



Security Sensitive Biological Agents Regulatory Scheme

SSBA – Guideline 8 – Transporting SSBAs and suspected SSBAs

January 2026

Introduction

This guideline provides information to facilities transporting confirmed or suspected security sensitive biological agents (SSBAs). You should refer to the relevant sections of SSBA Standards for the complete requirements for transport of SSBAs.

Transporting SSBAs

Transfer of a SSBA is a reportable event to the Australian Centre for Disease Control (CDC) and both the sending and the receiving facilities must report the transfer.

SSBAs (including suspected SSBAs) are required to be transported securely and in accordance with the relevant sections of the SSBA Standards.

Registered entities transporting confirmed SSBAs

If you are **sending** a confirmed SSBA you must:

- comply with Commonwealth, State and Territory legislation governing the transport of Biological agents (such as the Australian Dangerous Goods Code for Road and Rail and the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations for Air Transport);
- ensure that the receiving entity will accept the SSBA prior to dispatch of the agent (a record must be maintained of the acceptance);
- notify the receiving entity of the shipment details;
- if sending via a transport agent, ensure that the transport agent has a documented transport security plan;
- if using authorised personnel, report the movement to the Responsible Officer who will maintain a record of the movement; and
- report the SSBA transfer to the Australian CDC within two business days of the transfer occurring using the *Transfer Out* report. If the outcome of the transfer, for

example, successful or unsuccessful is unknown at the time of this report you are required to submit an additional *Transfer Out* report outlining the outcome of the transfer once known.

If you are **receiving** a confirmed SSBA you must:

- confirm with the sending facility that you will accept the shipment;
- confirm with the sending facility that the SSBA has arrived;
- check if the shipment was successfully transferred. If the shipment is deemed unsuccessful (for example, evidence of package tampering, missing items, etc) you must report the unsuccessful transfer to the sending facility and the Australian CDC ;
- notify the sending facility if the shipment does not arrive as expected;
- notify the Australian CDC within two business days of the receipt of the SSBA using the *Transfer In* report. If you are **not** registered to handle the SSBA or if you have a new purpose for handling the SSBA you are required to report using the *Start to Handle a New SSBA* report or *Administrative Changes – Change of Purpose for Handling* report within two business days;
- dispose of the SSBA within two business days, if you do not intend to retain and handle the SSBA. Disposal may be either by complete transfer or destruction of the SSBA.

Transferring SSBAs between facilities of the same entity

If you are transferring SSBAs between facilities of the **same** entity you can use the report *Transfer Between Facilities of the Same Entity*. This report must be submitted to the Australian CDC within two business days of the transfers occurring. The officer submitting this report must be authorised by the entity to report on behalf of both the sending and receiving facilities.

Unsuccessful transfer versus loss of an SSBA during transport

A successful transfer is defined under the SSBA Standards as verification that complete shipment of the SSBA (quantity and type), as covered by the shipping documents, has been received and that there is no evidence of tampering to the shipping container. Tampering refers to the deliberate altering or damaging of the package. Accidental damage to a shipping container does not automatically mean that there has been an unsuccessful transfer. If there is damage to the outer container, but the shipment has arrived complete and if there is no evidence of tampering with the inner container(s), then this does **not** need to be reported as an unsuccessful transfer for the purposes of the SSBA Standards.

When to report:

- If the shipment has arrived, but one or more of the above indicators of successful transfer has not been met, then both the *sending and receiving facilities* must report an **unsuccessful transfer**.
- If only a portion of the SSBA shipment arrives then both the *sending and receiving facilities* must report an **unsuccessful transfer**.
- If the shipment of SSBA fails to arrive at the receiving facility and it cannot be located within the transport chain, then the sending facility must report a **loss of SSBA**.

Unsuccessful transfers must be reported using the unsuccessful transfer section in the *Transfer In* or *Transfer Out* forms. Loss of an SSBA must be reported to the Australian CDC by using the *Incident Notification* form. Reports are required within two business days following discovery of the outcome of the transfer.

Transporting suspected SSBAs or SSBAs handled under the temporary handling provisions

If you are **sending** suspected SSBAs for confirmatory testing or destruction, a previously suspected SSBA that has now been confirmed or an SSBA received under the temporary handing provisions you must:

- comply with Commonwealth, State and Territory legislation governing the transport of Biological agents (such as the Australian Dangerous Goods Code for Road and Rail and the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations for Air Transport);
- ensure that the receiving entity will accept the suspected SSBA prior to dispatch of the agent (a record must be maintained of the acceptance);
- notify the receiving entity of the shipment details; and
- report the transfer within two business days of the transfer occurring.

If you are **receiving** suspected SSBAs, a previously suspected SSBA that has now been confirmed or an SSBA sent under the temporary handing provisions you must:

- confirm with the sending facility that you will accept the shipment;
- check if the shipment was successfully transferred;
- confirm with the sending facility that the suspected SSBA has arrived; and
- notify the sending facility if the shipment does not arrive as expected.

Other legislation

Transport of biological agents may be subject to other legislation within your jurisdiction. For example, there may be restrictions on the movement of animal disease pathogens, genetically-modified organisms or infectious agents. You are advised to check prior to

transporting the SSBA whether any approvals are required or any other restrictions are in place within your jurisdiction or the jurisdiction you are transporting an SSBA to.

Registered entity sending a confirmed SSBA checklists

Sending SSBAs	Yes	No
Have you informed the receiving facility that you wish to send the SSBA to prior to sending?		
Have you received confirmation in writing from the receiving facility that it is willing to accept the SSBA?		
Have you informed the receiving facility of the shipment details (for example, the consignment number, waybill numbers, details of transport agent)?		
Have you informed the receiving facility of the expected time and date of delivery?		
Have you packaged the SSBA in accordance with the dangerous goods requirements?		
Are you using an appropriate transport agent?		
If not, are you using an authorised person?		
If you have not heard from the receiving facility within two days of the expected delivery date, have you contacted the receiving facility to confirm receipt?		
Have you notified the Australian CDC of the transfer, including the outcome, within two business days?		
Receiving SSBAs	Yes	No
Have you sent the sending facility written confirmation that you are willing to accept the SSBA?		
Have you recorded the SSBA shipping details?		
Have you received the SSBA?		
If not, have you contacted the transport agent/authorised person to check for delays?		
Have you notified the sending facility that the SSBA has arrived?		
Have you checked to ensure that it was a successful transfer?		

Receiving SSBAs	Yes	No
Have you notified the Australian CDC of the transfer including the outcome within two business days?		

Sending suspected SSBAs or SSBAs received under the temporary handling provisions (known SSBAs) checklists

Sending Suspected SSBAs	Yes	No
Have you informed the receiving facility that you wish to send the suspected/known SSBA to prior to sending?		
Have you received confirmation in writing from the receiving facility that it is willing to accept the suspected/known SSBA?		
Have you informed the receiving facility of the shipment details (for example, the consignment number, waybill numbers, details of transport agent)?		
Have you informed the receiving facility of the expected time and date of delivery?		
Have you packaged the suspected/known SSBA in accordance with the dangerous goods requirements?		
If you have not heard from the receiving facility within two days of the expected delivery date, have you contacted the receiving facility to confirm receipt?		
Have you notified the Australian CDC of the transfer?		
Receiving Suspected SSBAs	Yes	No
Have you sent the sending facility written confirmation that you are willing to accept the suspected/known SSBA?		
Have you recorded the suspected/known SSBA shipping details?		
Have you received the suspected/known SSBA?		
If not, have you contacted the shipping agent to check for delays?		
Have you notified the sending facility that the suspected/known SSBA has arrived?		

Receiving Suspected SSBAs	Yes	No
Have you checked to ensure that it was a successful transfer and reported the outcome to the sending facility?		