



Fact Sheet

International Freight Assistance Mechanism

21 October 2020

INTERNATIONAL AIRFREIGHT – RECONNECTING GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS

The International Freight Assistance Mechanism (IFAM) is a targeted, temporary, emergency measure established by the Australian Government in response to COVID-19. The mechanism provides funding to help keep international freight routes and flights operating into and out of Australia.

IFAM has helped reconnect crucial global supply chains and supported the import of critical medical supplies, equipment and other goods of national importance. It also provides the opportunity, on the outbound legs, for high-value and time-sensitive perishable products to be exported to established markets. To date, IFAM-supported flights have enabled over 160,000 tonnes to be exported or committed for export to 66 international destinations between April and early December 2020.

By keeping key airfreight routes open, IFAM is preserving jobs and providing Australian businesses disproportionately affected by COVID-19 time to adapt their business models and adjust to a new and tougher trading environment.

[Find out](#) about support available for businesses.

IFAM supported flight information

For detailed route information, pricing, flight numbers and days of operation, please download the:

[IFAM flight schedule outbound](#)

[IFAM flight schedule inbound](#)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the International Freight Assistance Mechanism?

The International Freight Assistance Mechanism (IFAM) is a targeted, temporary, emergency measure put in place by the Australian Government in response to COVID-19.

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Who is overseeing the IFAM?

The Australian Government has appointed Mr Michael Byrne as the International Freight Co-ordinator General and Air Vice-Marshal Margaret Staib AM CSC as the Australian Government Freight Controller.

Mr Byrne has significant international logistics experience as Managing Director of Australia's two largest logistics companies, plus as a former non-executive director of Australia Post.

With over 30 years' experience in the Australian Defence Force and past experience as Chief Executive Officer of Airservices Australia, Air Vice-Marshal Staib brings significant experience in domestic and international aviation and logistics to the role.

Air Vice-Marshal Staib and Mr Byrne will focus on facilitating the movement of high-value, time sensitive and airfreight reliant (high-perishability) products in to and out of Australia. The two roles are complementary and work flexibly together to optimise the benefits for Australia and the economy.

Who provides airfreight services for IFAM?

A network of airfreight service providers and freight forwarders supports the delivery of IFAM.

Airlines / Airfreight service providers

- › Air New Zealand Limited
- › Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd
- › Emirates
- › Etihad Airways PJSC
- › Federal Express Corporation
- › Japan Airlines Co. Ltd
- › Singapore Airlines Ltd
- › QANTAS Airways Ltd
- › Qatar Airways Group (Q.C.S.C.)
- › United Airlines Inc.

Freight forwarders

A panel of freight forwarders was established to provide specialist advice as well as support the delivery of IFAM in reconnecting global supply chains.

They include: CT Freight Pty Ltd, Schenker Australia Pty Ltd, Kuehne & Nagel Ltd, Toll Group, and DHL Global Forwarding (Australia) Pty Ltd.

For full contact details see **Appendix A**.

When was IFAM established?

IFAM was [established in April 2020](#) with \$110 million in funding to help keep supply chains open. IFAM received a [further \\$241.9 million in July 2020](#).

On 6 October, the Australian Government [announced an additional \\$317.1 million](#) in funding for the International Freight Assistance Mechanism (IFAM). With **\$95 million** to directly address upcoming seasonal demand and **\$222.1 million** to extend IFAM to the middle of 2021. The funding injection will help keep international supply chains open.

The additional funding also continues to support the re-building of domestic connections for producers and growers in regional and rural areas that rely on airfreight to get their products to existing markets.

What freight is prioritised on outbound IFAM flights?

Eligibility for products supported by IFAM is determined by a set of overarching principles rather than a list of commodities. Products that are eligible are:

Australian made or produced, high-value, time sensitive, reliant on airfreight (for example, due to perishability) or otherwise deemed to be in the national interest.

For example:

- products that could not be sent by an alternative to airfreight without losing their essential product characteristics or value,
- goods that have a limited shelf life or are required to meet a sudden or immediate need.

IFAM is not limited to agriculture and seafood goods. Any product which meets the above principles may be considered for IFAM support.

Other products eligible under the principle-based framework may include medicines which have a short shelf-life, are high-value and are reliant on airfreight to meet a sudden or immediate need – for example blood products, or raw material ingredients for pharmaceuticals.

Frozen product such as frozen meat or seafood do not meet the criteria for IFAM support, as these are not time-sensitive or perishable products. Powdered milk is also out of scope.

The eligibility principles apply to all exports seeking IFAM support, including via IFAM grants, charter flights and block bookings.

The International Freight Coordinator General and Australian Government Freight Controller have authority to make decisions based on the principles outlined above, with guidance from the Airfreight Deputy Secretary Board.

What freight is prioritised on inbound IFAM flights?

On inbound flights, IFAM is prioritising medical supplies, medicines and equipment to support Australia's health response, as well as items deemed in the national interest.

For example, on inbound flights IFAM has supported:

- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
- Pharmaceuticals and consumables
- Medical equipment and consumables

- Inputs to health industries
- Imported components essential to the operation of key infrastructure assets, non-medical personal protective equipment and agricultural chemicals.

How do I access outbound IFAM support?

If you believe your goods align to the description above, please [register your interest](#).

Once you've registered and received an acknowledgement email, you should contact your Freight Forwarder to access any of the below options:

- IFAM supported flights - see [IFAM flight schedule outbound](#)
- Grant assistance – see [more information](#)
- Regional and remote flight connections – see [more information](#)

How do I access inbound IFAM support?

On inbound flights, IFAM is prioritising medical supplies, medicines and equipment to support Australia's health response, as well as items deemed in the national interest.

Importers can work with their freight forwarder to access freight capacity – see [IFAM flight schedule inbound](#)

If importers are having difficulty accessing freight space for urgent medical supplies please contact airfreight@ustrade.gov.au

Do I have to pay anything toward the IFAM flights?

Yes.

Airfreight costs will be more than pre-COVID airfreight rates and Australian businesses will need to make a financial contribution towards the increased cost of their freight. The pricing in the flight schedules is inclusive of the government support but not inclusive of freight forwarders fees or additional costs.

As a temporary emergency measure, IFAM will – in the short term – assist in reducing the impacts of COVID-19 on key international supply chains. To this end, the government will help businesses get their products on flights and to established international markets quickly.

How does the pricing work?

The cost of IFAM supported flights can be found in the IFAM flight schedules ([outbound](#) and [inbound](#)). These prices are inclusive of the IFAM government support, however, these prices are not inclusive of freight forwarder fees or additional costs.

The government contribution will decrease over time, according to market dynamics.

What support is available for regional and remote locations?

IFAM is committed to supporting regional Australia. There are international IFAM supported flights departing from regional locations across Australia, as well as IFAM supported domestic flights connecting to international IFAM supported flights – see [IFAM flight schedule outbound](#) for details.

In addition, a commercial domestic service is operational, including [Qantas and Virgin Australia](#), Australia Post and Toll. They are operating a [minimum domestic network](#), servicing the most critical metropolitan and regional routes in Australia.

What is grant assistance?

If the scheduled IFAM supported flights do not meet an exporter's needs, the exporter may discuss their options with their freight forwarder and consider applying for grant assistance through IFAM. Freight forwarders can apply for grant assistance on behalf of the exporter.

The IFAM grant application process is managed through an online system called SmartyGrants – [submit an application](#). Information on using SmartyGrants can be found in the [How to Guide](#).

Please note:

- Exporters' products must be high-value, time-sensitive and reliant on airfreight (highly-perishable) to be considered.
- IFAM cannot provide grant assistance on scheduled IFAM flights (see [IFAM flight schedule outbound](#)).
- Exporters and freight forwarders are expected to first consider the scheduled IFAM supported flights.
- Larger loads of high-value, time-sensitive and perishable freight, or applications for support over multiple flights or weeks, are more likely to be supported.

What other flight options are available?

In addition to IFAM supported flights, there is increasing commercial freight capacity, accessible through your freight forwarder – see [Commercial flight options](#) for further details.

I have received grant assistance, and now need extended or additional support, what do I do?

You need to reapply for IFAM support. Proposals and support do not continue past the time period approved in the assistance documents. Each proposal will be evaluated and considered based on market conditions at that point in time. We will only accept proposals for a maximum time period of 8 weeks.

You should also review the [IFAM flight schedule outbound](#) to ensure there is not IFAM support readily available. The IFAM grant application process has moved to an online system called SmartyGrants – [submit an application](#). Information on using SmartyGrants can be found in the [How to Guide](#).

How long will the IFAM support continue?

On 1 April, IFAM was initiated as a temporary and emergency measure to help keep global supply chains open and has already demonstrated its value in re-connecting airfreight links.

The commercial airfreight sector near collapsed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; committing additional funds to keep IFAM alive gives Australian businesses more time to re-engineer their business models and adjust to a new, tougher trading environment.

On 6 October, the Australian Government announced an additional \$317.1 million to extend the International Freight Assistance Mechanism (IFAM) to the middle of 2021, keeping international supply chains open.

How do I prepare for a new reality?

Australian businesses **need to use the time now** to review their current business models.

The future trading environment will not resemble the pre-COVID trading environment. Businesses must work together, aggregate, and collaborate to use the mechanisms available to them now. These include:

- Re-established IFAM airfreight flights
- Funding assistance through a grant mechanism
- Businesses, freight forwarders and industry associations across sectors must work together now to innovate and secure our trading future.

Relevant State and Territory Governments, as well as Federal Departments, are also working together to support you to adjust and will continue to share resources as they become available.

What can I do to ensure flight routes remain?

One of the key objectives of the IFAM is to temporarily support international airfreight supply chains. The program has a particular emphasis on ensuring access to airfreight services from hubs like Adelaide, Brisbane, Cairns, Darwin, Hobart and Perth for high-value, perishable and time-sensitive produce.

Exporters need to ensure they use the IFAM support available to demonstrate demand for ongoing support. The Australian Government cannot continue to support specific flights/routes if they are under-utilised.

For example, if flights from A to B are under capacity, IFAM will likely seek to support alternative flights/routes. The choices made by businesses over the next six months will have a significant impact on the options available to them in the longer term.

What happens next?

IFAM is a targeted, temporary and emergency measure to keep Australia's critical air links with the world open as businesses adjust to a tougher new trading environment. Businesses must work together, aggregate and collaborate to demonstrate demand ensuring the airfreight links re-established by IFAM continue to operate once funding ends.

Australian businesses must use this time to review their current business models and prepare for a new reality. The future trading environment will not resemble the pre-COVID trading environment and businesses will need to adapt. This is particularly relevant for businesses that rely heavily on airfreight.

Businesses, freight forwarders and industry associations across sectors must work together now to innovate and secure our trading future. Relevant State and Territory Governments, as well as Federal Departments, are also working together to help support you and will continue to share resources as they become available.

For additional government support, visit business.gov.au.

For market insights and latest updates, visit Austrade's [COVID-19 page](#).

Is IFAM contrary to our obligations under international trade law?

No. IFAM is consistent with Australia's WTO obligations.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

For more information or if you have a question, please email Austrade at airfreight@austrade.gov.au

Austrade IFAM landing page: austrade.gov.au/ifam

For detailed route information, pricing, flight numbers and days of operation, please download the:

- [IFAM flight schedule outbound](#)
- [IFAM flight schedule inbound](#)

For outbound support, register your interest and complete the dedicated enquiry form: haveyoursay.agriculture.gov.au/international-freight-assistance

For information on applying for IFAM grant assistance see [SmartyGrants](#) and [how to guide](#)

For market insights and latest updates visit [Austrade's COVID-19 page](#)

For additional government support visit business.gov.au

Ministerial press releases:

- [Securing freight access for Australia agricultural and fisheries exporters](#)
- [First flight takes off under \\$110 million freight assistance initiative](#)
- [Western rock lobster back on a roll](#)
- [High-quality Victorian lamb takes-off](#)
- [New air freight network to boost agricultural and fisheries exports](#)
- [1000 tonnes of premium Australian lamb is wheels up](#)
- [Freight controller appointed to manage airfreight in the national interest](#)
- [Lift off for South Australian produce](#)
- [New flights to get seafood exports moving again](#)
- [Bridging the gap for Tasmanian exporters](#)
- [South Australian premium produce flying high](#)
- [Freight flights boost for South East Queensland farmers](#)
- [Freight flights boost for Australian exporters](#)
- [Export boost for South Australian farmers and fishers](#)
- [Trade, Tourism and Investment critical to economic recovery and jobs](#)

APPENDIX A

Airfreight Service Providers and Freight Forwarders Panel

Airfreight Service Providers

Air New Zealand Limited	nalesh.prasad@airnz.co.nz
Cathay Pacific Airways	nigel_chynoweth@cathaypacific.com
Emirates	Melbourne: sharon.doyle@emirates.com or skycargomel@emirates.com Sydney: jeremiah.wong@emirates.com or skycargosyd@emirates.com Australia Other: greg.johnson@emirates.com
Etihad Airways	ashadid@etihad.ae
Federal Express Corporation	sean.mgee@fedex.com
Japan Airlines	harakawa.s99x@jal.com or takaramoto.jp3p@jal.com
Singapore Airlines	Nicholas_Kok@singaporeair.com.sg
Qantas Airways	freightsalessupport@qantas.com.au
Qatar Airways	Sydney: qatarcargo.syd@worldwidegsa.com Melbourne: qatarcargo.mel@worldwidegsa.com Perth: qatarcargo.per@worldwidegsa.com Adelaide: qatarcargo.adl@worldwidegsa.com Brisbane: qatarcargo.bne@worldwidegsa.com
United Airlines Inc.	Troy.Young@united.com

Freight Forwarders

CT Freight	wade.bollard@ctfreight.com
DHL Global Forwarding	Bernie.cooney@dhl.com
Kuehne & Nagel	Exports: wes.mcdiarmid@kuehne-nagel.com Imports: roman.degen@kuehne-nagel.com
Schenker Australia	Johan.Sandahl@dbschenker.com
Toll Group	Dwayne.Jude@tollgroup.com