

Procedure

Biosecurity – National Livestock Identification System – Procedure for cattle, sheep and goat abattoirs and knackeries

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Scope:

The Biosecurity Act 2015 (the Biosecurity Act) promotes biosecurity as a shared responsibility between government, industry and communities. This procedure applies to the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), and Local Land Services (LLS), in their roles in administering and enforcing the Biosecurity Act.

The procedure refers to approved roles of LLS under other procedures. Employees of LLS do not directly have responsibilities or jurisdiction for compliance matters at abattoirs or knackeries under this procedure. This procedure also applies to on-plant staff employed by the Australian Government, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF).

For the purpose of this Procedure, unless otherwise specified, the term ‘abattoir’ includes knackeries, consistent with the definition of an abattoir including any premises used for the slaughter of stock or for the processing of carcasses of stock.

The owner or person in charge of an abattoir, as referred to in the Biosecurity (National Livestock Identification System) Regulation 2017 (NLIS Regulation), is collectively referred to in this procedure as the ‘abattoir operator’.

Management of the biosecurity risk

The purpose of this procedure is to inform the NSW Government of their roles for ensuring compliance with National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) requirements in cattle, sheep and goats’ abattoirs and knackeries as prescribed under the Biosecurity Act, the NLIS Regulation 2017, the Food Act 2003 (the Food Act) and the Food Regulation 2015 (the Food Regulation).

It details the measures that must be adopted by operators of abattoirs and knackeries in NSW to effectively implement the NLIS in accordance with state legislation and red meat standards, and by meat safety inspectors when monitoring and enforcing compliance by those establishments.

Note:

This procedure has been updated to reflect the requirements for abattoir and knackery operators who will begin to scan and upload individual data for sheep and goats identified with eID from 1 July 2024.

The period 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2026 is a transition period when abattoirs and knackeries are updating their systems from uploading mob data for sheep and goats, to individual eID uploads for sheep and goats. During this time sheep and goats will be identified by either, or both, a visual NLIS tag, or an NLIS electronic device (eID).

From 1 January 2027 all sheep and goats must be identified with an NLIS electronic device or eID before they go to sale, slaughter, or another property, with the eID scanned and individual kill files uploaded to the NLIS database by abattoir operators. The abattoirs will no longer be required to upload mob-based kill data.

During the transition period, sheep and goats with visual tags as well as eID tags must be uploaded to the NLIS database as a mob to ensure full traceability. In addition, sheep and goats with eIDs must be scanned and uploaded as an individual kill file to get abattoir systems ready for device-based kill uploads. From 1 January 2027 abattoirs in NSW will cease to do mob-based data uploads and will switch fully to device-based kill uploads.

Biosecurity legislation summary

The NLIS is Australia's permanent whole-of-life identification system which aims to ensure individual cattle, sheep and goats, and pigs can be traced from property of birth to slaughter for biosecurity, food safety, product integrity and market access purposes.

The NLIS is underpinned by state and territory legislation, which forms the regulatory framework for the system. The NLIS is endorsed and supported by all sectors of the cattle, sheep and goats and pig industries including producer, stock and station agent, saleyard, feedlot and processor peak industry bodies.

Any person who deals with the sectors mentioned above ought to know of the biosecurity risks associated with these livestock and has a general biosecurity duty to take measures to prevent, eliminate or minimise the risk as far as is reasonably practicable. The general biosecurity duty can be discharged by following the NLIS Regulation and Industry Standards.

The collection, use and disclosure of information in accordance with this procedure, including any internal or external discussion or distribution of information, must be in compliance with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 or be exempted by the operation of section 387 of the Biosecurity Act.

Section 387 (2) of the Act provides authority for the disclosure of information about a person, without the consent of the person: to a public sector agency or to any other person, but only if the disclosure is reasonably necessary for the purpose of exercising a biosecurity risk function.

Data about animals killed and processed in an abattoir is commercially sensitive and confidential and use of the information within the NLIS database is subject to the Terms of Use for the NLIS database as approved from time to time by SAFEMEAT and published by Integrity Systems Company (ISC) Ltd.

Work health and safety

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 places an obligation on the agencies as a person conducting a business or undertaking and workers to provide a safe and healthy workplace. Safe Work Method Statements that support activities included in this procedure must be used in identifying, assessing and controlling risks.

NSW DPIRD and LLS will work together to create a safe and supportive work environment when undertaking any activities for this procedure.

Users are reminded of the need to follow safe work practices when applying any techniques described in this publication. This includes identifying, assessing and managing any work health and safety risks.

Safe Work Method Statements that refer to activities included in this procedure must be used in assessing and managing risks. All persons working in or visiting abattoirs must comply with all safe work practices determined by abattoir management.

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1. Roles and responsibilities

The NLIS Regulation places obligations on a number of people. If cattle, sheep and goats are not correctly identified by the owner or vendor, other people may subsequently commit an offence if the stock is sold to, bought by, delivered to or slaughtered at an abattoir.

NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD: includes NSW Food Authority)

The department's authorised officers may conduct on-site audits of abattoir conformance with NLIS requirements in collaboration with on-plant staff (OPS) or supervisors (from DAFF). The authorised officers investigate alleged breaches of the NLIS Regulation by abattoir operators based on information obtained from the NLIS database or provided by OPS or food safety officers and take appropriate regulatory action.

The department licenses all abattoirs and regulates food safety schemes in domestic abattoirs and knackeries. DAFF performs similar functions with respect to export abattoirs and there is a formal arrangement between the DPIRD and DAFF covering these arrangements:

- DPIRD Compliance and Integrity Systems (CIS) officers are authorised under both the Food Act and the Biosecurity Act. If non-conformances are identified during routine audits or as part of an investigation, the officer who identified the non-conformance carries out compliance and enforcement actions under the most suitable legislation in line with the DPI Compliance and Enforcement Policies.
- Food safety and CIS officers are appointed as both Authorised Officers and Authorised Auditors under the Food Act. Authorised Officers under the Food Act are referred to as Food Inspectors in the NLIS Regulation.

1.2 Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

The responsibilities of DAFF On-plant veterinarians include the following:

- verifying establishment compliance with its Approved Arrangement in relation to NLIS, traceability and status requirements.
- on a weekly basis, confirm that the number of stocks uploaded to the NLIS database equates to the number slaughtered and discuss any discrepancies with abattoir management and the establishment Area Technical Manager (ATM) with a view to prompt corrective action.
- notifying the State/Territory authority of any non-compliance (breach of legislation) and assisting State/Territory inspectors with the investigation of breaches.

ATMs undertake audits to verify that the identification and traceability conditions as stated in the Approved Arrangement and the DAFF on-plant system meet requirements of the Export control legislation.

1.3 Local Land Services

District registrars arrange the authorisation and supply of special identifiers to abattoirs on request by an abattoir operator in accordance with the NLIS Regulation and the NLIS 'Procedure for the supply of approved identifiers'.

District Veterinarians (DVs) and authorised officers investigate alleged breaches by livestock producers, stock agents, saleyard operators, buyers and carriers, based on information provided by abattoir operators, OPS, food safety and/or authorised officers, and take regulatory action in accordance with approved compliance procedures.

1.4 Livestock producers

Stock owners must ensure that their animals are properly identified with an NLIS electronic device (all cattle; all sheep or goats from 1 January 2027) or NLIS visual device (sheep and goats) before

leaving the property on which they are kept, whether they send the stock from their property for sale or directly to an abattoir.

On arrival of cattle, sheep, or goats at an abattoir, the person in charge of the stock must provide the abattoir operator with an approved form of NLIS movement document (usually an LPA National Vendor Declaration and Waybill (NVD) which includes the delivery information in relation to the stock. This is described in Section 2.1.

1.5 Buyers of prime stock

Buyers of livestock destined for slaughter must ensure they do not buy cattle, sheep or goats that are not correctly identified. An NVD or equivalent NLIS document with the required delivery information for the animals must be supplied.

1.6 Abattoir and knackery operators

The owner or person in charge of the abattoir (the 'abattoir operator') must ensure that:

- all cattle, sheep and goats slaughtered at the abattoir are identified (except for stock slaughtered for humane reasons)
- the PIC of the property on which the livestock were last held is supplied.
- prescribed information about the stock is uploaded to the NLIS database in time.

Abattoir operators (other than knackeries) also determine, prior to or at slaughter, whether any animals have a status that requires testing or other action.

The responsibilities of export abattoirs are to ensure that:

- the establishment's Approved Arrangement contain procedures which guarantee compliance with the identification, traceability and residue status of cattle, sheep, and goats, with AS4696:2023 and conformance with the NLIS Regulation
- records of the place of production/source of the stock are maintained to ensure the safety of the meat from producer to customer.
- procedures are in place to identify and address any non-compliance with identification and traceability requirements.
- contingency measures are in place in the event NLIS devices are unreadable and/or the associated technology fails.

Operators must ensure that:

- NLIS procedures are included in the abattoir's Food Safety Program including ensuring compliance with AS4696:2023 and the NLIS Regulation
- animals admitted for slaughter are sourced from holdings where the management of the animals ensures the safety of the meat.
- abattoirs have records of the PIC where the animals were sourced (property and/or, saleyard)
- the Food Safety Program includes procedures for traceability and assessing the residue status of animals for slaughter, as detailed below.

Knackerries operate under the NLIS Regulation and the Food Regulation. Operators must ensure that:

- animals for slaughter or processing for pet meat are identified in accordance with state legislation. This includes animals that are euthanised or cadavers of animals that have otherwise died on a property. Due to the risk of anthrax, approval must be granted by the department prior to processing these animals.
- if the identification requirements are not met, the animal cannot be processed as pet meat.

- a system is in place to ensure the source of each animal processed is known. The source of the animal processed is considered to be the place of production of each animal, or the saleyard from which each animal is obtained. Obtaining an NVD or Transport Stock Statement (TSS) on which the PIC is recorded meets this requirement.
- if a knackery is receiving a euthanised animal from another property, or (under an approved arrangement for fallen stock) processes the cadaver of an animal that has died from other causes on another property, the carcass must still be identified with an NLIS electronic device before transport and processing. The definition of identifiable stock means cattle, pigs, goats and sheep and includes a carcass of any such animal.

2. Legislation and standards

2.1 NSW Government Regulation

Mandatory requirements for the NLIS in NSW are prescribed under the NLIS Regulation. It is prescribed that:

- all stock must be identified with an approved NLIS electronic device (cattle, sheep and goats) or NLIS visual device (sheep and goats until 1 January 2027) before the animal, or its carcass, leaves any property or is transported, sold or slaughtered.
- on arrival of any stock at an abattoir, the person in charge of the stock must provide the person in charge of the abattoir with the delivery information (usually an NVD, possibly a TSS or permit, if accepted) in relation to the stock
- the person in charge of the abattoir must provide the delivery information in relation to the stock to the abattoir operator.
- if the person in charge of an abattoir or the operator of the abattoir has not obtained the delivery information for identifiable stock, they must take all reasonable steps to ensure the stock are not slaughtered unless it is for humane reasons.
- the abattoir operator must upload slaughter details (kill file) of any stock and movement of any living stock from the abattoir to the NLIS database by the close of business (COB) on the next working day following the day on which the reportable transaction occurs.
- knackeries have seven days to notify the NLIS database of the dead/slaughtered animal details.
- the owner of the stock immediately before the stock arrived at the abattoir must keep a record of the delivery information for seven years. The owner of the abattoir must keep the delivery information for two years.

Delivery information is defined under Part 4, Clause 32 of the NLIS Regulation and includes:

- a. the type of stock and the number of each type of stock
- b. the date the stock left the previous property
- c. the property identification code of the previous property
- d. the unique serial number of any permit or NLIS movement document created in relation to the delivery of the stock
- e. a completed delivery declaration that includes the following:
 - i. the name and signature of the person preparing the declaration
 - ii. the date on which the declaration is made
 - iii. the PIC of the property to which the stock is to be delivered (or if the code is not known or readily available, the name and address of the person to whom the stock are to be delivered).

Note that an NLIS movement document such as an NVD will contain the required delivery information.

Reportable transactions at an abattoir or knackery, under Part 4, clause 45 of the NLIS Regulation are the:

- a. slaughter of any stock at the abattoir, and includes the transaction information
 - i. type and date of transaction
 - ii. relevant identification particulars of the relevant stock
 - iii. serial number of any NLIS movement document related to the transaction
 - iv. PIC of the abattoir or knackery
 - v. PIC of the previous property
- b. movement of any living stock from the abattoir PIC to another paddock or property (PIC) and includes the PIC to which the stock were moved.

2.2 Australian Standards

Traceability standards for **red meat production** are prescribed in the *Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption* (AS 4696:2023).

The new (2023) Australian Meat Standard was implemented in all Tier 1 and Tier 2 export registered meat establishments through an amendment to the definition of the Australian Meat Standard in the *Export Control (Meat and Meat Products) Rules 2021 (the Meat Rules)*, changing from AS 4696:2007 to AS 4696:2023. The amendment to the Meat Rules came into force on 01 July 2023.

The Australian Meat Standard (AS 4696:2007) introduced risk-based amendments to Schedule 2 and 3 only. No other technical amendments were made to the standard.

Traceability standards for **pet meat production** are prescribed in the *Standard for the Hygienic Production of Pet Meat, PISC Technical Report 88* (see References):

- pet meat processing establishments must have a documented system that provides for the accurate identification of, and the ability to trace and recall, pet meat produced at the premises.
- in particular, animals must only be processed if the State requirements for animal identification are complied with, and the establishment must be able to identify the source of each animal, such as the property where it was produced or the saleyard from which it was obtained (section 9)
- the Standard provides for the processing of fallen stock (being the body of a farm animal that has died for reasons other than slaughter) under an approved arrangement with the controlling authority.
- NSW Food Authority allows knackeries to source downer or emergency slaughter animals from farms, abattoirs and feedlots provided the facility operates in accordance with the On-Site Salvage Slaughter Procedure for Knackeries.

NSW DPIRD Requirements

Under the NSW Food Regulation, the department licenses:

- abattoirs to slaughter animals for human consumption, and
- knackeries to slaughter animals for use as animal food as defined in the Food Regulation.

There are prescribed standards with which these establishments must comply:

- red meat abattoirs with the Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption (AS 4696:2023)
- knackeries with the Standard for the Hygienic Production of Pet Meat: PISC Technical Report 88.

Businesses wanting to process fallen stock must make arrangements with the NSW Food Authority and only operate in accordance with the On-Site Salvage Slaughter Procedure for Knackereries.

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

The previous DAFF (AQIS) Meat Notice 2007/11 was archived in 2016, with the requirements incorporated into the Approved Arrangements guidelines – meat. This document is undergoing review with an anticipated publication date of Quarter 3, 2024.

2.3 Terms of Use for the NLIS Database – Property and Device Statuses

Properties (PICs) and cattle, sheep and goat electronic devices may be assigned one or more statuses that indicate a risk to an animal's suitability for marketing or for human consumption. Collectively these statuses are referred to by the term 'extended residue program' (ERP):

- these statuses are generally assigned by state animal health authorities and historically related to chemical residues (organochlorines, endosulfan and antimicrobials)
- this status now includes other concerns such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) or mad cow disease (imported animals, animals exposed to restricted animal material), other animal diseases (anthrax, *Cysticercus bovis* (beef measles), Johne's disease, bovine tuberculosis), residues (lead), and stolen animals.

Abattoirs must check the ERP status of properties consigning livestock to the abattoir prior to or at slaughter, through their NLIS database account or the abattoir's software program which interfaces with the NLIS database. The software displays messages about testing requirements, the animal's suitability for human consumption, or contacting other authorities.

This allows the abattoir to segregate that mob and schedule the animal's slaughter so that any risk can be more readily managed or scan each animal in that consignment before slaughter and do an ERP check to identify and segregate any risk animals.

The Early Warning (EW) status is available and helps monitor and manage food safety and biosecurity risk along the entire supply chain. It gives livestock buyers and agents prior notice around potential risk by flagging that the PIC may have high risk animals associated with it. The buyer or agent is then able to contact the vendor and seek more information about whether a high-risk animal is in a consignment.

An individual animal is given a 'device-based status' on the NLIS database against its NLIS device or bolus when it has a known disease or residue issue that presents a food safety or biosecurity risk and requires specific management, at feedlots, saleyards or processors.

Abattoirs must be aware that an EW status indicates that there are animals on that PIC with a risk status; it does not prove that any animals in that consignment are in fact of risk, nor the nature of the risk and action required:

- if the PIC has an EW status, the abattoir must do an ERP check on each animal consigned from that PIC to determine whether there are any risk animals in the mob, what that risk is and what corrective action they need to undertake
- if an ERP check shows no status (the status field is blank) or displays 'Clear no test', the EW status can be ignored as the ERP check has confirmed that there are no risk animals in that consignment.
- saleyard operators can view the NLIS database to confirm if any individual animals within a consignment present a high risk. Following pre-sale scanning, or if the vendor provides a list of NLIS tag numbers, the saleyard operator can check the device status for individual animals using the NLIS database.
- abattoirs may also enquire, through the NLIS database, about eligibility for the European market, Livestock Production Assurance and lifetime traceability status for marketing and quality assurance purposes.

- PIC and device statuses are summarised in the Tech Tip 'PIC and device status codes' and detailed in Appendix 14.9 of the 'NLIS Terms of Use' document. Information about EW PIC system and ERP checks is available in the NLIS fact sheets and Tech Tips.

3. NLIS Requirements for Abattoirs

3.1 Acquiring stock for slaughter.

It is an offence to sell or otherwise dispose, buy or otherwise acquire, and to send or transport any stock that is not identified with an NLIS electronic, or visual device as prescribed in the NLIS Regulation. The owner at that time may be:

- the vendor (if the stock has been consigned for slaughter over the hooks)
- a commissioned buyer
- the abattoir that has bought the stock.

Vendors, sellers, buyers, and carriers of stock destined for slaughter should all check that the stock they intend selling, buying or transporting are correctly identified.

3.2 Movement documents

On arrival of any stock at an abattoir, the owner or person in charge of the stock must provide the abattoir operator with the transaction information in relation to the stock, which includes:

- for an abattoir producing food for human consumption, the PIC of the place of production (not a saleyard or another abattoir)
- for knackereries, the PIC of the origin of the stock, although a saleyard PIC is acceptable.

The delivery information must be provided in an approved form. The approved forms are:

- LPA NVD or electronic NVD (eNVD) available as a web-based document or via an eNVD App (see ISC Ltd)
- Transported Stock Statement (TSS)
- Buyer's Reconciliation Report or Post Sale Summary produced by saleyards.
- Permit issued by an authorised officer.

The abattoir operator must not slaughter the stock unless they have received this information, unless the stock is required to be slaughtered for animal welfare reasons on the direction of an authorised officer, food safety officer, animal welfare inspector or a veterinary practitioner.

3.3 Uploading information to the NLIS database.

The person in charge of an abattoir is responsible under the NLIS Regulation for uploading prescribed information about reportable transactions at an abattoir which includes:

- the slaughter of any identifiable stock at the abattoir, and
- the movement of any living identifiable stock from the abattoir.

The information that must be provided to the NLIS administrator is:

- particulars of identification of the stock (Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID), eID, or NLIS number)
- PIC of the abattoir (this is 'automatically' uploaded when the abattoir logs onto the NLIS database through an account to which the PIC is linked)
- PIC of the property where the stock was last held.
- date of slaughter

- serial number of the relevant NLIS movement document (as required by the NLIS Regulation)

Note that commercial software used in abattoirs includes NVD serial number data when the devices are transferred to the abattoir PIC from a saleyard. For direct consignments, commercial software can upload an NVD serial number, but the NVD field isn't mandatory, and some abattoirs leave it blank. It is mandatory for the NVD serial number to be entered by NSW abattoirs.

If any cattle, sheep, or goats are not slaughtered but are moved alive from the abattoir to another property or abattoir, then the PIC of the destination property must be uploaded.

3.3.1 Upload methods

Abattoirs can use a variety of commercial kill-floor systems (e.g., Cedar Creek, Sastek and Triton) or in-house software to collate and upload data in a format acceptable to the NLIS database. This format is referred to as a carcase feedback (CFB) file.

Knackeries have a few options, depending on how many livestock they process:

- if processing only a few animals, read the NLIS ID numbers on the electronic devices and write them down.
- Open an NLIS database 'Abattoir/Processor' account and type in the NLIS tag numbers and other required information using one of the following functions on the account:
- "Killed animals with PIC of consignment" function on the account (requires the knackery establishment number – a 6-character number starting with NK)
- "Killed animals" (to upload a file which lists all killed animals) or
- "Livestock moved off my property" with code 'DECEASED' as the destination PIC
- if processing a large number of animals, it is recommended that an RFID/eID reader is used to scan the devices electronically, NLIS software installed, and all slaughtered devices uploaded directly from the scanner via a computer to the NLIS database.
- arrange with a local scanning contractor, stock and station agent, or LLS to read and upload the devices on a fee for service basis.

3.4 Body number

Each carcase is assigned a body number which is unique for a kill day. The number of bodies uploaded to the NLIS database must equal the number of stock slaughtered:

- the person in charge at an abattoir or abattoir operator must make a record, by the close of business on each working day, of the number of livestock slaughtered that day and the number held alive at the abattoir at the end of that day.
- this record must be kept for at least two years and provided on request to an authorised officer.

3.5 RFID/eID number

Each animal must be scanned, and the RFID/eID number uploaded for each body. Scanning may be done either pre- or post-slaughter, depending on the facilities at the abattoir:

- abattoirs must ensure that all livestock are correctly identified with an NLIS electronic device before slaughter. It is an offence to slaughter unidentified stock, as per the NLIS Regulation.

Buyers for abattoirs should be instructed to only bid on cattle, sheep or goats that are properly identified, and to insist that the saleyard replaces any lost or non-reading devices before the stock leave the saleyard.

All abattoirs must have facilities and procedures in place to do this:

- vendors who are consigning stock directly to the abattoir should be instructed to check and confirm that every animal is identified with a working NLIS device before loading.

- if an RFID/eID cannot be scanned due to device or scanner fault, the NLIS ID can be manually read from the device and entered against the body record via the kill-floor system.

If any livestock have lost their NLIS electronic device in transit or the lairage, a special or 'emergency' NLIS electronic device can be linked to the animal. Special identifiers may be ordered through LLS, who may authorise a person at the abattoir to supply special identifiers for use on a day-to-day basis in the abattoir:

- the special identifier should be printed with the abattoir PIC or, if unavailable, the LLS district code (if the latter, the identifiers must be transferred to the abattoir PIC (using TAGTRANS) by LLS before they are used.
- LLS may charge a fee for the supply of special identifiers to cover the cost of the identifiers and administration. An abattoir may incur additional costs in their use.
- the special identifier does not have to be physically attached to the animal, instead must be linked to the carcass, and then disposed of in accordance with the NLIS Regulation.

The NLIS Regulation requires a record of the supply of special identifiers to be made and kept. This record is deemed to have been made and kept for compliance purposes if the CFB data associated with the special identifier is uploaded to the NLIS database as prescribed.

If a whole consignment of cattle, sheep, or goats without NLIS devices is received, and this is detected in time, the stock should not be unloaded but returned to the property of origin:

- if the livestock have been unloaded into lairage, and the abattoir does not have sufficient special identifiers, the abattoir must notify the OPS or food safety officer immediately.
- the PIC of the property from which the livestock were consigned must be determined from the movement document, and normal food safety checks on that PIC carried out.
- the stock may be held until sufficient special identifiers can be obtained or may be slaughtered on the direction of an OPS, food safety or authorised officer on animal welfare grounds. NLIS devices for the property must not be supplied by the vendor for use in the abattoir.
- if the stock is slaughtered without NLIS devices, all other mandatory data must still be uploaded to the NLIS database.
- the abattoir operator should notify the relevant LLS region or the department of the consignment PIC and other details for investigation of the breaches allegedly committed by the stock owner and others involved in the transaction.

Approval must be obtained from LLS to move an animal to an abattoir, which is too large or dangerous to identify safely on a property:

- such animals may be slaughtered without an NLIS electronic device provided that a special or emergency device is linked to the body, and all other relevant information, is uploaded to the NLIS database.
- abattoirs may choose not to accept unidentified stock.

3.6 Property Identification Codes (PICs)

The PIC of the property or place where the animal was last held (PIC of consignment) must be uploaded for each body. If the animal was taken directly from a saleyard to a knackery, the saleyard PIC may be uploaded. This is essential for traceability, compliance with the NLIS Regulation, and to demonstrate compliance with the Australian standards:

- for consignments from saleyards, the PIC is 'automatically' entered by the abattoir software if the saleyard has transferred the stock to the abattoir PIC before slaughter (saleyards are required to upload stock (with electronic identification) to abattoir PICs by the close of business on sale day). Otherwise, the abattoir must manually enter the PIC from the NVD or post sale summary, or scan the devices in lairage and conduct a property to property transfer onto the abattoir PIC.

- for direct consignments from properties, the abattoir must enter the PIC from the NVD, or require the vendor to transfer the livestock to the abattoir PIC before they are slaughtered (i.e., on the day of consignment), or scan the devices in lairage and conduct a property to property transfer onto the abattoir PIC.
- if a PIC is not entered, some abattoir software programs insert a default PIC of ZZZZZ999 or ZZZZZZZZ. The database is programmed to also accept an 'administrator assigned PIC' of 8As (AAAAAAAA). These are *not valid PICs and do not comply with the NLIS Regulation*. If an abattoir has submitted a file containing a default PIC for a body record but knows what the correct PIC should have been, users of kill programs can send a modified carcasses feedback record to the NLIS database, including the correct PIC with the original body record. *Contact ISC Ltd for further information on the format of the modified body record.*
- if an abattoir records a device as slaughtered from a PIC, the database records a P2P movement from that PIC to the abattoir's PIC, then to deceased. If the animal was last registered to a PIC and a slaughter record for the device was uploaded with a default PIC, the current PIC on a life history would be the original PIC but the device is no longer active.

3.7 Carcase weight

Depending on software used at the processing plant, the carcase weight of each body may be uploaded, except for stock processed at a knackery. Carcase is defined as the body of an animal after being dressed (head, feet, hide, and internal organs removed). Upload of carcase weights is not required by the NLIS Regulation.

3.8 Current holdings over 7 days

This refers to stock which, according to the NLIS database, have been on the abattoir PIC for more than seven days. This may be because:

- all stock may not have been slaughtered within seven days due to kill agendas.
- stock have been slaughtered but have not been uploaded as deceased:
 - stock have not been scanned onto the abattoir PIC due to lost or faulty NLIS devices or faulty scanning equipment
 - uploads have not been attempted or have failed in part or in full.
- stock have been mistakenly transferred to the abattoir PIC:
 - buyer has quoted the wrong PIC, or the wrong PIC is linked to the buyer's account
 - saleyard or vendor has incorrectly transferred stock to the abattoir PIC.
- stock have been held in holding paddocks for more than a week:
 - holding paddocks should have a separate PIC, and the stock should be transferred to the holding paddock PIC initially, then to the abattoir PIC shortly before slaughter.
- stock have not been slaughtered:
 - the livestock have been deemed unsuitable for slaughter at that time and have been returned to pasture or a feedlot or have been resold without being transferred to the destination property PIC as required. (Note it is very rare for abattoirs to return stock not slaughtered or on-sell such stock. This action should be documented in the abattoir's Food Safety Program if it is likely to occur).

3.9 Livestock that die while at an abattoir/knackery.

Any cattle, sheep or goats that die (other than by slaughter) while at an abattoir are to be recorded on the NLIS database by the abattoir operator by the close of business on the next working day after the death:

- dead cattle, sheep and goats may be recorded through the abattoir's NLIS database account 'Livestock moved off my property' function and entering 'DECEASED' as the destination PIC. This function must not be used for slaughtered cattle, sheep, or goats as it does not capture all of the other essential data, nor to clear current holdings as the stock might not in fact be dead.

3.10 Timeliness of uploads

The NLIS Regulation requires all relevant information to be uploaded to the NLIS database by the close of business on the next working day after slaughter.

However, knackereries processing only small numbers of cattle, sheep or goats are allowed by the NLIS Regulation up to seven days to upload so they only have to submit the required information once a week:

- stock that are held at the abattoir for a few days prior to slaughter do not have to be recorded on the database until they are slaughtered.
- stock to be held for more than seven days should first be transferred to a separate holding property PIC and then to the abattoir PIC the day before slaughter.

3.11 Data Correction

Abattoir operators must check for error messages from the NLIS database daily and take prompt corrective action when an error message indicates that some or all data has not been successfully uploaded to the database.

The easiest way to check if the data has been uploaded and processed successfully is to log into their abattoir account on the NLIS database and select 'View my transaction history' from the drop down on the home page:

- this will list all carcase feedback uploads and a status of 'complete' if successful or 'error', 'incomplete', 'bad format' or similar message if further action is required. Click the status to view the corresponding error messages.
- correct the error to comply with the NLIS Regulation, and re-upload the data by the close of business on the next working day after the stock were slaughtered.

From time to time, a data error may be reported by a producer or detected by the department or DAFF. Abattoir operators must respond promptly and positively to requests from a producer or regulatory agency to correct data.

Technical advice on error correction is available from ISC Ltd, and the abattoir operator should contact ISC Ltd promptly if they cannot determine the cause of or fix a data upload error themselves.

3.12 Disposal of used devices

NLIS devices removed from slaughtered animals must be disposed of in accordance with the NLIS Regulation to prevent their unlawful reuse, i.e., disposed of in a manner that ensures the device can't be reused or attached to stock.

4. Compliance monitoring and enforcement

4.1 Monitoring

4.1.1 Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry

Each OPV has access to an NLIS 'AQIS Plant' account to undertake weekly verification activities:

- an account can be opened online and takes a couple of days to be authorised.
- to run the required report, select View/generate all reports > Go > Abattoir Upload Monitoring > Go > Enter the establishment number and date range > Go

For example:

	Abattoir	Town	Authority	Uploads	Days	RFID count	Percent of rfid recorded	Wt count	Percent of Weights recorded	PIC count	Percent of PICs recorded	No.cattle
1	Smith's Meats Pty Limited	SMITHTOWN	F	8		5141	96.22%	5338	99.91%	5167	96.71%	5343
2	Total:			8	10	5141	96.22%	5338	99.91%	5167	96.71%	5343

- this report is sufficient for monitoring abattoir activity for cattle.
- the 'No. cattle' (number of cattle uploaded) figure should be compared to the actual kill figures for that week, obtained from abattoir management, to ensure that all bodies have been uploaded.
- compliance figures less than the compliance target should be discussed with the abattoir management to immediately correct the previous week's data and prompt action to prevent future discrepancies.
- at the time of writing, no equivalent report was available for OPVs to monitor numbers of sheep and goats uploaded, to compare these with actual kill figures.

4.1.2 NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

The department monitors the performance of all cattle, sheep, and goat abattoirs quarterly from the NLIS database and provides a report to each abattoir, the NSW Food Authority, DAFF and relevant NSW DPIRD Biosecurity and Food Safety staff and management.

The monitoring data assesses how well abattoirs are complying with the requirements of the NLIS Regulation and whether the system at each abattoir is continuously improving. It provides an overall measure of traceability and whether the NLIS in NSW is working.

An overall performance measure and rank is calculated based on:

- devices uploaded (as a percentage of bodies uploaded)
- active PICs uploaded (as a percentage of bodies uploaded)
- timeliness of uploads (within two and seven days of kill)
- current holdings (as a measure of late or failed uploads).

Appendix 1 describes the key performance parameters, how to interpret the data, and corrective action that should be taken to continuously improve performance.

4.2 Enforcement

4.2.1 Compliance Action

All DPI compliance actions must be consistent with the BFS Prosecution Guidelines, the BFS Compliance and Enforcement Policy and specific directions or work instructions.

Officers must ensure that compliance action is timely and applied consistently across the state. Where an LLS officer cannot resolve an offence or the offending continues, they can discuss a resolution with BFS Compliance using the regulatory support arrangements.

Offences are generally investigated by the authorised officer who detects the offence. An officer may request the assistance of another experienced officer from LLS or BFS Compliance to provide guidance and mentoring or where the direct involvement of the experienced officer is needed.

To maintain a superior level of industry and community confidence, investigations into serious NLIS offences will be managed by BFS Compliance (nominally the Compliance Investigations Unit (CIU)). Investigations may be jointly undertaken where LLS officers request assistance to ensure procedural fairness and natural justice for the alleged offenders.

A range of guidance materials and templates are available for LLS and DPI staff to undertake compliance actions for NLIS offences.

DAFF OPVs and ATMs may undertake corrective action for non-compliances with Approved Arrangements. This may be in the form of:

1. non-compliance issue (NCI): A written record made by department on-plant staff of an identified non-conformity that had the potential to affect food safety, animal welfare, product integrity or market access requirements. The intent of an NCI is to record details of non-compliance and the associated corrective and preventive actions which can assist in decision making regarding the issuance of a corrective action request (CAR) for future non-compliance, or
2. corrective action request (CAR): A written directive from the department to the establishment management to take corrective and preventive action when a non-conformity is identified and reasonably likely to affect food safety, animal welfare, product integrity or market access requirements.

Definitions and acronyms:

- Abattoir: a building or place where animals are slaughtered for food; a slaughterhouse (Macquarie Dictionary).
- CFB: Carcase feedback (data or file)
- DAFF: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- DPIRD: Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
- ERP: Extended Residue Program
- EW: Early Warning
- FSO: Food Safety Officer
- ISC Ltd: Integrity Systems Company Limited, a subsidiary of Meat & Livestock Australia
- LLS: Local Land Services
- NLIS: National Livestock Identification System
- NVD: National Vendor Declaration
- OPS: On-plant staff or supervisor (DAFF)
- OPV: On-plant veterinarian (DAFF)
- PIC: Property identification code
- RFID: Radio Frequency Identification Device
- TSS: Transported Stock Statement

Documentation:

- Biosecurity Act 2015
- Biosecurity (National Livestock Identification System) Regulation 2017
- Food Act 2003
- Food Regulation 2015
- Export Control Act 1982
- Exporting meat and meat products – policy documents

- Meat Notice - Implementation of the new Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption (AS4696:2023)
- Standard for the Hygienic Production of Pet Meat: PISC Technical Report 88
- NSW Biosecurity and Food Authority General Circulars
<https://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/news/general-circulars>
- NLIS database User guide for Processors
- Early Warning status and what it means
- NLIS database – PIC and device status - Tech Tip
- Terms of Use for the National Livestock Identification System Database
- Procedure – Stock Identification - Managing statuses, errors and data transfers on the NLIS database
- NLIS Procedures for the supply of approved identifiers
- NLIS Compliance monitoring procedure
- NSW Biosecurity and Food Safety Compliance and Enforcement Policy
- Procedure - Biosecurity collection, use and disclosure of information

Revision History:

1	01 July 2017	Substantially updated to align with Biosecurity (NLIS) Regulation 2017	Systems, Intelligence & Traceability
1.1	April 2023	Review and update to new template as part of DPI website uplift project	Animal Biosecurity, Traceability Team
2.0	May 2024	Review content and obtain up to date information from DAFF re AS4696:2023, and Commonwealth's role in export abattoir compliance. Include the requirements for sheep and goats identified with eID in this procedure, noting that scanning and uploading activities of sheep and goats' eIDs will be similar for abattoir operators as those for cattle.	Animal Biosecurity, Policy Team
2.1	July 2024	Update to new template as part of DPIRD name change	Animal Biosecurity, Traceability Team

Contact:

- For NLIS policy, procedure, legislation, and database enquiries:
 - Email: livestock.traceability@dpird.nsw.gov.au
 - NSW DPIRD NLIS Helpline, phone 1300 720 405
 - <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/nlis>
- For supply chain NLIS information:
 - Email: support@integritysystems.com.au
 - Phone 1800 683 111
 - [NLIS | Australia's system for identification and traceability of livestock](#)
- For general biosecurity matters:
 - animal.biosecurity@dpird.nsw.gov.au
 - Emergency Animal Disease hotline: 1800 675 888

Appendix 1 – Compliance and performance monitoring

The following sections describe key performance parameters, how to interpret monitoring data, and corrective action that should be taken to continuously improve performance.

Overall score

These figures provide an overall estimate of how well abattoir operators are complying with the NLIS Regulation and uploading data that allows effective tracing.

The percentage figure is an average of the performance measures detailed below, namely 'Devices uploaded', 'PICs uploaded', 'Uploads within 2 days' and 'Current holdings over 7 days'.

Over 99.5% (rounded up to 100%) for cattle and pork abattoirs and over 98.5% for sheep and goat abattoirs is satisfactory and achievable. Between 96% and 99.5% for cattle and pork abattoirs and between 96% and 98.5% for sheep and goats' abattoirs indicates that improvement is required. Under 96% for abattoirs all species means that the NLIS Regulation is not being complied with, and prompt corrective action is essential.

- **Kill days.**

This is the total number of days for which kill data was uploaded during the monitoring period.

This figure should be compared with actual operating days.

For example, if the abattoir operates 5 days a week, with 1 day off for maintenance each month and no public holidays, then there should be 62 kill days each quarter. A lower 'kill days' figure suggests that some kill days were not uploaded. This is for guidance only and is not included in the overall measure of performance.

- **Bodies uploaded.**

This is the total number of bodies uploaded during the monitoring period. This figure should be compared with and exactly match kill data.

A lower number suggests that some bodies were not uploaded to the NLIS database, perhaps due to a failed upload with uncorrected errors. The status of all uploads should be checked daily by logging into your NLIS database account, running the report 'View my transaction history', clicking on any statuses that indicate an incomplete upload, error, or bad format, then promptly correcting the error and re-uploading the data. Please contact Integrity Systems Company (ISC) support for assistance with data correction.

- **Devices uploaded.**

This is the total number of RFIDs uploaded during the monitoring period. This figure should be the same as bodies uploaded (i.e., each body has a device), providing a performance measure of 100%.

A lower number suggests that some livestock did not have a device, or that some were not successfully scanned. Action must be taken to ensure that in future all livestock have a device which is recorded and uploaded.

- **Traceable PICs uploaded**

This measures whether a PIC has been uploaded which allows the property of origin to be traced. It counts number of bodies where the PIC of consignment has Active, Inactive status or it is an agent code and it is calculated as: $[Active] + [Inactive / 2] + [Agent\ codes / 2]$.

This performance measure should be greater than 99.5%. A lower figure may be due to:

- not confirming that a valid PIC has been entered against each body. Some kill programs automatically insert the PIC against the RFID or eID for stock that have been transferred to the abattoir PIC by a saleyard (as a saleyard out transfer) or by the vendor of a direct or over the hook consignment (as a property-to-property transfer). However, the PIC has to be manually entered for directly consigned livestock that have not first been transferred from the property to

the abattoir PIC. If a PIC is not entered, the software inserts a default (invalid) PIC of ZZZZZ999 or ZZZZZZZZ. The correct PIC may be subsequently uploaded as a modified PIC.

- uploading devices manually to 'deceased' without including the consigning property PIC
- using disbanded (cancelled) PICs, blocked PICs or 8As which are unlawful and negate traceability
- use of consignment PICs with inactive statuses. The owners of inactive PICs should be advised to contact their Local Land Services office in order to activate their PICs
- excessive use of agent codes. Although agent codes are allowable, they compromise traceability and their use should be discouraged, hence their value as a performance measure of the tracing system is discounted 50%.

Timeliness

This is a measure of timeliness of uploads, i.e., percentage of kill data uploaded within 2 days, 7 days and after 7 days is recorded. The NLIS Regulation requires kill data to be uploaded by the close of business on the next working day after slaughter.

This figure should always be 100%. A lower figure suggests that one or more uploads have been outside the 2-day required time frame.

Current holdings

This measures devices which have been transferred to the abattoir PIC but not uploaded as killed or deceased within 7 days.

This figure should always be 100%, indicating that there are not current holdings over 7 days. A lower figure suggests that:

- some uploads have failed
- stock have been consigned to the abattoir PIC but not slaughtered within 7 days.
- stock sent to holding paddocks for more than a week should be transferred to the holding paddock PIC
- stock transferred incorrectly to the abattoir by a saleyard have not been rolled back or uploaded as killed by another abattoir. If a roll back on these devices is not possible, then the devices should be assigned an inactive status.

Each abattoir receives an automated email daily from the NLIS database listing all active devices which have been on the abattoir PIC (and any other PIC linked to the processor's database account) for more than 7 days.

Limitations

Monitoring reports from the NLIS database do not take into account:

- number of cattle, sheep and goats actually killed
- whether body numbers and RFIDs align (providing the correct PIC for each body).
- Whether direct consignment PICs are for the correct property.

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