The New Zealand Biosecurity System and how it operates

Purpose

To provide insight into how biosecurity in New Zealand operates for the purpose of understand risk that specific pathways present and to determine if the current level of protection is sufficient to mitigate this risk.

The Biosecurity System and how it operates

Biosecurity in New Zealand is not a single line of defence at the border, rather it is a multi – layer system that begins offshore, incorporates the border and continues post-border into New Zealand where it becomes a joint effort between central government, regional councils, industry, community groups, and all New Zealanders.

The Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI), the agency tasked with the lead role for biosecurity in New Zealand, describes the system of consisting of 7 layers:

Pre-border

1. International Plant and Animal Health Standard Development

New Zealand actively influences international standards to protect human plant and animal health without unnecessarily restricting trade. This is done through two key standard setting bodies; the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the World Organisation of Animal Health (OIE). Rules that enable countries to take necessary measures to protect their nation's biosecurity are set in place in the WTO SPS Agreement of the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement).

2. Trade and Bilateral Arrangements

MPI provides technical expertise in the negotiation of the SPS chapters of free trade agreements and enforces these chapters once the agreements are in place. This involves developing Import Health Standards (IHS) to facilitate market access, and may involve capacity building and technical assistance projects between the parties to the FTA.

3. Risk Assessment and Import Health Standard Development

Risk assessment is the process used by MPI to determine the likelihood of an organism or disease entering, establishing, or spreading in New Zealand, the likely impact to the country if this was to occur, and the options available for managing this risk. Import Health Standards specify the risk management actions that must be undertaken to manage the biosecurity risks associated with imports such as; the heat treatment of imported foods, disease testing of animals and inspection of used vehicles before shipment.

MPI communicates these standards to exporting countries who then ensure their products meet New Zealand requirements and have government verification of compliance in the form of an export assurance certificate to MPI.

The intent of these pre-border measures is to create a continuous, targeted programme to move risk reduction measures offshore. Pre-border regulations and standards should be robust, consistent and subject to periodic review.

Border

4. Border Interventions

Border activity is targeted at ensuring risk goods comply with requirements of IHS, and preventing the entry of pests. Borders are diffuse and do not only include the point of entry. Containers unloaded at ports may be opened and inspected at hundreds of transitional facilities around the country.

MPI have three main areas of focus for intervention tools to mitigate biosecurity risks at the border

- Voluntary compliance achieved through increasing awareness of requirements, and incentivised through avoidance of delays or fines for compliant behaviour
- Anticipating or detecting risk goods and verifying compliance with Import Health Standards (profiling, x-ray screening, detector dogs etc.)
- Managing risk goods or non-compliant behaviour (fines, treatments, post-entry quarantine etc.)

Border inspections by MPI operate on a targeted system based on risk profiles. Risk profiles are generated on the basis of many criteria including; risk item pathway, the nature of the item, country of origin and previous history of the person or company sending the item. Items flagged as high risk may be subject to 100 % inspection while low risk items will receive much lower levels of inspection. There are various technologies being employed by MPI to create these risk profiles and better utilise their use of resources such as; Joint Border Management System (JBMS), Immigration Global Management System, Integrated Targeting and Operations Centre (ITOC) which establishes a more coordinated operations and increase risk management capability, and the recently introduced x-ray image transfer system.

The expectation of border activities is that all significant pathways including any hitchhiker pathways are covered, and monitoring is performed to provide slippage information about how much is getting past the border and how effective current protection measures are.

Post-border

5. Surveillance

Surveillance involves looking for unwanted exotic pests and diseases for early detection of new incursions, looking for established pests and diseases to determine distribution and population density to support pest management actions, or to determine pest or disease presence or absence to provide trading partners with area of freedom assurances.

6. Readiness and Response

This layer refers to New Zealand's ability to effectively respond to any incursions should they incur, which includes MPI working in partnership with industry to better plan and prepare for responses under the Government Industry Agreement (GIA) initiative. Response plans have been prepared for some major threats such as fruit fly and Foot and Mouth Disease, and generic programmes are designed to cover other scenarios and these should be routinely updated.

It is expected that in the event of a high impact incursion there would be sufficient access to expertise and operational capacity to respond immediately.

7. Pest Management

New Zealand has a pest management system in place to contain or reduce the impact of unwanted pests and diseases that have established here, such as Psa-V. Pest management of established organisms is a major expense that represents over half of New Zealand's total biosecurity expenditure.

It is expected that there is clear and effective national leadership and coordination of pest management activities and that transparent and effective performance measures monitor and forecast the establishment of pest and weed impacts and pathways.

THE MULTIPLE LAYERS OF NEW ZEALAND'S BIOSECURITY SYSTEM

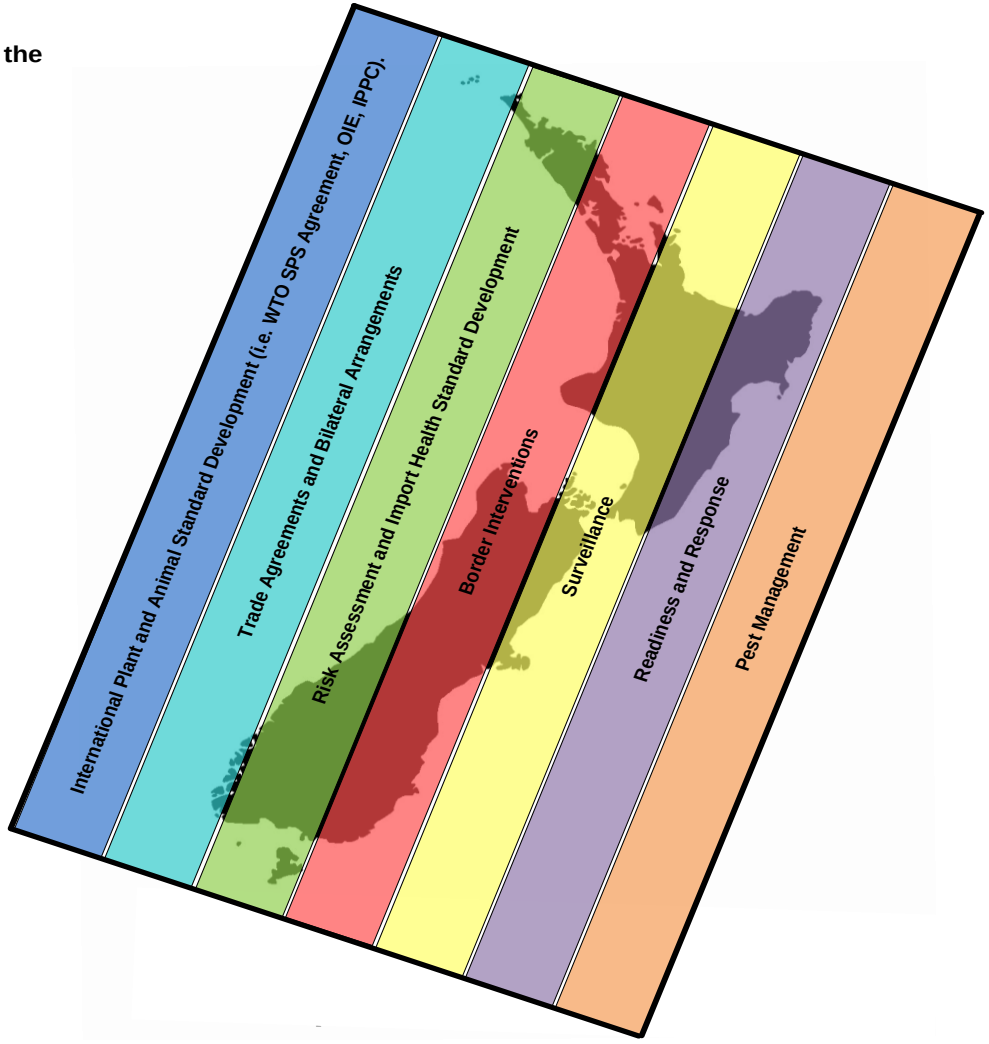
Biosecurity pressures on the border

Passengers

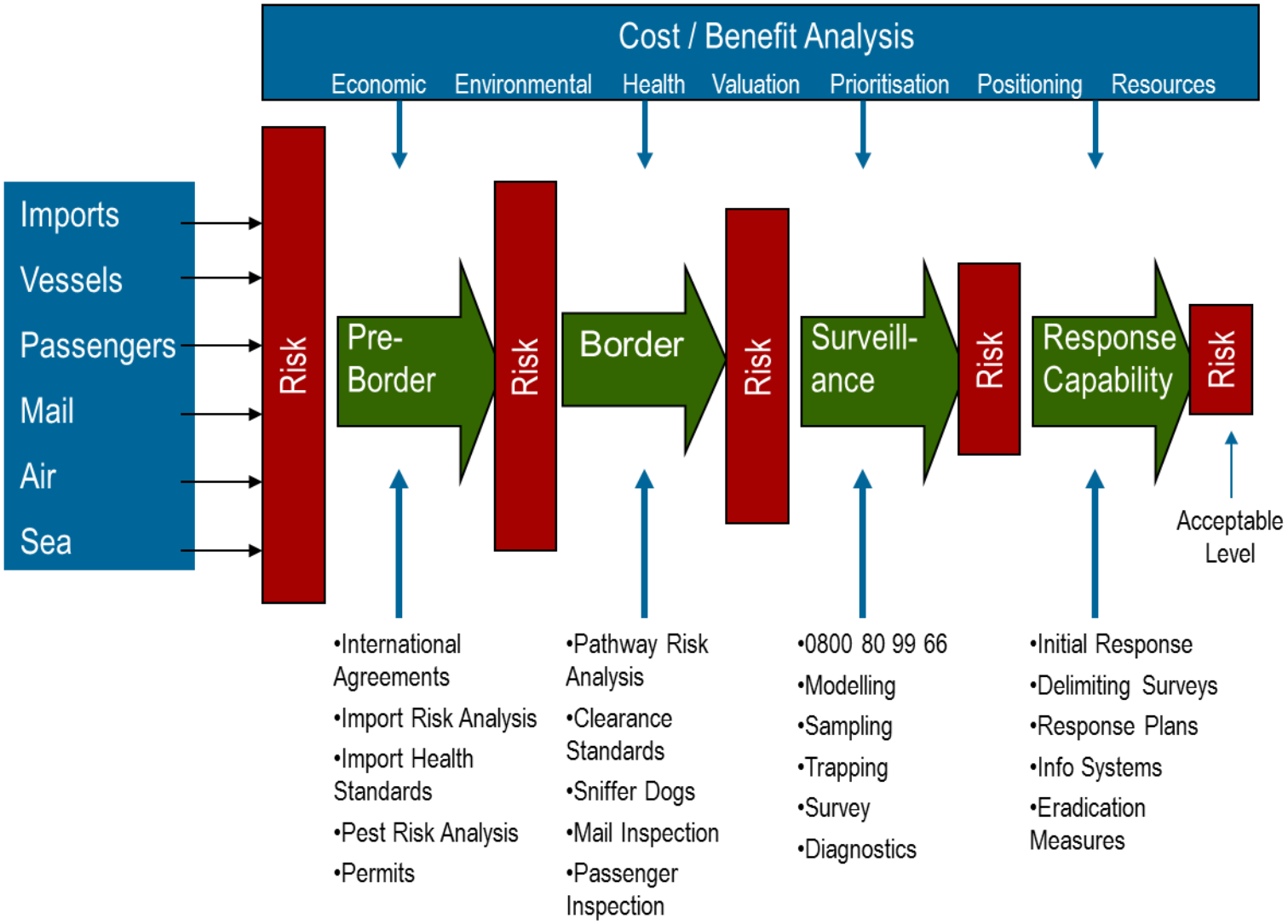
Cargo & Mail

Craft

Wind, tidal currents, rain



'Assured' New Zealand Exports


Cost / Benefit Analysis
Economic
Environmental
Health
Valuation
Prioritisation
Positioning
Resources
Imports
Vessels
Passengers
Mail
Air
Sea
Risk
Pre-Border
Risk
Border
Risk
Surveill-ance
Risk
Response Capability
Risk
Acceptable Level
•International Agreements
•Import Risk Analysis
•Import Health Standards
•Pest Risk Analysis
•Permits
•Pathway Risk Analysis
•Clearance Standards
•Sniffer Dogs
•Mail Inspection
•Passenger Inspection
•0800 80 99 66
•Modelling
•Sampling
•Trapping
•Survey
•Diagnostics
•Initial Response
•Delimiting Surveys
•Response Plans
•Info Systems
•Eradication Measures