



Safe . Sustainable . Seafood



Overview of current import measures affecting Thai fishery trade in Australia

Safe Sustainable Seafood Pty Ltd and SIAA | January 2018

Executive Summary

This is a collation of a series of reports which collectively provides a comprehensive picture of the trade relationship between Australia and Thailand with respect to fisheries and aquaculture (exports).

Under the terms of the agreement the work comprises;

- 1 Overview of current import measures affecting Thai fishery trade in Australia
- 2 Development of legislation concerning Country of Origin Labelling Issues and food safety
- 3 Updated information on relevant Australian Government Consultative Committees
- 4 Updates on IRA review
- 5 Recommendations for regaining market share.

With regard to this whole series, a wide range of issues have been raised and discussed in the various sections below including;

- Enhanced import conditions for both the uncooked and breaded, battered and crumbed prawn categories
- Australian Federal Government enquiries into the White Spot outbreak in Australia and the consequent Import Risk Assessment review now underway
- Country of Origin labelling of seafood at retail and foodservice
- Tightened food safety border inspection regimes for certain products
- New carbon monoxide testing for certain tuna and barramundi products
- Revised weights and measures legislation including product-glazing requirements
- New Modern Slavery legislation
- Feedback from various government consultative committee processes
- A review of Thai seafood's market share and current retail / consumer drivers, including consumer perception of imported seafood
- The need for positive PR and product promotion

What this large list of topics demonstrates is that even in a relatively short space of time (18 – 24 months) many different aspects relating to the conditions surrounding international seafood trade can change.

Exporting (and importing) businesses and foreign governments need to have mechanisms in place to ensure that they can constantly keep a watching brief on what is happening in these Australian government processes (State and Federal), to keep up, or stay ahead, of the incoming changes. There is a growing need for business to be very nimble and be able to change direction on products and processes quickly, if required, to keep in conformance with the import legislation framework.

Also, consumer and societal expectations change over time and these need to be taken into account, preferably ahead of time, so that when society / the consumer starts asking for something 'new', businesses are in a position where they can rapidly meet that new need / demand. For example, the Modern Slavery legislation and seafood sustainability certifications fall into this category.

Trade associations such as the SIAA (Seafood Importers Association of Australasia) help to fulfill this role for the seafood importing (and exporting) businesses that choose to join the association. The trade attaches at embassies also play an important role in this space. This is a complex landscape that needs to be carefully watched for any changes or unintended consequences.

We thank Thailand for commissioning us to do these reports and hope that they have been useful

