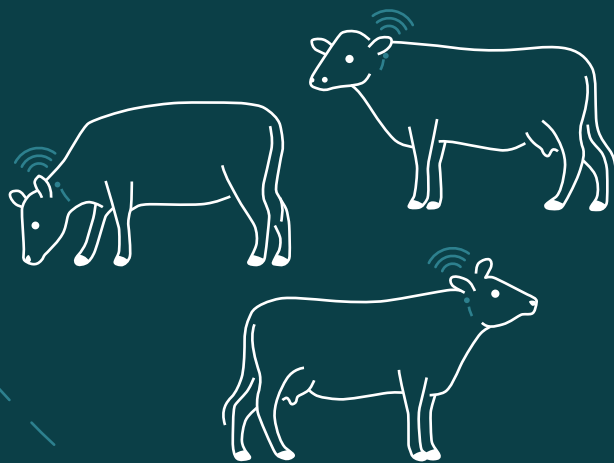




Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment (Virtual Fencing) Regulation



The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2025 (the regulation) has been amended to legalise virtual fencing for cattle in NSW, subject to animal welfare safeguards and requirements relating to the responsible use of the technology.

Use of virtual fencing is permitted only if:



Users are trained and animal welfare can be monitored.



Public safety is ensured. Virtual fencing is for internal purposes only and must not be used as the way cattle are contained to a property.

Existing animal welfare standards must be met, and virtual fencing is not allowed to cause unnecessary pain or distress to cattle. The amendment adopts an Animal Welfare Guide for Virtual Fencing of Cattle and will be supported by an education campaign and a review after 2 years.

What are the changes?

On 12 December 2025, changes were made to the regulation to allow the use of virtual fencing devices for controlling and monitoring the movement of beef and dairy cattle in NSW.

The changes were developed with input from stakeholders and include a guide so that users of the technology understand how they can meet their animal welfare obligations.

In summary, the amendment:

- allows the use, sale and possession of virtual fencing devices in NSW, but only if users are trained by the supplier and are on the same property as the cattle at the time the device is activated
- adopts the [NSW Animal Welfare Guide for Virtual Fencing of Cattle](#), which sets principles and outcomes-based criteria to protect animal welfare
- restricts use to within a property, except where neighbouring landholders have reached a mutual written agreement.

How will it work?

- Virtual stock fencing systems involve cattle wearing Global Positioning System (GPS) enabled neckbands. The regulation does not permit devices that can manually provide electric cues directly to cattle.
- Devices can only be used on beef and dairy cattle, and only to monitor and control cattle movement for containment and herding.
- Cattle must first receive an audio or vibrational cue. Electric cues can only be delivered after non-aversive cues have been delivered, and will cease if the animal is not demonstrating the desired learning behaviour.
- Users must be trained by the manufacturer or supplier.
- Users must be on the same property as the cattle at the time the device is activated, and be satisfied that the device will be monitored by someone who can have the device deactivated or removed if it malfunctions or causes the animal distress.
- Users can control the boundaries that trigger cues but cannot deliver cues directly to an animal.
- Any virtual fencing system must be based on behavioural algorithms that enable rapid associative learning.

What happens next?

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) will work with industry, enforcement agencies, and suppliers to provide material that helps users understand:

- the animal welfare issues related to use of virtual fencing devices
- the safeguards that are in place
- how these may affect their use of the devices and their choice of device.

There will be an evaluation of the regulatory changes after 2 years. Beef and dairy producers can contact suppliers to seek information about the options available for virtual fencing devices and their implementation.

More information

For more information, visit [Animal welfare reform](#)

Read the regulation on the [NSW legislation website](#)

