



Australian Aquatic Biological P/L

HYGIENE PROTOCOL

**for the prevention
of pathogen transmission
& translocations (plants & animals)
between catchments**

Australian Aquatic Biological Pty Limited



Introduction

This protocol is for employers, co-researchers and volunteers working in the field on Australian Aquatic Biological research projects. The precautionary procedures listed here are designed to reduce the risk of pathogens being transferred between catchments. Pathogens come in all forms and can occur in both freshwater, marine and terrestrial environments, they may be marine diseases like QX disease that affect oysters to freshwater/terrestrial disease like fungus that affects frogs. Regardless of the disease, the protocols listed are designed to reduce the risk of transmission from infected areas to non-infected areas.

Additionally, there is also the potential to transfer weed or noxious aquatic plants from one region to another and this is addressed in this hygiene protocol.

Objectives

The objectives of this protocol are:

- To provide reference material for employees, co-researchers and volunteers working with AABio employees on research projects like “The Australian Crayfish Project” or “The Australian Aquatic Biodiversity Survey”.
- Provide information on dress codes that reflect hygiene protocols and safety.
- Provide awareness of the hygiene requirements.
- Provide simple best practice procedures for field workers to achieve both hygiene and translocation protection for the environment.
- Specify standard repetitive procedures to follow for all personnel at sites at all times. Regardless of the risk, the procedures are implemented every time.

Preparation

Footwear:

Sturdy enclosed toe footwear is mandatory. Bare foot/open toe sandals/thongs are not acceptable. Hiking boots, gumboots, work boot are recommended. Sand shoes and trainers are acceptable but not preferred. Water proof or water resistant is preferred as footwear is regularly sprayed down. Sand shoes and trainers quickly become saturated when moving from site to site.

Clothing:

Sturdy jeans/trousers are preferred for both male and female participants. Long sleeve shirts are also preferred but short sleeve is acceptable. Shirts, tee shirts and tops that will tuck into your trousers and stay tucked in are the preferred clothing. Female participants wearing short tops that leave their midsection exposed are a common problem. Mosquitoes, leaches and stinging nettles are a constant source of annoyance for those people so that type of dress is not recommended.

Essential Accessories:

Hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and insect repellent are essential items for all.





Hygiene Procedure

- **Footwear**

It is essential to disinfect footwear between catchments. Each team leader will be responsible for footwear disinfection of all survey participants. It is essential that all team members make the effort to use the disinfection kit every time without fail. Footwear needs to be sprayed at the start of all survey activities and then sprayed again between sites.

Spraying footwear with 'toilet duck' (active ingredient benzalkonium chloride) is recommended to disinfect all footwear. This readily available chemical provides hospital grade germ kill and disinfectant ensuring your footwear hygienically clean

- **Hands**

Hands can be cleaned with antibacterial hand gel. Hand gels are available in the door compartments of the survey vehicles and team leaders are responsible to ensure the small 70ml bottles of gel are available. Hand gels do not require water (active ingredient ethanol 60% w/w), just apply a dollop to your hand and rub hands together working over fingers and wrists.

- **Nets**

Hand scoop nets are to be spraying with 'toilet duck' (active ingredient benzalkonium chloride) between sampling sites.

Traps are only to be used once, then washed in chlorinated water, rinsed and sun dried for 2 days before reuse. Different sites different traps.

- **Vehicles**

Tyres should be sprayed with Toilet Duck in areas known to contain pathogens. Using Duck's formula provides hospital grade germ kill and disinfectant ensuring your tyres are hygienically clean without damage to the tyres or vehicle.

Survey Vehicle Hygiene Kit

1. Hand pump spray bottle (500ml capacity). Recommended to have a spare, as they tend to wear out with constant use.
2. 500ml bottle "Duck" hospital grade disinfectant.
3. 70ml bottles of Antibacterial Hand Gel.

The standard procedures described above are designed to protect the environment by reducing the risk of transporting pathogens and weeds between catchments.

