



Chemical and Biological Weapons Nonproliferation and the Australia Group

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The Australia Group

- Not a treaty; the AG operates independent from, but supports the objectives of, the CWC and BWC.
- Formed to ensure that exporters in participating countries do not assist – either intentionally or inadvertently – states and other actors seeking to acquire a CBW capability.
- Has since evolved into full-fledged nonproliferation regime.
- Australia is permanent chair and secretariat.
- Currently has 43 members.



Australia Group: What it does

- The AG is publicly known for its export control function – publishing **common control lists** of dual-use items and a set of **guidelines** governing transfers of those items.
- These lists/guidelines have become the international standard for safe, responsible trade in the items needed to produce chemical and biological weapons.
- The AG also performs a crucial convening function – sub-groups of experts to meet on a regular basis to:
 - Discuss updates to the common control lists/guidelines.
 - Develop common approaches to export licensing and industry/academia outreach.
 - Share case studies and best practices.
 - Exchange information on proliferation trends.
 - Establish professional contacts and foster cross-border cooperation.



The AG and Export Controls

- Each country agrees to reviews license applications for items on the **common control lists** against a set of risk factors in the **AG Guidelines**, including:
 - Whether the proposed end-use makes sense
 - The bonafides of the end-user
 - The recipient country's export control/nonproliferation track record, etc.
- The aim of this process to determine whether it is prudent to authorize the export of the controlled item.
- AG export controls are **not** a ban; most countries experience a very low export license denial rate.
- AG countries share license denial information with each other to prevent proliferators from shopping around.
- AG also requires “catch all controls” for unlisted items destined for CBW use.



What is on the control lists?

- Chemical Warfare Agent precursors:
 - 64; including some 25 not on the CWC Schedules
- Pathogens and toxins with high potential for biological weapons use
 - Including human, animal, and plant pathogens
- Production equipment and technology
 - dual-use chemical manufacturing facilities, equipment and related technology
 - dual-use biological equipment and related technology



Global Reach

- AG countries understand that they can't succeed alone, so they conduct a significant amount of outreach to non-member countries, industry and academia.
- Industry groups in emerging chem/bio fields have even adopted end-use/end-user screening practices modelled on AG guidelines/lists.
- The AG has formalized a status for non-member “adherents,” and is actively asking countries to adhere.



Summary

- The AG is a political understanding among states that seek to prevent CBW proliferation.
- For more information, visit www.australiagroup.net