

Regulatory Priorities 2026-27

(1 July-31 December 2026)

Six monthly and enduring biosecurity, food safety and animal welfare priorities.

July 2026



What are regulatory priorities?

Regulatory priorities are a set of clear statements that define where the regulator will focus their attention, effort and action.

Each priority statement may cover multiple enabling, education and enforcement regulatory functions:

- Regulatory extension
- Licensing and approvals
- Education and engagement
- Public reporting
- Regulatory research and Intelligence
- Compliance monitoring and surveillance
- Compliance audit programs
- Investigation, law enforcement and litigation

Our regulatory priorities cover multiple regulatory agencies. This enables cooperative action across the whole regulatory system which is critical to be efficient and effective and achieve big outcomes for NSW.

Why have regulatory priorities?

Regulatory priorities set expectations. They inform the regulated community, industry, government and the public of where the regulators will focus their attention, effort and action, no surprises! This encourages regulated entities and industry groups to proactively take precautions and act on risks in those areas ahead of engaging with the regulator, not after.

Regulatory priorities give the regulator clear focus, a coordinated risk-based approach across multiple regulatory agencies and functions. They shape interagency outcomes performance reporting and uphold system integrity.



How are regulatory priorities made?

Regulatory priorities are intelligence led. They are set by the regulator from analysing past and present risks, actions and incidents. They are also set from the regulator’s scan of future risks and threats to the public interest to protect and enhance public values in the months and years ahead.

Six monthly priorities

Operational priorities that target discrete problems where short term action can solve or materially reduce the regulatory risk, harm or impact on the public value.

Enduring priorities

Strategic priorities target problems that are more complex in nature where prolonged action across multiple systems is needed to mitigate long term risks and/or transform the operating environment.

Which agencies regulate biosecurity, food safety and animal welfare legislation in NSW?

1 Biosecurity

Regulating biosecurity in NSW is a shared responsibility under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*. The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), including Agriculture & Biosecurity, Local Land Services, Fisheries and Forestry and Hunting, partner with 123 local control authorities, including 6 county councils and the Lord Howe Island Board (for matters on Lord Howe Island), and the Australian Plague Locust Commission to regulate biosecurity in NSW.

These regulatory priorities relate to DPIRD Agriculture and Biosecurity regulators but provide a statewide focus and platform for all biosecurity regulators in NSW to work together.

2 Food Safety

DPIRD (which includes the NSW Food Authority) partners with 128 NSW local councils and other NSW government agencies to regulate licenced food businesses and food retail and service sectors under the *Food Act 2003*.

These regulatory priorities only relate to DPIRD's regulatory responsibilities under *Food Act 2003* but provide a platform for all food regulators in NSW to work together.

3 Animal Welfare

In NSW, animal welfare is mainly protected by the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979* (POCTAA). RSPCA NSW and Animal Welfare League NSW are authorised to enforce POCTAA, alongside NSW Police. DPIRD is not an enforcement agency under POCTAA. Animal welfare in NSW is enforced by DPIRD and protected under *Animal Research Act 1985* and *Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986*.

These regulatory priorities only relate to DPIRD's regulatory responsibilities under those two laws.

Regulatory Priorities 2026-2027

1 July- 31 December 2026

Enduring



Biosecurity

- 1** Protect NSW agriculture, economy, biodiversity and wildlife by minimising biosecurity risks and impacts from animal pests (invertebrate and vertebrate) and disease threats.
- 2** Protect human health, Aboriginal lands, agriculture and biodiversity by minimising biosecurity risks and harms from plants including high-risk weeds.
- 3** Prepare for and respond to biosecurity emergencies and natural disasters to minimise damage to NSW communities, economy and environment.



Food Safety

- 1** Protect human health by being prepared for, responding to and preventing food safety incidents, targeting:
 - High risk licensed food businesses
 - Food export businesses
 - Manufacturers and Wholesalers



Animal Welfare

- 1** Continuously improve animal welfare in NSW, targeting:
 - Animal Research
 - Exhibited Animals

Six monthly



Biosecurity

- Vertebrate Pest Animals**-practical regulatory guidance for land managers and compliance support for Local Land Services
- Red Meat Abattoirs**-licensed abattoirs in NSW targeting National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) compliance
- Almond and Blueberry Pollination**-proactive compliance inspections of bee hives
- Harvesting Equipment**-Parthenium weed vectors in harvesting equipment on the NSW/QLD border
- Priority Weeds- Hudson Pear**- supporting NSW Resources with practical regulatory guidance for landholders, explorers and small-scale miners
- Sheep and Goat electronic identification (eID)**-regulatory education of livestock saleyards to ensure that sheep and goats will be fitted with a proper eID by 1 January 2027



Food Safety

- Sulfur Dioxide (SO2) in Retail Meat**- monitoring and testing for illegal use of SO2 and meat species to protect consumers and human health.
- Vulnerable Persons**- compliance audit program on vulnerable persons facilities, Central Production Unit's and Delivered Meal Organisation's, including those facilities in the Third Party Audit Program.
- High Risk Seafood Processing**-High Risk Seafood Processing Audit Program
- Egg Processing**-compliance audit program on licensed egg processing facilities



Animal Welfare

- Red and Non-Red Meat Abattoirs**- targeting licensed red meat and non-red meat abattoirs in NSW to monitor animal welfare compliance with the Australian Standards.

Why do we focus on biosecurity?

We play a crucial role in ensuring that the legislative and policy settings are in place to support the best practice management of biosecurity risks. We work with other jurisdictions to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from biosecurity incursions and incidents.

Together with our local delivery partner, Local Land Services (LLS), and industry, we educate the community, land managers and other stakeholders on how to achieve strong biosecurity outcomes and effectively manage pests, diseases and weeds.

A photograph of two cows in a field at sunset. One cow is standing and facing the camera, while the other is grazing. The word "Biosecurity" is overlaid in white text.

Biosecurity

1



Biosecurity

Enduring priority 1-pest animals

- 1** Protect NSW agriculture, economy, biodiversity and wildlife by minimising biosecurity risks and impacts from animal pests (invertebrate and vertebrate) and disease threats.



July 2026 to
June 2027

Invasive Invertebrate Pest Compliance

NSW/Qld border compliance-fire ants and cattle tick

We will conduct high visibility vehicle inspections in Northern NSW to enforce compliance with the Fire Ant Emergency Order and the Biosecurity Order (Permitted Activities) in partnership with NSW Police, National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and Transport NSW, to prevent Red Imported Fire Ants and cattle ticks from impacting NSW biodiversity and agriculture.



July 2026 to
June 2027

Vertebrate Pest Animal Compliance

Vertebrate pest animal compliance operations

We will undertake coordinated compliance operations to support Local Land Services (LLS) to ensure land managers exercise their biosecurity duties to control pests, such as pigs and deer, and/or who are not participating in an LLS pest management program.



July 2026 to
June 2027

Bee Industry

Bee Code of Practice compliance operations

We will complete compliance programs targeting high risk beekeepers, enforcing compliance with registration conditions in the code of practice to protect the integrity of the bee industry in NSW.



Biosecurity

Enduring priority 1-pest animals



July 2026 to
June 2027

Abandoned Orchards

Abandoned orchard compliance operation in the Mudgee and Griffith regions

We will work with LLS and undertake coordinated compliance operations to ensure that properties identified as high risk for abandoned/neglected orchards in the Mudgee and Griffith regions. LLS to undertake regulatory extension and DPIRD to undertake compliance investigation and enforcement to control the biosecurity risks and prevent impacts to NSW agriculture from weeds, disease and invertebrate pests.



Biosecurity

Six monthly priorities-pest animals



July 2026 to
January 2027

Vertebrate Pest Animals

Development of regulatory guidance -pigs in Northwest and deer in Southeast NSW

We will work with LLS to build practical regulatory guidance that educates and enables land managers and occupiers to comply with the law and properly exercise their general biosecurity duties to control deer in southeast NSW and pigs in northwest NSW and prevent impacts to NSW agriculture.



July 2026 to
December 2026

Red Meat Abattoirs

Abattoir compliance operations

We will complete a compliance program on licensed red meat abattoirs in NSW targeting National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) compliance to uphold the integrity of biosecurity management programs and enable government and industry to effectively respond to biosecurity incidents and emergencies.



July 2026 to
December 2026

Almond and Blueberry Pollination

Almond and blueberry pollination- apiary compliance inspection operations

We will conduct proactive compliance inspections of bee hives and enforcement action to identified biosecurity compliance risks to protect the NSW bee industry and economy.



Biosecurity

Enduring priority 2-plants and weeds

2 Protect human health, Aboriginal lands, agriculture and biodiversity by minimising biosecurity risks and harms from plants including high-risk weeds.



July 2026 to
June 2027

Prohibited Matter banned from sale

Online trade of state priority weeds compliance

We will conduct targeted a compliance surveillance and enforcement program of Online Trading of prohibited matter and other weeds banned for sale under the Schedule 3 of the Regulation in NSW.



July 2026 to
June 2027

Prohibited matter eradication

Eradicate Hawkweed, Meadow knapweed, Mexican feather grass and Parthenium weed

We will support Local Control Authorities (LCA's) to undertake compliance operations targeting high risk sites to eradicate high risk weeds and protect Aboriginal lands, biodiversity and agriculture in NSW.



July 2026 to
June 2027

Tropical Soda Apple

Tropical Soda Apple (TSA) compliance operations in Northern NSW and Greater Sydney

We will work with LCA's for coordinated interagency monitoring, inspections and compliance targeting high-risk TSA sites and pathways to enable early detection and rapid response of new incursions to protect Aboriginal lands, biodiversity and agriculture in NSW from threats across north east, north west and Greater Sydney regions.



Biosecurity

Enduring priority 2-plants and weeds



July 2026 to
June 2027

Movement of plant material

Certified plant movement compliance operations
(Interstate and statewide movement)

We will complete compliance audit programs targeting business operating under approved certification assurance arrangements to enforce compliance with accreditation and protect NSW biodiversity, agriculture and Aboriginal lands from biosecurity risks.



July 2026 to
June 2027

Partnerships with Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC)

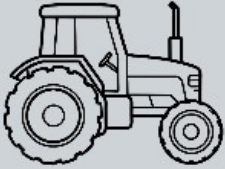
Early detection and rapid response of priority weed incursions

We will work with LALC's and LCA's targeting early detection, rapid response and control of priority weeds on Aboriginal lands and neighbouring sites to protect Aboriginal lands.



Biosecurity

Six monthly priorities-plants and weeds



July 2026 to
January 2027

Harvesting equipment

Parthenium weed vectors in harvesting equipment on the NSW/QLD border

We will target harvesting plant and equipment and their movement through high visibility vehicle compliance inspections in Northern NSW to implement the Procedure for Parthenium weed carrier inspection in NSW.



July 2026 to
January 2027

Priority Weeds- Hudson Pear

Development of regulatory guidance for land managers in Northwest NSW

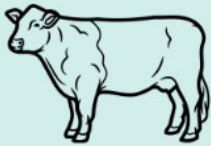
We will build practical regulatory guidance that educates and enables land managers and occupiers in Northwest NSW to properly exercise their general biosecurity duty to prevent Hudson Pear impacts on NSW biodiversity, Aboriginal lands and agriculture.



Biosecurity

Enduring priority 3- emergencies and natural disasters

3 Prepare for and respond to biosecurity emergencies and natural disasters to minimise damage to NSW communities, economy and environment.

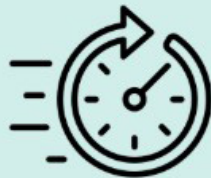


July 2026 to
June 2027

National Livestock Identification System

Property to Property- NLIS compliance operations

We will complete compliance investigations of Property to Property (P2P) cattle movements targeting compliance with mandatory NLIS transfer uploads obligations and livestock lifetime traceability is maintained.



July 2026 to
June 2027

Capability, maturity and preparedness

Growing our capability, maturity and preparedness

We will build and maintain regulatory capability and organisational maturity to sustain and improve regulatory practice. This includes building and implementing regulatory officer capability framework and self assessment tool. It also includes building agency maturity through application of the modern regulator improvement tool.



Biosecurity

Six monthly priorities-emergencies and natural disasters



July 2026 to
December 2026

Sheep and Goat electronic identification (eID)

Sheep & Goat eID traceability at saleyards

We will work with LLS to coordinate regulatory education of livestock saleyards to ensure that sheep and goats will be fitted with a proper electronic identification device by 1 January 2027.

Why do we focus on food safety?

The NSW food sector contributes over \$100 billion to the NSW economy every year. Foodborne illness and food safety incidents have a direct human health impact but also will impact the confidence in the industry and its contribution to the NSW economy.



Food Safety

2



Food safety

Enduring priority 1

1 Protect human health by being prepared for, responding to and preventing food safety incidents.



July 2026 to
June 2027

High risk licensed food businesses

Compliance operations targeting high risk processes in aged care, meat processing and meat retail facilities

We will complete compliance audit programs and proactive inspections of licensed food businesses to protect human health targeting the meat sector (meat processing, uncooked communitised fermented meat, sulfur dioxide in retail meat & seafood processing) and aged care sector (vulnerable persons facilities, central production units, & delivered meal organisations).



January 2027 to
March 2027

Export registered businesses

Compliance operations targeting meat and dairy exporters

We will complete compliance audit programs targeting export registered businesses trading meat and dairy products ensuring Commonwealth export requirements are met, overseas market access is sustained and industry integrity is protected.



July 2026 to
December 2026

Manufacturers and Wholesalers

High risk food manufacturers and wholesalers

We will complete inspections and enforcement programs on high risk facilities in the sector (e.g. High moisture baked goods, RTE foods, Cook Chill, Fresh Pasta & Noodles, Pies & Sausage Rolls, Fermented beverages) in Sydney and Regional NSW, targeting hygiene & sanitation, construction, pest control, process control and training.



Food safety

Enduring priority 1



July 2026 to
June 2027

Capability, maturity and preparedness

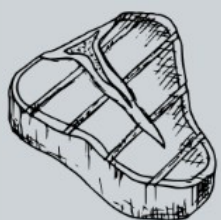
Growing our capability, maturity and preparedness

We will build and maintain regulatory capability and organisational maturity to enable timely and effective response to food safety incidents in NSW. This includes building and implementing online food safety learning modules for Authorised Officers and Third-Party auditors, and self assessment tools. It also includes building agency maturity through application of the modern regulator improvement tool.



Food safety

Six monthly priorities



July 2026 to
December 2026

Sulfur Dioxide in Retail Meat

Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂) and species testing in retail meat sector

We will conduct a surveillance, compliance monitoring and enforcement program of licensed retail meat premises in Sydney to test for the illegal use of SO₂ and meat species to protect consumers and human health.



July 2026 to
December 2026

Central Production Units (CPU's)

Central Production Unit audit program

We will conduct a compliance audit program on licensed CPU facilities targeting high risk cook/chill processes and system validation including those facilities in the Third Party Audit Program.



September and
October 2026

Delivered Meal Organisations (DMO's)

Delivered Meal Organisation audit program

We will conduct a compliance audit program on licensed DMO facilities, targeting processing and delivery food safety controls including those facilities in the Third Party Audit Program.



Food safety

Six monthly priorities



September and
October 2026

High Risk Seafood Processing

High risk seafood processing audit program

We will conduct a compliance audit program on high risk seafood processing facilities targeting Food safety program, critical control points and traceability.



November and
December 2026

Egg Processing

Egg processing audit program

We will conduct a compliance audit program on licensed egg processing facilities targeting Food Safety Program, critical control points and testing as per the Food Safety Schemes Manual.



November and
December 2026

Vulnerable Persons facilities

Vulnerable Persons compliance audit program

We will conduct a compliance audit program on vulnerable persons facilities, e.g. aged care, targeting Food Safety Program and approved suppliers, including those facilities in the Third Party Audit Program.

Why do we focus on animal welfare?

The NSW community has high expectations for the welfare of animals. A strong emphasis on animal welfare aligns with community expectations and legal obligations, reflecting a commitment to compassion, accountability, and best practice.

Animal Welfare

3



Animal welfare

Enduring priority 1

1 Continuously improve animal welfare and traceability in NSW.



July 2026 to
June 2027

Animal Research

Animal Research compliance inspection program

We will conduct a compliance inspection program of accredited Animal Research establishments and Animal suppliers licence holders that house animals for use in research, to improve animal welfare outcomes.



July 2026 to
June 2027

Exhibited Animals

Exhibited animals compliance audit program

We will conduct a compliance audit program of exhibited animal facilities to assess compliance targeting exhibited animal legal requirements on mandatory incident notifications (escape, injury and zoonoses), and enclosure standards to improve animal welfare in NSW.



Animal welfare

Six monthly priorities



July 2026 to
December 2026

Red and Non-Red Meat Abattoirs

Abattoir compliance audit program

We will conduct a compliance audit program targeting licensed red meat and non-red meat abattoirs in NSW to monitor animal welfare compliance with the Australian Standards.

