

Illegal Fireworks Task Force Meeting
Tuesday, August 24, 2010
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 229
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

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The legislature finds that the unchecked spread of invasive species is the single greatest threat to Hawaii's economy, natural environment, and health and lifestyle of Hawaii's people, causing millions of dollars in:

- Crop losses
- Extinction of native species
- The destruction of native forests
- The spread of diseases
- Quarantine of exported agricultural crops

It is estimated that invasive species enter Hawaii 2 million times more rapidly than the natural rate and become established in the islands 500 times more than any other state in the nation.

Of all the plants and birds known to be extinct in the United States, more than 66-percent are from the State of Hawaii, so what is at risk? Our native forests.

Hawaii is a remote place on earth and is dependent on air and sea arrivals to move people, food, fuel, and consumer goods into and out of the State, acting as the hub of the Pacific.

Close to 90-percent of Hawaii's consumer goods are imported. As long as people and cargo come to Hawaii, invasive species will be brought into the State through our airport and harbors.

Some examples of invasive species include:

- Brown treesnake – introduced into Guam after WWII, it has caused the extinction of nine native species of birds in the U.S. Territory of Guam. There have been eight confirmed interceptions of BTS in Hawaii since 1981 – all associated with aircraft arrivals from Guam. Over a 25 year period Guam has experienced more than 1200 power outages due to BTS. Estimated cost \$485 million per year.
- Red Imported Ants – a major pest in the United States posing a health hazard to humans and animals with its sting. Other areas affected include Australia, New Zealand, China, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia. Two confirmed interceptions have been recorded at the ports of entry in Hawaii, one via air and the other via maritime cargo. Both interceptions resulted in stopping this threat, which would have resulted in an estimated cost of over \$211 million per year.

- Mosquitoes and biting midges – will impact the health and lifestyle of Hawaii's residents and native biota. With only 5 species found in the islands, none of which are the primary vectors of malaria and dengue. May spread the most important diseases to man and animals in Hawaii if new species are introduced and become established in the State. Estimated cost, priceless.

Maritime transportation bring in 500,000 sea containers, carrying over 25 million cartons of goods into the State, and another half million containers are transported between the islands.

The Plant Quarantine Branch under the Hawaii Department of Agriculture is the first line of defense against invasive species. Noxious weeds, pestiferous insects and diseases, illegal animals, and human, animal and plant pathogens require constant vigilance throughout the various ports of entry in Hawaii. The inspection and clearance of cargo to determine that health and sanitation standards have been met are the first steps in preventing the entry of invasive species.

In 2008, the Hawaii Biosecurity Program was established to interface with other relevant state law, but not to be inconsistent with federal law, and to be:

- A multi-dimensional system to prevent the entry into and throughout the State of invasive species
- Respond effectively to eradicate, control, reduce, and suppress incipient pest populations and established pests

Segments of the Hawaii Biosecurity Program includes:

- Pre-Entry – establish inspection programs at the port of departure to ensure the likelihood that inbound cargo are pest free
- Port-of-Entry – establish inspection, quarantine and treatment programs at the air and sea ports throughout the State to share facilities between federal and state agencies, where possible
- Post-Entry – develop, implement and coordinate measures to eradicate, control or suppress pests upon discovery
- Growth of Agriculture – promote the production of agricultural commodities in the state to further reduce cargo shipments

1. Regulatory Authority

HRS §141 authorizes HDOA to quarantine, inspect, fumigate, disinfect, destroy, or exclude commodities infested with pests or any article which is, in itself, a pest, which may be injurious to the agricultural industries and forest resources of the state.

HRS §150A authorizes HDOA to regulate plant, animal, and microorganism importation into the state, including conditions of importation, the listing of prohibited, restricted, and conditionally approved plants, non-domestic animals, and microorganisms, as well as issuance of permits, collection of user fees, application of interim rules, and imposition of penalties.

2. Plant Quarantine Duties and Operations

HDOA has oversight of all rules and regulations pertaining to moving cargo from the U.S. mainland.

Shippers of domestic cargo bound for Hawaii by air or sea must notify HDOA of incoming goods requiring inspection.

Inspectors separate incoming goods into one of three risk categories: high, medium, and low risk, and inspect the items in decreasing order of risk. The record of past interceptions also influences the selection of items for inspection.

3. Airport Inspection

PQ inspectors are assigned to inspect incoming articles from the US mainland at various facilities in or around the airport.

All articles regulated by the state must be inspected by a PQ inspector before they can be released to the importer.

PQ inspectors screen packing lists and cargo manifests for commodities that might be hosts of specific pests, based on previous interceptions or interception records.

4. Maritime Inspection

Maritime inspections usually involve plant-related commodities only.

Through an agreement between HDOA and certain ocean carriers, fully loaded, refrigerated maritime containers that may contain perishable items are allowed to be taken out of the container yard for inspection at a separate, authorized facility, which may be a warehouse, packing and distribution facility, or a repacking facility.

5. Inter-island Inspection

As required by statute (Hawaii Administrative Rules §4-72), all plants and propagative plant parts, and non-domestic animals, including mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and insects, require inspection and certification prior to shipping from Oahu to the outer islands.

Private, non-commercial shipments are transported to either the airport or maritime offices for inspection and certification. Large commercial shipments may be inspected at their point of origin before being loaded into containers for inter-island barge transport.

6. Military Inspection

The branch has established cooperative agreements with military bases clarifying each agency's inspection and interception responsibilities.

Since 1992, PQ has conducted inspections for detection of Brown Tree Snake (BTS), *Boiga irregularis* (Merrem), in commercial and military aircraft and ships arriving from Guam.

7. Passenger Inspection

All passengers, officers, and crew members arriving in Hawaii via commercial aircraft or vessels must complete an HDOA declaration form and submit the imported items for inspection. Passengers arriving from the mainland by private aircraft or boat also must complete the declaration forms. Private boat owners arriving at any of the harbors must report to the harbormaster, who, in turn, directs them to PQ for inspection.

An amnesty provision exempts from penalties persons who voluntarily surrender, prior to the beginning of any seizure action, a prohibited animal or a restricted animal, for which they have no permit.