familiar with the requirements for each country to ensure compliance.

This year's risk season started on **1 September 2022** and we encourage Members and clients to visit the Australian and New Zealand authorities' BMSB websites for detailed and up to date information on their respective seasonal measures:

- [Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry](#)
- [New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries](#)

While the framework of the two countries' measures remains essentially the same as last season, the following should be noted:

- Seasonal measures apply to certain goods, such as vehicles, machinery parts, tyres, etc., manufactured in or shipped from a targeted risk country on or after 1 September 2022 and that arrive in New Zealand or Australia before 30 April 2023 (inclusive). The measures may also apply to vessels that berth at, load or transship from targeted risk countries during the same period.
- The shipped onboard date, as indicated on the bill of lading, is the date used to determine when the goods were shipped.
- No new countries have been added to the list of 'targeted risk countries' ahead of the 2022/23 BMSB risk season, and the list now consists of the following 38 countries:

TARGETED RISK COUNTRIES FOR THE BMSB 2022/23 SEASON			
 ALBANIA	 CZECHIA	 LIECHTENSTEIN	 RUSSIA
 ANDORRA	 FRANCE	 LUXEMBOURG	 SERBIA
 ARMENIA	 GEORGIA	 MOLDOVA	 SLOVAKIA
 AUSTRIA	 GERMANY	 MONTENEGRO	 SLOVENIA
 AZERBAIJAN	 GREECE	 NETHERLANDS	 SPAIN
 BELGIUM	 HUNGARY	 NORTH MACEDONIA	 SWITZERLAND
 BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	 ITALY	 POLAND	 TURKEY
 BULGARIA	 JAPAN	 PORTUGAL	 UKRAINE
 CANADA	 KAZAKHSTAN	 ROMANIA	 USA
 CROATIA	 KOSOVO		

- However, the Australian authorities have identified **China** and the **United Kingdom** as 'emerging risk countries'. This means that vessels carrying goods manufactured in, shipped from, or transhipped in the two countries could be subject to random onshore inspections when they arrive in Australia. While goods shipped from the United Kingdom are subject to random inspections during the entire 2022/23 BMSB risk season, the requirement apply only to goods shipped from China between 1 September and 31 December 2022 (inclusive).

- Australian authorities continue to pay particular attention to ro-ro vessels that berth at, load, or transship in targeted risk countries during the BMSB risk season and New Zealand upholds its particular focus on goods imported from Italy.
- All BMSB treatment providers in targeted risk countries must be registered under the two countries' joint Offshore BMSB Treatment Providers Scheme, a scheme which aligns treatment options, rates, and compliance requirements. Information on the joint scheme can be obtained via both countries' BMSB websites.
- New Zealand and Australia will not conduct BMSB treatments for each other, i.e., goods bound for Australia cannot be treated for BMSB in New Zealand and vice versa.
- Non-compliant goods, i.e., goods subject to mandatory offshore treatment that arrive untreated or treated by an unapproved treatment provider, are likely to be directed for export on arrival.
- The changing risk status of BMSB will be continuously reviewed throughout the season and both countries may adjust their seasonal measures accordingly, e.g., based on detections of BMSB.

Unwanted in Chile too

Similar BMSB management measures also apply to vessels arriving in Chile. The Chilean Agriculture and Livestock Service ([Servicio Agrícola y Ganadero \(SAG\)](#)) has declared BMSB as a quarantine pest and requires inspection and fumigation of certain imported products, mainly coming from the United States.

Following interceptions in shipments of used clothing, toys, shoes and vehicles, a new resolution took effect in 2018 ([No. 971/2018](#) as amended by [No.5607/2019](#)) which requires fumigation of such goods arriving in Chile from the United States. An overview of Chile's actions to manage the BMSB risk (in English) is available [HERE](#), however, we recommend contacting vessel agents to verify the BMSB measures in force at a given time.

Source of Information: The Gard P&I Club