

Charges for intra and interstate livestock inspection services to rise

Western Australia is free of a number of serious livestock diseases present in other states. It is vital that measures are taken to prevent the entry of unwanted pests and disease. As part of these measures, inspection of livestock entering from other states and moving from some areas within WA are conducted by the Department of Agriculture

The costs of interstate livestock inspections by the Department of Agriculture have been increased, effective from 1 July 2003.

The Department is moving towards full cost recovery for services that provide a private benefit. This is in line with government policy and is supported by the livestock industries through the StockGuard Committees who acknowledge that biosecurity measures such as border quarantine inspections safeguard their industries from pests and diseases.

Animals imported into Western Australia or moved from the Cattle Tick Infected Area are required to undergo inspections, tests and treatments for specific animal diseases and be free of weed seeds, to prevent the introduction of specified animal diseases and declared weeds.

The cost of the Department's services to owners moving animals to or from other States, or from the Cattle Tick Infected Area of the Kimberley have, in the past, been heavily subsidised. In the 2003/04 financial year it is estimated that 70% of the cost of delivering the service will be recovered. Further increases will be necessary in 2004/05 to achieve full cost recovery.

Inspection sites

Quarantine inspection yards and inspection services are provided for importers at the Entry Inspection Points of Norseman, Kalgoorlie, Halls Creek and Kununurra. Inspection is conducted in privately owned yards in Broome. For some imported animals, further inspections, tests and treatments are also required after they have moved to the property of destination.

Examples of fee increases

To move towards full cost recovery, some charges for inspection services will rise significantly in 2003/04. The increase will be greatest for the use of the wash-down bay at sites other than Kununurra (due to the high cost of water), yard fees (due to the high cost of maintenance), the call-out fee for inspections on weekends and the charges for travel. Cost of medicine (fluke drench) and treatment (dipping) will not increase.

In 2003/04, each shipment (truck) will have a service charge (shipment fee) of \$46 to cover communication and preparation time. Where there is more than one consignment on-board a truck there will be an additional service fee of \$23 (consignment fee) for each consignment of animals inspected, to cover the costs associated with providing the Import Health Certificates and communications.

In 2002/03 these charges were all part of the first 15-minute charge of \$84 for 'inspection'. Under the new schedule they are more transparent and are itemised.

The minimum charge for a 'call out' on weekends or public holidays will be \$384 to cover the first three hours of either travel and or inspections. After this, the charge rate will be \$32 per 15 minutes. Importers can minimise their costs by planning to arrive at the Entry Inspection Post on a week day and have their stock inspected during normal work hours (6.00 am to 6.00 pm).

Please direct enquiries about the Department's schedule of fees and charges for livestock inspections in 2003/04, to Garry Hodgen, in South Perth on 9368 3370. Alternatively, request the brochure 'Service fees and charges for livestock inspections – 2003-2004' from your district office of the Department of Agriculture.