Electronic National
Livestock Identification
System (NLIS)
(Sheep & Goats)

Standards

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

For more information, visit www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/sheepEID

Contents

Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to specify the standards for operating the electronic tag based National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) (Sheep & Goats) in Victoria. These standards apply to all sheep and goats born on or after 1 January 2017 that move from or onto a Victorian property.

The expected outcome of adopting an electronic NLIS (Sheep & Goats) in line with these standards will be compliance of sheep and goats born in Victoria after the *commencement date* with Australia's National Livestock Traceability Performance Standards and the traceability requirements of Australia's Primary Production and Processing Standard for Meat and Meat Products (FSC 4.2.3), which came into effect on 31 July 2015. Under FSC 4.2.3, a 'meat producer' is any party involved in growing, supplying or transporting animals for human consumption.

These standards represent minimum mandatory requirements needed to ensure compliance with Victorian legislation for sheep or goats born on or after the *commencement date*. These standards need to be read in conjunction with legislation addressing the identification and movement recording of sheep and goats born before the *commencement date.*

Scope

These standards apply to:

1. all sheep and goats that were, or are likely to have been, born on or after 1 January 2017*;*

2. their movements between premises where one or both locations are in Victoria; and

3. persons responsible for their management, husbandry and/or their dispatch to, receival at and transportation from premises, including Victorian farms, residential properties, feedlots, saleyards, holding depots, artificial breeding centres, veterinary practices, export depots, knackeries, abattoirs and agricultural show venues.

When a consignment or sale lot includes one or more sheep or goat born on or after 1 January 2017, the consignment or sale lot in its entirety is covered by these standards.

Interpretation

Each numbered section or part of the document covers a particular responsible party and contains the following information:

• Scope — specifies the parties to whom the section or part applies

• Objective — intended outcome(s) for each section of the standards

• Standards — minimum requirements that must be met under Victorian law

• Verifiable statements — standards are intended to be clear verifiable statements and are numbered with the prefix 'S'

• Notes — guidance in the context of the standards

• Acronyms and terms — are described in the glossary

Further detail on sheep and goats identification and traceability standards can be found in Agriculture Victoria publications and at www.agriculture.vic.gov.au.

Reasons for sheep and goat traceability

Sheep and goats act as vectors in the spread of infectious diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), anthrax and other diseases that have potentially significant market access and human health impacts. It is essential that sheep and goats of interest can be located quickly and accurately, to manage the spread of disease and to address food safety related emergencies (for example, those associated with chemical contamination).

The ability to quickly and reliably establish the property of residence of a sheep or goat is critical to underpin Victoria's quality brand, to protect Victoria's sheepmeat, wool, goat, beef, dairy and pork industries and to capitalise on emerging market opportunities associated with food safety and provenance.

Effective tracking enables authorities to impose preventive measures promptly and may shorten the life of an epidemic, delivering considerable commercial and animal welfare benefits. The ability to accurately identify animals is also important when collecting disease surveillance information, including sampling animals for diagnostic purposes.

Similarly, identifying animals helps authorities mitigate food safety risks. Pinpointing likely sources of disease or contamination quickly improves response times to food safety incidents. Having access to information about where similarly affected animals might be located makes product recalls or on-farm follow-up investigations easier.

A 'whole of life' approach—by which animals can be tracked back to their farm of birth if necessary—is essential for addressing many animal health and food safety issues. The ability to trace forward to locate companions at various points in the life history of an animal is equally important for disease control and food safety. During an incident, authorities usually need to promptly locate animals that may have moved from the premises where they were exposed.

Suppliers can also use animal tracking systems to support claims about features of the production systems that were used during an animal's life, for example, 'grass fed', as well as claims relating to food safety, product integrity and provenance.

Carcass tracking

Several Victorian sheep and goat processors are installing a carcass tracking system that, once commissioned, will link an animal's electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag to its carcass from the point of slaughter to the chiller or boning room. Abattoirs and knackeries can record carcass characteristics (such as hot standard carcass weight and, in time, carcass defect information collected on the 'retain rail'). They can then provide this information to producers about individual animals through either the NLIS database or the Livestock Data Link system being developed by Meat and Livestock Australia Limited (MLA).

These standards do not require abattoirs and knackeries that process sheep and/or goats to install a carcass tracking system.

Traceability system

The importance of animal identification and traceability is recognised in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and in a dedicated Codex Alimentarius standard.[1]

Animal traceability is far more than simply identifying animals. Using brands, marks and identification devices is one component of a process that allows authorities to track an animal or group of animals along a production chain and to locate their cohorts quickly, if necessary. These components, when linked together, form a traceability system that authorities can use to address animal health and food safety challenges.

The electronic NLIS (Sheep & Goats) covered by these standards is an integrated package, linking a number of components in a framework designed to address clearly defined biosecurity, food safety, market access and industry productivity related objectives.

To achieve the required level of traceability, Victoria's electronic system for tracking sheep and goats has the following elements:

a) a property registration system that allocates a unique identifying number known as a Property Identification Code (PIC) to premises. The PIC register contains information on the species present, contact details for the person who is responsible for the animals and a mapping capability;

b) electronic NLIS (Sheep) ear tags, to physically identify animals;

c) defined movement documentation requirements;

d) an official secure database, the NLIS database, that registers tags and stores movement records;

e) standards and associated legal and quality assurance frameworks, developed with input from all sectors of the supply chain;

f) an ongoing program to educate industry participants about their responsibilities and to provide training and technical support;

g) documented arrangements for performance monitoring, enforcement, evaluation and periodic review; and

h) a query system that allows authorities to establish the history and whereabouts of individuals or groups and their cohorts easily, particularly during emergency responses. The system displays the information in conjunction with spatial and temporal information.

These standards outline industry participants' obligations relating to premises registration, the means of identifying sheep and goats, movement document requirements and NLIS database reporting.

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[1] World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) 2012, *Terrestrial animal health code, Volume 1: general provisions*, http://www.oie.int/international-standard-setting/terrestrial-code; Codex Alimentarius 2006, *Principles for traceability/product tracing as a tool within a food inspection and certification system*, CAC/GL 60-2006, www.codexalimentarius.org/standards/list-of-standards.

Electronic sheep and goats identification

Electronic ear tags approved by NLIS Limited as part of the NLIS (Sheep & Goats) comply with Australia's *NLIS standard for radio-frequency identification tags,* as well as relevant Australian and international standards, namely AS5018-2001 and AS5019-2001 and ISO11784 and ISO 11785, respectively. Electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags are stamped with the NLIS logo.

These tags offer the best 'value for money' solution for tracking sheep and goats to achieve the objectives of Victoria's NLIS (Sheep & Goats).

Information on procedures for accrediting electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags and a copy of the *NLIS standard for radio-frequency identification tags* can be found at: www.mla.com.au/Meat-safety-and-traceability/National-Livestock-Identification-System.

Producers can purchase electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags by visiting www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/nlis. Tags will typically be delivered within 10 working days of the order being received.

NLIS database

Australia's NLIS database registers electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags before manufacturers dispatch them to producers. The NLIS database receives, processes, stores and facilitates the prompt retrieval of information relating to sheep and goat movements between properties.

The standards governing the operation of the NLIS database and information on the process for opening a database account, are available at www.nlis.com.au. Through their database account, industry participants register movements involving sheep or goats between properties in accordance with their obligations under these standards.

Further information about the operation of the NLIS database is available from the database helpline on 1800 654 743 during business hours.

Livestock Production Assurance

The Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program is industry's voluntary on-farm market assurance program. LPA provides participants with the tools to demonstrate their cattle, sheep and goats comply with the food safety and product integrity requirements of domestic and export markets. Producers choosing to participate in LPA must supply a current National Vendor Declaration (NVD) form with all sheep and goat movements, including those between farms, or to a saleyard, abattoir, feedlot or live export depot.

Producers seeking information about LPA and procedures for accessing LPA NVDs should visit www.mla.com.au/Meat-safety-and-traceability/Livestock-Production-Assurance or phone the LPA helpline on 1800 683 111 during business hours.

Part 1: Producers

Scope

This Part of these standards applies to:

- persons owning and/or managing a property on which sheep or goats are bred, agisted, reared or kept;

- persons responsible for the husbandry of sheep or goats; and

- persons owning and/or managing sheep or goats moving off or onto a property at any point of the animal's life for any reason.

Note:
These standards also apply to sheep and goats kept as pets.

Objective

To ensure that sheep and goats, where appropriate, are permanently and uniquely identified with an accredited electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag, to record their movements and to facilitate tracking as and when required.

Standards

S1.1 Property identification

S1.1.1
All persons owning or managing a property, including a residential property, on which sheep or goats are or will be kept must obtain and maintain a valid PIC assigned to that property by Agriculture Victoria.

S1.1.2
Changes to any of the following information relating to a PIC must be notified to Agriculture Victoria within two working days:

a) owner contact details including name, address and contact phone number; or

b) manager contact details including name, address and contact phone number; or

c) changes to property boundaries involving their expansion through acquisition or agreement to graze sheep or goats, or their reduction through sale or the relinquishing of a lease or agistment right.

S1.2 Sheep and goats identification tags

S1.2.1
The only method of identification permitted in respect to these standards is through attaching an electronic NLIS (Sheep) accredited ear tag in accordance with the supplier's instructions.

Note:
Electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags may be attached to either the right or left ear of sheep and goats.

S1.2.2
Identifying the following categories of sheep and goats with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag is voluntary:

a) harvested rangeland (feral) goats introduced into Victoria in transit directly to an abattoir for immediate slaughter;

b) Saanen, British Alpine, Toggenburg, Anglo Nubian, Melaan and Australian Brown dairy goat breeds;

c) the Elf breed of goats;

d) deceased sheep and goats that are being consigned directly to a knackery;

e) sheep and goats born before 1 January 2017; and

f) sheep and goats born after 1 January 2017 on a property outside of Victoria and that are subsequently transported to Victoria, provided they are identified at entry into Victoria in accordance with the legal requirements in the jurisdiction from which they were dispatched.

Note:
A tagging exemption applies to dairy goat breeds because the vascular ears of these breeds may become infected when an ear tag is attached, leading to welfare concerns and the potential for a high incidence of tag loss. The Elf breed of miniature goat has only rudimentary ears that cannot be tagged.

S1.2.3
With the exception of the exempt classes of sheep and goats specified in S1.2.2, all sheep and goats:

a) born on or after 1 January 2017 on a Victorian property must be tagged with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) breeder tag before leaving that property;

b) likely to be have been born in Victoria on or after 1 January 2017 that have been introduced onto a Victorian property and that are not identified with a visual or electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag (including sheep and goats that have lost their NLIS tag) must be tagged with a pink electronic NLIS (Sheep) post-breeder tag before leaving that property; and

c) born outside of Victoria on or after 1 January 2017 that are introduced onto a Victorian farm or feedlot after 1 January 2019 must be tagged with a pink electronic NLIS (Sheep) post-breeder tag before leaving that property.

Note:
NLIS (Sheep) tags are used to identify both sheep and goats. No tags are accredited specifically for goats.

Note:
For introduced sheep and goats that are not identified with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag, the owner or person responsible for their husbandry must have evidence (for example, an accompanying NVD form containing age or date of arrival information) if they wish to claim that the animals do not need to be identified with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag.

Note:
Unless an exemption applies (see S1.2.2), sheep and goats born after the commencement date being dispatched to an interstate location must be identified with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag.

S1.2.4
Sheep and goats may be dispatched from a property without an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag if;

a) the person in charge has received permission in writing from an authorised Agriculture Victoria animal health or veterinary officer because their sheep or goats cannot be safely tagged on the property on which they reside before dispatch; or

b) there is an extreme emergency such as imminent threat from a bushfire or floods, in which instance the minimum information specified in S1.5.1 must be recorded and reported to the NLIS database within 14 days of the sheep and goats departure date; or

c) the goats are harvested rangeland (feral) goats that have been introduced into Victoria and are leaving a Victorian property operating under a traceability plan approved in writing by Agriculture Victoria.

Note:
A traceability plan is required if untagged rangeland goats captured outside of Victoria are taken to a Victorian property before being dispatched to an abattoir.

S1.2.5
If a sheep or goat on a farm, feedlot or depot loses its electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag, the tag must be replaced according to S1.2.3 before the animal leaves the property on which it resided when the tag was lost.

S1.2.6
Other than in the context of the slaughter of sheep or goats in an abattoir or the processing of carcases in a knackery, electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags must not be removed from a sheep or goat (unless tested using an electronic tag reader and found to be not functioning; see S1.2.11), or damaged or disfigured in any way.

S1.2.7
Sheep and goats must be identified with only one electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag at any point in time.

S1.2.8
Sheep and goats must not be identified with an NLIS (Cattle) tag or bolus and electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags must not be used to identify cattle, camelids, pigs or deer.

S1.2.9
Electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags are issued for use on a specific property (PIC) and must not be applied to sheep and goats on a property assigned a different PIC unless approved in writing by an authorised Agriculture Victoria officer.

Note:
The PIC on which issued NLIS (Sheep) tags are to be used is printed on the tag. The PIC forms the first eight characters of the NLIS number on electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags. Arrangements for registering unused tags against a different PIC can be made by calling the Agriculture Victoria NLIS helpline on 1800 678 779 during business hours.

S1.2.10
Electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags must be used to identify the species—that is, sheep or goats—against which they have been registered on the NLIS database.

Note:
When ordering electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags, producers must nominate whether the tags will be used to identify sheep or goats. Supplied tags are registered by the manufacturer on the NLIS database against the species on which they will be used. Electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags are issued by suppliers with packaging clearly designating whether they are intended to identify sheep or goats.

S1.2.11
If the transponder in an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag on a sheep or goat located on a farm, feedlot or depot cannot be read electronically:

a) that NLIS tag must be removed and replaced in accordance with S1.2.3 before the sheep or goat leaves the farm or feedlot on which it resides; and

b) the non-functioning NLIS device number may be linked with the replacement NLIS (Sheep) tag on the NLIS database.

S1.3 Movement information and documentation

S1.3.1
A *movement document* must be generated by the person dispatching, or person authorising the dispatch of, sheep or goats from a farm, feedlot or depot to a destination other than a knackery. The *movement document* must be accurate in respect to each animal in the mob and must include:

a) the PIC of the property from which the sheep or goats are to be dispatched;

b) the date of dispatch of the sheep or goats;

c) the number and description of sheep or goats to be dispatched;

d) the name of the person creating the document;

e) the date the document is made;

f) a unique identifying number;

g) whether the sheep or goats in the consignment were declared to have been bred by the owner or vendor; and

h) the intended destination of the sheep or goats, which may be the PIC of the destination property, the street address of the destination property, or the name of the saleyard or abattoir.

Note:
The unique identifying number on a *movement document* can be a serial number or electronically generated date and time stamp. The unique identifying number will then be linked to the electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags on animals in the mob at the location where these tags are scanned.

Note:
If a single *movement document* cannot accurately describe and record information about all animals in a mob, an additional *movement document or documents* should be used. It should also be possible to draft animals, if necessary, into groups relating to each of the *movement documents* used.

S1.3.2

The following are considered acceptable *movement documents* for the purposes of these standards:

a) NVD forms issued by LPA for use when sheep or goats move between properties; and

b) an electronic or paper NVD in a form approved by notice published by Agriculture Victoria.

S1.3.3

The person responsible for dispatching sheep or goats must ensure that an accurately completed *movement document* is provided to the receiver of the sheep or goats by no later than the time of their arrival at the destination property (PIC).

S1.3.4

The person generating a *movement document* must keep of copy of the document for two years. Copies of movement documents must be retrievable by the person generating the document within 24 hours of being requested to do so by an Agriculture Victoria animal health or veterinary officer.

Note:
The copy of the *movement document* can be stored electronically, including as a pdf on the NLIS database, provided it can be retrieved within 24 hours.

S1.3.5

The person must not dispatch sheep or goats that were introduced onto the property on which they are located before receiving the *movement document* supplied by the previous owner or manager, or the post-sale summary or vendor's NVD supplied by the selling agent if the animals were acquired at a saleyard or public auction.

S1.4 Persons acquiring sheep or goats

S1.4.1

At the time of purchase or at the point when possession changes (if no sale occurs), a person acquiring sheep or goats must provide the person dispatching or releasing the sheep or goats, or selling agent in the case of a saleyard purchase, with the PIC of the property to which they will be taken.

Note:
If animals are to be taken to a depot or holding property, the PIC of this location must be provided, not the PIC of the ultimate destination of the animals.

S1.4.2

A person acquiring sheep or goats at a saleyard or public auction, including a processor or person acting on behalf of a processor, must at the time of purchase provide the selling agent with the PIC for the next property or the abattoir to which the sheep or goats will be taken.

S1.5 Movement recording of sheep and goats moving between farms, feedlots and depots

S1.5.1

From 31 March 2018, when sheep or goats identified with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag arrive on a farm, feedlot or depot directly from a Victorian or interstate farm, feedlot or depot (with a different PIC), the person receiving the sheep or goats must register the following information on the NLIS database:

a) the PIC of the property from which the sheep or goats were dispatched;

b) the date of arrival of the sheep or goats;

c) the number of sheep or goats received;

d) the electronic number encoded on the transponder in each electronically readable electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag present on the introduced sheep or goats; and

e) when an LPA NVD has been supplied by the consignor, the NVD serial number.

This information must be registered on the NLIS database within 48 hours of the sheep or goats' arrival or before they next move, whichever is the sooner.

Note:
The recording of movements can be undertaken on behalf of the person receiving the animals by an agent or third party on the receiver's behalf, provided NLIS database standards are met.

Note:
This section applies to movements directly between two farms involving sheep and goats acquired via internet based selling services, for example, Auctions Plus.

Note:
A producer may engage a third party to scan tags and report movements to the NLIS database. The third party could be an agent, transporter or alternative service provider. The NLIS website contains the authorisation form that must be completed and returned to allow a third party to access and record information on the NLIS database on a producer's behalf.

Part 2: Transporters

Scope

This Part of these standards applies to:

- persons and businesses transporting sheep or goats between properties including to a saleyard, feedlot, depot, abattoir, knackery, veterinary or artificial breeding centre, or agricultural show, or for any other reason or purpose.

Objective

To ensure that sheep and goats are identified in accordance with these standards before dispatch.

Standards

S2.1 Transportation of sheep and goats

S2.1.1

A person must only take possession of and transport sheep and goats that are identified in accordance with these standards.

S2.2 Movement document

S2.2.1

A person transporting sheep or goats must deliver to the person receiving the sheep or goats any *movement document* provided by the consignor by no later than the time the receiver takes possession of the sheep or goats.

Part 3: Livestock agents

Scope

This Part of these standards applies to:

- persons involved in the sale of sheep or goats in a saleyard or at a public auction, including auctions held on a farm, at an agricultural show or at an exhibition.

Note:
This Part does not apply to agents involved in trading sheep and goats via the internet, for example, Auctions Plus.

Objective

To ensure that sheep and goats are identified in accordance with these standards and that their movement between auction venues and properties can be effectively and rapidly tracked.

Standards

S3.1 Sheep and goat identification tags

S3.1.1
The selling agent must ensure that before sheep and goats are sold:

a) they are correctly identified in accordance with these standards (see S.1.2 and S.1.3);

b) they can be reliably linked to the PIC of the property from which they were consigned; and

c) an NVD supplied and completed by the consignor has been received.

Note:
While the owners of sheep and goats must ensure that, before they are dispatched to a saleyard, the sheep and goats are correctly identified in accordance with these standards (see S.1.2 and S.1.3), persons facilitating their sale are required to ensure the animals are correctly identified and traceable. The obligation on selling agents to ensure the livestock they sell are correctly identified and are traceable is not a new requirement. Agents are covered under the definition of 'owner' in the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994* and have for many years been required to ensure the cattle, sheep, goats and pigs they offer for sale are correctly identified and traceable. Agents are also 'meat producers' under the national Production and Processing Standard for Meat (FSC 4.2.3) that came into effect on 31 July 2015 and must comply with this standard.

S3.1.2
Electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags are issued for use on a specific property (PIC) and must not be applied to sheep or goats on a property with a different PIC.

Note:
Vendors and their agents are not permitted to bring NLIS (Sheep) tags to a saleyard or auction venue for the purposes of tagging sheep or goats that are intended for sale.

S3.1.3
When an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag on a sheep or goat is unable to be read electronically at a saleyard or public auction:

a) that NLIS tag may be removed by the selling agent and replaced in line with S1.2.11 before the animal is released to the purchaser; and

b) the non-functioning NLIS device number may be aligned/linked with the new NLIS tag on the NLIS database.

3.2 Electronic reading of tags on animals offered for sale

S3.2.1

Once a saleyard has installed and commissioned tag reading equipment and software, from that date forward when a selling agent takes possession of a consignment of sheep or goats and one or more animals must be identified with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag, the selling agent must ensure that the consignment is scanned using a functioning electronic tag reader and that tag transponder number/s are recorded.

S3.2.2

Once a saleyard has installed and commissioned tag reading equipment and software, from that date forward when a selling agent takes possession of a consignment consisting of sheep or goats born in Victoria on or after 1 January 2017, at least tags on the number of head corresponding to the designated *action level* advised by Agriculture Victoria must be scanned and their encoded transponder numbers successfully recorded.

Note:
Agents should assume that all sheep and goats consigned from a Victorian property that are identified with an NLIS (Sheep) tag in the 'year of birth' colour relating to 2017 are electronically tagged and must be scanned.

Note:
Agents and saleyards will be advised by Agriculture Victoria of the *action level* that will apply. The Sheep and Goats Identification Advisory Committee will review the *action level* from time to time. After considering this advice, Agriculture Victoria may change the *action level*.

S3.2.3

When the number of head in a consignment containing sheep or goats born in Victoria on or after 1 January 2017 that are successfully scanned does not exceed the *action level*, the selling agent must take the following remedial action:

a) rescan the consignment until the action level is exceeded (see S3.2.2); or

b) examine each sheep or goat in the consignment and replace any missing or non-functioning electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags using post-breeder tags issued for use at the saleyard and then rescan the consignment; or

c) return the consignment to the vendor.

S3.2.4

At the time of scanning, selling agents must make a record of consignments containing sheep or goats born in Victoria on or after 1 January 2017 when the number of head that were read electronically did not exceed the *action level*, along with the remedial action taken. Selling agents must retain and be able to retrieve this record for one year.

S3.2.5

Electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags on sheep and goats must be scanned and any remedial action (when required) completed before the sheep or goats are released to the purchaser or the purchaser's transporter.

S3.3 Records regarding the sale of sheep or goats

S3.3.1

From 1January 2017*,* the selling agent must record the following details for each sale lot of sheep or goats that were or may have been born on or after 1 January 2017, or that contain one or more animals that have been identified with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag and provide this information to the saleyard operator by close of business on the day following the sale:

a) date of the sale;

b) PIC from which the sheep or goats were consigned;

c) number of head in the sale lot;

d) if tag scanning has occurred, electronic transponder number for each NLIS (Sheep) tag successfully scanned;

e) the destination PIC provided by the buyer, or by the vendor for a sale lot that was passed in;

f) whether the vendor's *movement document* states that the sheep or goats were bred by the owner or vendor; and

g) the NVD serial number, if the vendor supplied an LPA NVD.

S3.4 Post-sale documentation

S3.4.1
The selling agent must keep a copy of the *movement document* supplied by each vendor for two years from the date of the sale and be able to retrieve the document within 24 hours of being requested to do so by an Agriculture Victoria animal health or veterinary officer.

Note:
Agents that upload pdf files of *movement documents* to the NLIS database in conjunction with movement records satisfy this storage requirement.

S3.5 Provision of documentation to buyers

S3.5.1
When the destination PIC provided by a buyer is an abattoir, selling agents must provide a post-sale summary, or copies of the NVDs supplied by vendors, to the operator of the abattoir by midnight on the day of sale.

S3.5.2
When the destination PIC provided by a buyer does not relate to an abattoir, the selling agent must provide a copy of the NVD supplied by the vendor to the purchaser by no later than seven days after the date of the sale.

S3.5.3
A person introducing sheep or goats onto his/her property must not dispatch those sheep or goats until they receive a correctly completed post-sale summary supplied by the selling agent, or a copy of the NVD supplied by the consignor.

S3.5.4
A post-sale summary provided by a selling agent to a purchaser must include:

a) sale venue;

b) date of the sale;

c) selling agent's name;

d) number of head in each purchased lot;

e) unique identifier associated with the consignor's *movement document;*

f) the PICs present on the electronic NLIS (Sheep) and visually readable NLIS (Sheep) tags present on the sheep or goats in the lot;

g) destination PIC provided by the purchaser; and

h) whether the sheep and goats in each sale lot were bred by the owner or vendor.

Note:
Selling agents must provide sufficient information to purchasers to enable purchasers to link each animal in a consolidated mob containing two or more sale lots to a consignor and to that consignor's *movement document*. If the need arises, purchasers will then have sufficient information to draft a sale lot from the consolidated mob.

S3.6 Purchasing of sheep or goats by an agent

S3.6.1

When the buyer of sheep or goats at a public auction is a livestock agent or agent acting on behalf of a processor and he/she is uncertain of the destination PIC of the sale lot at the time of purchase, the agent may provide their Agents' PIC to the selling agent, but then must transfer the purchased animals on the NLIS database to the PIC to which they were taken within seven days of the date of the sale.

Note:
When an agent acting on behalf of a processor provides an Agents' PIC and the purchased sheep or goats are processed within seven days and electronic tags read and recorded on the NLIS database as 'deceased', the agent will be deemed to have completed the transfer of the animals. The agent is responsible for ensuring this occurs.

S3.7 Auctions on farms and at public events

S3.7.1

When a public auction occurs at a venue other than a saleyard (for example, on-farm or at a showground), the selling agent is responsible for creating and uploading movement files as specified in S4.4.1 to the NLIS database. The selling agent must create and upload movement files within two working days of the sale.

Part 4: Saleyards

Scope

This Part of these standards applies to:

- persons operating a public saleyard at which sheep or goats are sold; and

- agents conducting a public auction on a farm, at a showground, or other venue that is not a public saleyard.

Objective

To ensure that electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags can be read and linked to the PIC from which sheep and goats were dispatched and to the PIC to which the animals are sent, so the movement can be registered on the NLIS database.

Standards

S4.1 Property identification

S4.1.1

Persons operating a saleyard must obtain and hold a current PIC relating to their premises issued by Agriculture Victoria.

S4.2 Sheep and goats tags

S4.2.1

Pink electronic NLIS (Sheep) post-breeder tags that record the saleyard's PIC must be available for use on sheep born on or after, or likely to have been born on or after, 1 January 2017 that arrive untagged for sale.

S4.2.1

The saleyard operator or their authorised representative (which may be the selling agent) must keep an auditable record of the use of electronic NLIS (Sheep) post-breeder tags to identify animals that were found not to be identified in accordance with these standards, at the time these tags are used. The record must link the:

a) NLIS number or transponder number of the tag or tags used;

b) date of use;

c) person attaching the tag/s;

d) PIC of origin of the sheep or goats; and

e) the destination PIC provided by the buyer.

S4.2.2

The record regarding electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag use must be kept for at least one year and be retrievable within 24 hours of being requested to do so by an Agriculture Victoria animal health or veterinary officer.

S4.3 Sheep and goat sales

S4.3.1

By 31 March 2018, the saleyard operator must ensure functioning equipment and software is available to scan all sheep and goats identified with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag and link them to the PIC of the property from which they were dispatched.

Note:
The contract between saleyards and Agriculture Victoria in relation to funding to support the installation of tag reading equipment and software will include a clause that requires saleyards to promptly install, commission and commence routinely using such equipment and software at sales where electronic tagged sheep or goats are being traded.

S4.3.2

If, on a sale day scheduled after 31 March 2018, the saleyard operator does not expect to have functioning equipment and software available to efficiently scan electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags, the operator must provide Agriculture Victoria no later than five working days before the sale with a protocol for visually inspecting a minimum of five per cent of sheep in each arriving consignment, to check the PICs on both visual and electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags are recorded on accompanying movement documents. The plan must also describe the remedial action proposed when one or more of the checked tags have PICs not recorded on the accompanying movement document, or if one or more sheep are not identified with an NLIS (Sheep) tag. The saleyard operator will bear the costs associated with implementing the protocol in every respect. Agriculture Victoria may accept or reject the proposed protocol at its discretion.

S4.4 Movement file

S4.4.1

From 1 January 2017, the saleyard must upload to the NLIS database, within two working days of a sale, a movement file for each sale lot containing:

a) the date of sale;

b) the PIC of the property from which the sheep or goats were dispatched;

c) the number of head in the sale lot including animals without an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag or with a tag that was not read electronically;

d) if tag scanning has occurred, the transponder identification number of each electronically read NLIS (Sheep) tag;

e) the serial number on the *movement document* (if a serial number is present) accompanying the sheep or goats; and

f) the destination PIC provided by the buyer.

S4.4.2

When a public auction occurs at a venue other than a saleyard (for example, on-farm or at a showground or exhibition), the selling agent is responsible for creating and uploading movement files, as specified in S4.4.1, to the NLIS database. The selling agent must create and upload movement files within two working days of the sale.

Part 5: Processors

Scope

This Part of these standards applies to:

- persons owning, operating, or employed in processing of sheep or goats and their carcases, including licensed abattoirs and knackeries.

Objective

To ensure that sheep and goats are identified in accordance with these standards and that their last property of residence, not being a saleyard, prior to arriving at the abattoir or knackery can be rapidly established.

To ensure that all sheep and goats that are identified with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag when processed have their tag scanned and recorded as 'deceased' on the NLIS database.

Note:
The intent of this objective is to ensure accurate traceability back to the last property of origin. It is recognised that there will be situations, for example, when untagged sheep or goats are processed from a boxed line direct from saleyards, that the saleyard PIC may need to be used.

Standards

S5.1 Property identification

S5.1.1
A person owning or operating an abattoir or knackery that processes sheep or goats must obtain and hold a current PIC relating to their premises issued by Agriculture Victoria.

S5.1.2
All holding properties and depots used by a processor must hold a current PIC relating to each location issued by Agriculture Victoria.

S5.2 Sheep and goats tags

S5.2.1
Electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags must not be removed for reuse or recycling without the written permission of Agriculture Victoria.

S5.3 Movement documentation

S5.3.1
An abattoir operator must not slaughter a sheep or goat sourced from a Victorian or interstate property or saleyard unless the operator possesses:

a) an LPA NVD;

b) an alternative approved *movement document* (see S1.3.2); or

c) for sheep and goats purchased at a saleyard, a *post-sale summary* or a copy of the vendor's NVD provided by the selling agent, that records the last property (PIC) of residence of the sheep or goat that was not a saleyard.

Note:
Processors should, as part of the quality assurance arrangements, have documented procedures for ensuring that incoming mobs are accompanied by correctly completed *movement documents* and that individual animals can be linked to their last farm, depot or feedlot of residence.

S5.3.2

Processors must keep a physical or electronic copy of the movement documentation described in S5.3.1 for two years and be able to retrieve the record within 24 hours of being requested to do so by an Agriculture Victoria animal health or veterinary officer.

Note:
Documents can be stored in hardcopy, or as an electronic copy linked to a *kill file* and submitted to the NLIS database.

S5.4 Sheep and goats identification

S5.4.1

Sheep and goats must not be slaughtered or processed unless they are identified in accordance with these standards (see S1.2.2 and S1.2.3), except:

a) when sheep or goats have arrived untagged under a permit issued by an Agriculture Victoria animal health or veterinary officer; or

b) when their last property of residence (which may be a saleyard) before arriving at the abattoir or knackery has been established and a record made of the number of head that were untagged, the PIC of the property or saleyard from which they were sourced and the accompanying *movement document* or post-sale summary.

S5.4.2

Once slaughtered, a sheep and goats carcase must be identified in a manner that maintains correlation with the PIC of the premises from which it was sourced (which may be a saleyard) until the point at which:

a) it has passed meat inspection and is deemed to comply with the Production and Processing Standard for Meat (FSC 4.2.3) if destined for the human food chain; or

b) it has been inspected and deemed to comply with the Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production of Pet Meat, if destined for rendering or use as pet food.

S5.5 Scanning and movement recording

S5.5.1

From 31 December 2017, processors and knackeries must ensure that at least electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags on the number of head corresponding to the designated *performance level* advised by Agriculture Victoria are scanned, and a *kill file* uploaded to the NLIS database within two working days of the date of slaughter or processing.

Note:
The contract between abattoirs and knackeries and Agriculture Victoria in relation to funding to support the installation of tag reading equipment and software will include a clause that requires them to promptly install, commission and commence routinely using such equipment and software where electronic tagged sheep or goats are being processed.

S5.5.2

The *kill file* must include the:

a) PIC from which the sheep or goats were sourced (which may be the PIC of a saleyard or a holding property or depot);

b) processing establishment identifier or PIC;

c) date of slaughter/processing;

d) the movement document serial number for sheep or goats consigned directly from a property; and

e) the electronic transponder number when an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag is present that can be read electronically.

S5.5.3

At least weekly, the processor must monitor the numbers of electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags linked to its PIC on the NLIS database and ensure the number of tags listed corresponds with the number of electronic NLIS (Sheep) tagged animals held in the lairage or recorded in *kill files* that are yet to be uploaded.

Note:
This clause requires processors ensure that their 'current holdings' are consistent with the number of animals in lairage and animals listed in *kill files* that are yet to be uploaded at least weekly. It does not require processors to complete a precise reconciliation of 'current holdings' with tags yet to be uploaded.

S5.5.4

The processor must take steps to confirm that uploaded *kill files* have been received and accepted by the NLIS database and undertake prompt corrective action in response to all error messages relating to uploaded *kill files* generated by the NLIS database.

Note:
As part of their quality assurance arrangements, processors should have documented procedures for ensuring the actions outlined in S5.5.3 and S5.5.4 are completed.

S5.5.5

The processor must dispose of electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags in a manner that prevents unauthorised recovery and reuse.

Part 6: Agricultural shows and similar events

Scope

This Part of these standards applies to:

- persons organising or managing an agricultural show or other public event to which sheep and goats will be taken for public display.

Objective

To ensure that sheep and goats are identified in accordance with these standards and that their movement to and from the show/event can be tracked effectively and rapidly.

Standards

S6.1 Property identification

S6.1.1

A person operating or organising an agricultural show, exhibition or other similar event must ensure that the property or location where the event is to be held has a current PIC issued by Agriculture Victoria.

S6.2 Sheep and goats identification

S6.2.1

Sheep and goats admitted to an agricultural show or other similar event must be identified in accordance with these standards.

S6.3 Movement recording

S6.3.1

A person operating an agricultural show, exhibition or similar event from 31 March 2018, must ensure:

a) sheep and goats attending and returning to the PIC from which they came have their electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags read and recorded against the showground/event location PIC on the NLIS database (known as a 'sighted movement') within two working days of their departure from the show/event; or

b) sheep and goats moving onto the showground/event location have their electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags read and transferred both onto and off the PIC of the showground/event location as per S1.5.1.

S6.3.2

From 31 March 2018, a person who acquires a sheep or goat at an agricultural show or similar event (but not in the context of a public auction) must register the arrival of the sheep or goat on their property on the NLIS database in accordance with S1.5.1.

Part 7: Export depot operators

Scope

This Part of these standards applies to:

- persons operating export registered premises or depots or employed by a live sheep or goats export business ('the exporter').

Objective

To ensure that sheep and goats are identified in accordance with these standards and that their movement between properties and their subsequent export are recorded on the NLIS database so that exported animals can be effectively and rapidly tracked.

Standards

These standards are in addition to the requirements placed on producers by Part 1 of these standards and are to be read in conjunction with Part 1.

S7.1 Property identification

S7.1.1

The exporter must ensure all properties upon which sheep or goats are to be held during the export preparation period, including pre-export quarantine and export feedlot properties, have a current PIC issued by Agriculture Victoria.

S7.2 Movement recording

S7.2.1

From 31 March 2018, when sheep or goats leave Australia from a port or airport in Victoria, the exporter must ensure all electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags on the sheep and goats are read and the movement is recorded on the NLIS database within two days of the date of export. The 'exported' PIC of 'EEEEEEEE' (also known as the '8Es') is to be used as the destination PIC.

S7.2.1

At least weekly, the exporter must monitor the numbers of electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags linked to PICs in the live export supply chain on the NLIS database and ensure that the number of tags listed corresponds with the number of electronic NLIS (Sheep) tagged animals held on each PIC.

Acronyms and terms

Agriculture Victoria
Agriculture Victoria is a business entity within the Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources.

Commencement date
Date after which sheep and goats born in Victoria are required to be identified with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) tag before they move, unless a tagging exemption applies and date from which these standards apply in the State of Victoria. This date is 1 January 2017.

Consignment
One or more sheep or goats leaving a property.

Department
Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources.

Electronic NLIS (Sheep) breeder tag
Electronic NLIS (Sheep) breeder tags are either yellow or coloured in accordance with the national 'year of birth' colour system and are used by a breeder to permanently identify sheep or goats before they leave their property of birth.

Electronic NLIS (Sheep) post-breeder tag
Electronic NLIS (Sheep) post-breeder tags are pink and can be used to permanently identify introduced sheep or goats that are not already identified with an electronic NLIS (Sheep) breeder or post-breeder tag, or sheep or goats that have lost their NLIS (Sheep) tag.

Kill file
The electronic file generated by an abattoir or knackery and submitted to the NLIS database to register movements of sheep or goats and their processing.

Livestock Production Assurance (LPA)
Livestock Production Assurance is the livestock industry's voluntary on-farm food safety and market assurance program.

Meat producer*
A business, enterprise or activity that involves growing, supplying or transporting animals for human consumption.
A meat producer must have a system to identify the persons:

a) from whom animals were received; and

b) to whom animals were supplied.

(* As defined in the Production and Processing Standard for Meat (FSC 4.2.3), which came into effect nationally on 31 July 2015.)

MLA
Meat and Livestock Australia.

Movement
Any movement involving one or more sheep or goats between two properties with different PICs.

Movement document
The document completed by the person consigning or selling sheep or goats and used to describe the sheep and goats and record the locations where the movement commenced and ended. Movement documents include LPA National Vendor Declarations and compliant post-sale summaries.

NLIS database

National database operated by NLIS Limited that registers electronic NLIS (Sheep) tags and sheep, goat and cattle movements.

NLIS Limited

A wholly owned subsidiary company of Meat and Livestock Australia, that manages the NLIS database and operates the NLIS database helpdesk and accredits NLIS tags.

National Livestock Identification System (Sheep & Goats)

Known as the NLIS (Sheep & Goats), the national system operating throughout Australia for identifying and tracking sheep and goats.

National Vendor Declaration (NVD)

Movement document completed by the person consigning or selling sheep or goats and used to describe the sheep and goats and record the locations where the movement commenced and ended.

NLIS logo

Registered Trade Mark [993748] belonging to Meat and Livestock Australia, used to designate that a livestock identification device has been approved as an NLIS device.

Over the hooks

Where sheep and goats are sent directly to an abattoir and paid for on a weight and grade basis post-slaughter.

Post-sale summary

A document provided by a selling agent to a purchaser of sheep or goats that includes:

a) sale venue;

b) date of the sale;

c) selling agent's name;

d) number of head in each purchased lot;

e) destination PIC provided by the purchaser; and

f) whether the sheep and goats in each sale lot were bred by the owner or vendor.

Producer

A person, organisation or business engaged in breeding, feeding or raising sheep or goats. It includes feedlot operators, depot managers and persons keeping sheep or goats for commercial purposes, for lifestyle reasons or as pets.

Property

A parcel of land, consisting of one or more blocks within the one locality, operating as part of a livestock enterprise, hobby/lifestyle farm or residence. It includes farms, feedlots, saleyards, holding depots, artificial breeding centres, veterinary practices, export depots, knackeries, abattoirs and agricultural show venues.

Property Identification Code (PIC)

The eight character alphanumeric code for a property as allocated by the relevant state or territory authority. Agriculture Victoria assigns PICs to Victorian properties.

Vendor

A person, organisation or company offering livestock for sale.

agriculture.vic.gov.au/sheepEID