

Guidance notes for applicants applying for an approval to sell electronic collar systems for use on cattle in Victoria

Information for applicants

Under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2019 (the Regulations), the use of electronic collar systems for cattle in Victoria is permitted using technologies that have been approved by the Minister for Agriculture (or delegate).

An electronic collar system means a product that is a system manufactured for use on cattle consisting of one or both of the following - a containment system, or a herding system.

Applications for approval can be submitted by manufacturers, or their agent.

How do I apply for an approval?

Applications can be submitted to Agriculture Victoria. Applicants must apply using the approved form for the application to be considered. The application form can be accessed via the Agriculture Victoria [electronic collar webpage](#) or by emailing animal.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au.

To avoid any delay in the processing of your application, please ensure you have provided all the information and documentation required with your completed application. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a copy of the product manual detailing the features and functions of the electronic collar system.
- images or diagrams showcasing the physical design and specifications of the product.
- a copy of the manufacturer's instructions on 'how to use' the electronic collar system.
- a copy of the manufacturer's training program or other specified training program.
- research data and/or scientific literature supporting the suitability of the electronic collar system on cattle.

Applications are to be provided as one complete electronic file or hardcopy package.

Application processing will not commence until the application fee is paid in full.

Applications can be submitted by email or post.

- *Email:* animal.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au
- *Post:* Animal Welfare Policy,
Agriculture Victoria
475 Mickleham Road
ATTWOOD VIC 3049

How much does it cost?

Applicants are also required to provide the specified fee of 387 fee units before the application can be progressed for decision on approval. In the 2025-2026 financial year, the **application fee amount is \$6,505.47**. This fee is payable regardless of whether an approval is granted or not.

The fee amount changes every year on 1 July. Find the [current value of a fee unit](#).

How long is the approval valid for?

Approvals may be granted for a period of **up to three years** from the date of approval. A notice of approval will include the period the approval is valid for. After this period, the applicant will be required to submit a new application for renewal of the approval for their electronic collar system.

Application and assessment process

Please ensure that all required fields are completed or there is information provided in the data field to reference to where the information can be found in any attachments or documentation.

Further advice on information that is required as part of an application is set out in Appendix 1.

For any assistance email animal.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au.

Applications will be processed in order of receipt and completeness (i.e. all required and/or requested documentation has been received).

Step 1: Application submission	<p>The applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• should review the Part 2, Division 3 of the POCTA Regulations before completing an application to ensure they are familiar with all manufacturer requirements and check if their electronic collar system is eligible for an approval.• must complete an application using the approved form.• must submit all accompanying documentation required for an application to proceed.• must pay the application fee before an application can be assessed• must provide any additional information requested by the Minister (or Delegate). <p>An application must demonstrate how the electronic collar system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• meets the welfare and data requirements specified in regulation 23F (welfare and data criteria – refer appendix 1)• is supported by a training program provided by or on behalf of the manufacturer to users of the electronic collar system that includes training of users on the identification and management of welfare risks associated with the system.
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<p>Step 2: Application assessment</p>	<p>The application will be reviewed for completeness. If the application is assessed as incomplete, the applicant will be advised on what additional information needs to be submitted. If the application is deemed as complete, it will be assessed against the regulatory requirements including the requirements set out in regulations 23A and 23F.</p> <p>Approval will only be considered where an applicant can demonstrate that the electronic collar system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is designed and safe for use on cattle • has appropriate system settings and safeguards in place to protect animal welfare • does not exceed any maximum electric shock characteristics that have been specified in a notice in the Government Gazette • is supported by a training program that ensures users have adequate skills and knowledge to safely use the system and respond to welfare risks and animals are appropriately introduced to the system • has monitoring and data collection capabilities and supports the recording of any specified data. <p>All applications will be assessed against the prescribed criteria set out in the POCTA Regulations (refer Appendix 1) and in accordance with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, Agriculture Victoria's <i>Approval to sell electronic collar systems for use on cattle – Application assessment policy</i>.</p>
<p>Step 3: Decision making</p>	<p>Upon receipt of a complete application, and following the assessment process, the Minister (or delegate) will either grant or refuse the application. Conditions may be imposed on an approval.</p>
<p>Step 4: Notification of outcome</p>	<p>The Minister (or delegate) has 60 days from receipt of a complete application (including payment) to make a decision.</p> <p>Once a decision is made the applicant will be advised in writing of the decision as soon as possible. If granted, this will include any additional conditions imposed upon the granting of an approval. If an approval is refused, advice will be provided on why an approval was not granted.</p> <p>If necessary, the Minister (or delegate) can extend the period for making a decision by notifying the applicant in writing.</p>

Resources

- [Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2019](#)
- [Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986](#)
- Agriculture Victoria [website](#) – search for electronic collars

Appendix 1 – Advice for providing required information

1. An application needs to clearly define the product name for the electronic collar system that approval is being requested for.

- Provide details including the name or brand of the electronic collar system for which approval is being sought. Include relevant details such as device name, product numbers or other defining details. Please note: this information will inform the approval wording so it is important that it clearly defines the product without restricting the approval to a specific model or version.
- Please reach out to Agriculture Victoria via animal.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au if unsure on how to describe your product. If product name details of the system are too specific (for example a model number) you may need to seek a new approval if you change your product detail however, if details do not clearly define the product (i.e. could cover a range of different systems) you may be asked to provide further details before your application is considered.
- As part of an approval you will be required to notify Agriculture Victoria via animal.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au within 30 days if any significant changes are made to an approved electronic collar system.
 - **significant change** means a change that the holder of an approval reasonably believes will have an impact on the assessment of any of the welfare and data requirements set out in regulation 23F.

2. An application must clearly set out the type of cattle systems that it is designed for and any restrictions on class of cattle for which the collar is suitable

- Please clearly detail the type of cattle system (i.e. beef or dairy or both) that the electronic collar system is suitable for use on.
- Please advise if there are any restrictions on the type of cattle that the system can be used on (for example: age, sex, production status).
- Provide evidence that demonstrates the system is appropriate for use on the type and class of cattle the approval is requested for.
- Note: under the regulations, use is not permitted on animals under 6 months of age.

3. An approved electronic collar system must meet the following welfare and data requirements—

- a. The electric shock delivered by the electronic collar system does not exceed the relevant maximum level relating to any of the characteristics of an electric shock specified by the Minister (or Delegate) under regulation 23L unless an application for a different level has been made and accepted (see 4 below).**
 - An application will need to include evidence to demonstrate that the electric cue used by the system complies with any level set by the Minister (or Delegate).
 - Note: Any maximum levels will be specified by notice in the Government Gazette. Advice on maximum levels will also be provided on the Agriculture Victoria [website](#) (search “approvals for electronic collar systems for cattle”).
- b. Any electric shock delivered by the electronic collar system will be preceded by an appropriate non-aversive stimulus, being a stimulus that is not an electric shock.**

- An application will need to include evidence that demonstrates that any cues applied prior to the electric cue are non-aversive.
 - Note: non-aversive stimulus may include cues such as sound, provided that the level and tone are not aversive to cattle, or vibration.
- c. The level, duration and frequency of the electric shock delivered by the electronic collar system are the minimum necessary to achieve the containment or herding of the animal.**
- An application will need to include evidence that demonstrates how the characteristics of the electric shock that the electronic collar system uses are the minimum necessary.
- d. The electronic collar system is safe and reliable for use on cattle.**
- An application will need to include evidence of the safety and reliability of the electronic collar system including electrical safety standards, enclosure of any electrical components, any deactivation or failsafe capabilities or processes and any other relevant features.
- e. The physical features of the electronic collar (including its weight, shape and material composition) are designed and constructed in a way that limits the risk of injury or harm to the animal wearing the collar.**
- An application will need to include evidence that the collar includes physical features to limit any injury or harm to the animal wearing the collar including appropriate break points, collar weight, material, etc.
- f. The electronic collar system monitors the animal wearing the collar, including the location of the animal and the cues, including electric shocks, delivered by the collar to the animal.**
- An application will need to include evidence that the electronic collar system is capable of monitoring and recording the location of an animal, the aversive and non-aversive cues administered, including time and number of cues delivered to an animal, and the number of times an animal may breach the virtual boundary or herding direction.
- g. The electronic collar system is designed to enable animals to learn and respond appropriately to any stimulus emitted by the collar, which may include the taking of action to avoid an electric shock.**
- An application will need to include evidence of how the system supports the learning of an animal to understand and respond appropriately to any cues delivered by the system including avoiding the electric cue.
- h. The electronic collar system enables the collection and retention of data relating to the use and operation of the electronic collar system.**
- An application will need to include evidence of the data retention abilities of the system and ability to store required data for up to 3 years.
 - Data that may be required to be held includes details of cues administered to animals, breaches of virtual boundaries/herding directions and alerts delivered relating to animal welfare.
- i. The electronic collar system has appropriate safeguards and settings to protect animal welfare and to prevent misuse, including—**

- i. **cut-off settings and other settings relating to the level, duration or frequency of the electric shock; and**
 - ii. **safeguards to prevent a person using the electronic collar system from directly administering an electric shock or other cue on an animal.**
 - An application will need to include evidence that the system incorporates appropriate cut off settings to reduce any excessive cues to an animal or to identify and cut off cues being delivered to an animal not capable of responding.
 - Evidence will also need to be provided that a person cannot directly administer an electric shock or any other cue to an animal.
 - j. **The electronic collar system is capable of issuing alerts to a person responsible for or using the electronic collar system.**
 - An application will need to include evidence that the system is capable of issuing alerts and details of what alerts it can issue.
 - Alerts must include where an animal has breached the virtual boundary or herding direction, where an animal is not responding appropriately to cues, an immobile animal, where cut off or failsafe processes have activated and any other alerts necessary for animal welfare.
- 4. The Minister (or their delegate) can decide to set a maximum limit for one or more electric shock characteristics that differs from the level published in the Government Gazette, under regulation 23L. The welfare of the cattle using the electronic collar system needs to be considered in making such a decision.**
- Characteristics of an electric shock may include the maximum energy, current, voltage or duration of the electric shock.
 - Note: If an applicant wishes to include a request for a different level to be applied as part of the approval please contact animal.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au **prior** to submitting an application.