



United States  
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Animal and  
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Inspection  
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## INTRODUCTION

Since 1993, the United States Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services (WS) has implemented an integrated wildlife damage management program on Guam to prevent the inadvertent spread of the invasive brown treesnake (*Boiga irregularis*) via the island's outbound cargo network. In Fiscal Year 2009, WS entered into Interagency Agreements with the United States Department of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) and Joint Region Marianas to prevent snakes from entering commercial and military cargo traffic from Guam, respectively. These agreements cover activities at the Guam International Airport, Commercial Packing and Shipping companies, Port Authority of Guam, Andersen Air Force Base, and Navy Base Guam. The scope of work includes the placement of brown treesnake traps and toxicant devices around ports of exit and cargo facilities to reduce brown treesnake populations that could enter aircraft or cargo traffic. Population reduction efforts are supplemented with nighttime searches for BTS along perimeter fence lines. As a final preventive measure, outbound aircraft and cargo are inspected with specially-trained brown treesnake detector dog teams (BTSDD). Wildlife Services continues to strive for 100% inspections of all departing aircraft and cargo.

This report summarizes canine inspection activities conducted by WS during Fiscal Year 2009.

As of the end of FY09, the BTSDD program had sixteen (16) BTSDD; eleven (11) BTSDD teams and five (5) dogs unassigned. All BTSDD are Jack Russell Terriers. In addition to the 11 handlers, there are two BTSDD trainers and one kennel technician. The program is managed by a supervisory biologist.

The BTSDD are housed in two locations: on the Navy Base Guam (NBG), where WS has one kennel with space for up to eight (8) dogs, and on Andersen Air Force Base (AAFB) with space for up to sixteen (16) dogs.

The BTSDD teams provide inspection coverage at all ports of exits and are divided into two areas for operational purposes, north and south. The three teams located at NBG conduct inspections on NBG, Polaris Point, Commercial Port, Guam International Airport (GIA), select warehouses, and the southern villages where service members may be living at the time of their permanent change of station (PCS). The BTSDD (8 working teams) housed at AAFB conduct inspections on AAFB, GIA, the Harmon industrial area, and the northern and central villages where service members may be living at the time of their PCS.

## Status of Personnel

The past fiscal year has seen the loss of three handlers and one trainer. Two handlers remained deployed with their National Guard units for the duration of the fiscal year



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and will return in January 2010. The Andersen based program had an average of 8.7 handlers/month over the year and there were an average of 2.9 handlers/month at Navy. This is a slight decrease over FY manpower availability (10-15%). Absences through Guard/Reserve commitments (of handlers not already deployed), leave, and training were equivalent to the absence of one full time employee (FTE) for the whole fiscal year.

Four new handlers are in the process of completing their BTSDD training and will be available for duty from the end of January 2010. One handler has been called up for 7 months military duty from January 2010.

## **INSPECTION RESULTS**

For the purpose of this report inspection results are presented in tabular form. The data covers the three major funding cooperators: USAF, USN, and Commercial (funding from the Office of Insular Affairs). The data presented is quantitative analysis of inspected and uninspected aircraft (A/C), household goods (HHG), warehouses, vehicles (including trailers or other wheeled equipment), and pallets.

Table 1 summarizes inspection data for FY09 and data to show the changes (+/-) in the amounts of inspected or missed items from the preceding fiscal year (08).

Completed inspections ranged from 93% – 100% of targeted items. Warehouses are counted by number of visits and can include multiple visits to a warehouse during a 24 hour day e.g., Continental Cargo. Missed inspections occur primarily with aircraft and household goods, and other cargo i.e., vehicles and palletized cargo.

### **Aircraft Missed**

- 73% Missed due to handler conducting other inspections.
- 22% Missed due to schedule changes/late notification/no notification.
- 5% Missed due to no handler on duty.

35% of missed A/C inspections were deemed high risk due to their final destination.

### **Household Goods Missed**

- 42% Missed due to handler conducting other inspections.
- 28% Missed due to service member not home.
- 21% Missed due to HHG all ready packed out.

20% of missed HHG inspections were deemed high risk due to their final destination.

### **Other Cargo Missed**

- 75% Missed due to cargo already loaded prior to arrival
- 25% Missed due to no notification.

All missed cargo was deemed high risk due its' final destination.

Multiple inspections occurring at approximately the same time which may result in handlers having to chose the outbound item deemed the highest risk. Household goods best exemplify this and continue to cause problems due to multiple pack-outs occurring at the same time at dispersed locations across Guam, off and on military installations. Other reasons for uninspected items include potential inspections occurring at shift change when no team is available or ready, no notification of departures, and decisions by flight crews to depart earlier than scheduled.

### **Significant Brown Treesnake Finds**

During FY 2009, 33 BTS were recovered from areas deemed critical, i.e., flightline, cargo processing/staging areas and household goods pack outs. Snakes were recovered or reported by military personnel, employees of non-military cooperators, or by USDA-WS employees.

Twenty-five (25) were recovered from areas around the AAFB flightline and base housing on Andersen, AFB, two (2) were recovered from locations on Navy Base Guam, six (6) were recovered from commercial exit points.

Of the 33 BTS caught in critical areas, five (5) were found by BTSDD teams during inspections. Another BTS was recovered from a vehicle by a BTSDD after the snake was witnessed crawling up in to the chassis. The remaining twenty-seven (27) were called or turned in by cooperators to WS employees.

The average snout-vent-length (SVL) of all BTS recovered was roughly 842mm long and a mass of 111g (the SVL and mass are skewed by some very large BTS, additional some BTS were in poor condition to take accurate measurements). The largest BTS was hand caught during spotlighting by a handler at GIA – 2059mm, 998g and the smallest was also captured at GIA by a Continental employee - 535mm, 16g, both were male.

Two BTS of special note was discovered during FY09. One found during the pre-inspection of a HHG shipment to Robins, AFB in Georgia was carrying 7 eggs and another was found stuck to tape on an outbound shipment. What was unusual about this was the BTS manage to align itself with the tape perfectly along its whole length. This was duly treated as suspicious and was not counted in the overall total of thirty-three.

**Table 1.** Wildlife Services canine inspection results for Fiscal Year 2009.

FY09	AIR FORCE INSPECTIONS					NAVY INSPECTIONS					COMMERCIAL INSPECTIONS				
	A/C <sup>1</sup>	Hses <sup>2</sup>	Vehs <sup>3</sup>	Whses <sup>4</sup>	Pallets <sup>5</sup>	A/C	Hses	Vehs	Whses	Pallets	A/C	Hses	Vehs	Whses	Pallets
<b>Qtr 1</b>	390	101	132	295	8051	254	309	483	515	26718	634	3	789	576	11091
<b>Qtr 2</b>	378	155	133	474	6272	318	306	911	520	23381	687	33	364	856	10357
<b>Qtr 3</b>	333	225	221	617	7563	313	318	425	461	22840	757	22	480	990	12435
<b>Qtr 4</b>	430	151	190	601	4552	287	292	304	520	22367	648	13	632	907	13605
<b>No. Inspected</b>	1531	632	676	1987	26438	1172	1225	2123	2016	95306	2726	71	2265	3329	47488
<b>No. Missed (% Missed)</b>	1 (> 1%)	47 (6.92%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5 (0.02%)	3 (0.26%)	60 (4.67%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3 (0.00%)	95 (3.37%)	1 (1.39%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	<b>34 (0.07%)</b>
<b>% +/- FY08</b>	-5.6%	-10.4%	76.5%	51.9%	0.0%	-2.2%	-36.6%	47.1%	-7.3%	6.6%	-2.8%	-7.7%	26.2%	23.0%	-8.0%
<b>Total Movements</b>	1532	679	676	1987	26443	1175	1285	2123	2016	95309	2821	72	2265	3329	47522
<b>FY08</b>															
<b>No. Inspected</b>	1602	583	383	1308	26408	1196	1693	1443	2175	89368	2604	69	1787	2706	51639
<b>No. Missed (% Missed)</b>	21 (1.30%)	175 (30.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	31 (0.10%)	5 (0.40%)	335 (19.80%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3 (0.00%)	297 (11.40%)	9 (13.00%)	8 (0.40%)	0 (0.00%)	2
<b>Total Movements</b>	1623	758	383	1308	26439	1201	2028	1443	2175	89371	2901	78	1795	2706	51641
	A/C	Hses	Vehs	Whses	Pallets	A/C	Hses	Vehs	Whses	Pallets	A/C	Hses	Vehs	Whses	Pallets
	AIR FORCE INSPECTIONS					NAVY INSPECTIONS					COMMERCIAL INSPECTIONS				

<sup>1</sup> Aircraft // <sup>2</sup> Household Goods // <sup>3</sup> Vehicles // <sup>4</sup> Number of warehouse visits // <sup>5</sup> A pallet is prepped cargo e.g., wooden pallet, metal cargo sheet //

## **FUTURE OUTLOOK**

Currently, some inspections processes remain an either/or proposition, as many export activities conflict across limited blocks of time during the business week. This is most evident for aircraft and HHG inspections, where conflicting inspection requirements necessitate a handler making a choice regarding inspection priorities. Inspection requirements may conflict due to: multiple scheduled pack-outs, short-notice changes to flight schedules, and handler shortages. In most circumstances, handlers must make a decision on inspection priority, based primarily on the perceived risk of movement(s).

Inspection results from Fiscal Year 2009, as with FY08, demonstrated that even incremental increases in handler availability produce a significant reduction in missed inspections (Table 1). As of February 2010, WS could conceivably have enough handlers to reduce missed inspections even further than FY09 levels.

Due to changes from the commencement of Joint Region, WS has adapted to new cargo processing and handling procedures within local DoD commands. Wildlife Services' ability to meet the changing cargo environment on Guam will depend on improved communication with cooperators and partners in the effort against the BTS.

The detector dog program on Andersen continues operating under the 36WGI 32-7004 (Wing Instruction related to BTS inspections). This instruction has been very helpful for guiding units on Andersen AFB, with compliance and communication improving as more commands follow the instruction. However, the instruction has not been reviewed nor approved for almost two years. WS is currently working with Andersen AFB contacts to have a reviewed and revised plan signed within the next fiscal year. The Navy's BTS interdiction plan, COMNAVMAR Instruction 5090.10A fulfills similar requirements for BTS inspections, though the document is not widely known among the units operating within NBG. Joint Region Marianas is working to develop a single BTS instruction that will cover all DoD-related export activities on Guam; however, the potential completion date for this instruction remains uncertain. A unified procedural document would benefit all parties in understanding inspection processes related to BTS interdiction and foster improved communication and coordination.

Please direct questions or comments related to this report to Marc A. Hall; [marc.a.hall@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:marc.a.hall@aphis.usda.gov), ph (671) 366-3886 or Dan Vice; [daniel.s.vice@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:daniel.s.vice@aphis.usda.gov), ph (671) 635-4400.