

NLIS Sheep and Goats: Guidelines for NSW Saleyards and Stock Agents



*Sheep sale in operation.
Photo: Department of Primary Industries Image Gallery.*

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Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (November 2011). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information on which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent advisor.

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Foreword

This publication provides guidelines to stock and station agents and saleyard operators about complying with the requirements for the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) whenever sheep and goats are sold by public auction in NSW. These requirements are prescribed under the *Stock Diseases Regulation 2009*.

In summary:

- all sheep and goats must have an NLIS visual tag before they are sold;
- all sheep and goats must be accompanied by a completed NVD or TSS, which lists all of the tag PICs in the consignment, before they are sold;
- sale data must be uploaded to the NLIS database by the next working day.

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1. Tags

All sheep and goats that are being consigned to a saleyard must be identified with an approved NLIS visual ear tag. The use of the correct year of birth colour is strongly recommended. Tag exemptions for feral and dairy goats do not apply if they are sent to a saleyard.

The **vendor** should check all sheep or goats before they are loaded and:

- replace any missing tags with either a breeder (year of birth colour) tag if born on that property, or a post-breeder (pink) tag for that property if the stock was born elsewhere or their origin or age is uncertain;
and
- write on the NVD, under 'PICs on ear tags/brands', **all** other PICs on tags that differ from the pre-printed PIC on the NVD (this includes purchased sheep and sheep bred by the vendor on a different property);
or
- attach a pink post-breeder tag (with the PIC of the property the stock are being consigned from) to all the sheep, and write that PIC (which is the same as the pre-printed PIC) under 'PICs on ear tags/brands' on the NVD to indicate that post-breeder tags have been used.

The **selling agent** should sight the stock as they are being unloaded or penned at the saleyard. If any missing tags are noticed, arrangements must be made to tag those sheep with saleyard (special, district or emergency) tags before sale. Saleyard tags can be obtained from the Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LHPA) or from the saleyard manager if authorised by the LHPA. A vendor's property tags cannot be attached in a saleyard except with the prior approval of an inspector.

It is an offence for any person to send, deliver, offer for sale, assist in selling, sell or buy untagged sheep.

2. Vendor declarations

All sheep and goat movements must be accompanied by either a national vendor declaration and waybill (NVD) or a transported stock statement (TSS). The NVD is preferable as it provides all of the information required for tracing, stock transportation and product integrity.

The **vendor** must provide the following information on the NVD.

- Property identification code (PIC) of the property where the journey commenced. This is pre-printed on the NVD. If the stock have been on agistment, the vendor must obtain an NVD with that property's PIC from the property owner.
- Number and description (year born, breed, sex, type) of the sheep.
- All other PICs on tags attached to the sheep. This includes purchased sheep and sheep bred by the vendor but born on a different property. These PICs are written under 'PICs on ear tags/brands'. If there are more than five other PICs, a list should be attached to the NVD and the most common four PICs, together with the words 'see attached list' or similar), should be written on the NVD.
- Whether the stock are vendor bred (question 3). If the answer is 'No', then the other tag PICs must be written on the NVD as above.
- Date of movement

The rest of the NVD must also be completed to meet stock transportation and product integrity requirements.

The **selling agent** should confirm that a completed NVD has been provided and, if the answer to question 3 is 'No', that other PICs have been written under 'PICs on ear tags / brands'. If not, the agent should contact the vendor and make arrangements to have the other tag PICs recorded.

It is an offence for the vendor not to provide this information, and for the agent to offer for sale, assist in selling or sell sheep if they don't have this information.

3. NLIS database uploads

The key feature of the NLIS is the ability to rapidly trace sheep and goats through the NLIS database. To achieve this outcome, prescribed data must be uploaded soon after sale.

Who

Uploading sale data is the responsibility of the saleyard operator (manager or lessee). If a number of stock agents operate independently at a saleyard, then each agent is responsible for uploading their data in time. Contractors may be employed to upload the data.

The saleyard operator or agent must have a 'Saleyard' NLIS database account linked to the saleyard PIC (assigned by the LHPA) and saleyard identifier (EUSY number, assigned by NLIS Ltd). An account can be opened through www.nlis.mla.com.au or by contacting NLIS Ltd on 1800 654 743.

When

Key information must be uploaded to the NLIS database on the day of sale or the next working day. 'Working day' refers to normal business days, ie Monday to Friday except public holidays; for example a Friday sale may be uploaded the next Monday. It does not refer to sale days; for example, a saleyard that operates only once a month cannot delay the upload until the saleyard office is reopened next month.

How

The data may be recorded and uploaded in one of three ways:

- Using commercial saleyard software. This is the best option for larger saleyards with regular sales. The same software may be used for cattle and sheep sales.
- Entering the data into a spreadsheet which is uploaded to the NLIS database. This may be a good option for medium sized or intermittent saleyards that don't have commercial software, however NVD images cannot be uploaded with this method.
- Typing in the details on-line. This may be easiest option for small and occasional sales, and NVD images can also be uploaded with this method.

Details on the latter two options are available in the Tech Tip *Sheep and goats saleyard mob-based movement* available from the 'Help tools' tab on a saleyard NLIS database account.

What

The following data must be uploaded:

- Species (sheep or goats)
- Saleyard PIC or EUSY number
- Date of sale
- Vendor's PIC (From PIC)
 - If the vendor doesn't have a PIC, the district code may be used with an inspector's approval, provided the vendor's name and address are recorded in the agent's or saleyard's records. Use of district codes is discouraged and vendors should be

advised to contact the LHPA to obtain a PIC next time. PICs will be mandatory from 1 September 2012.

- Each buyer's PIC (To PIC) and the number of sheep bought by each person.
 - This should be a property PIC for store stock. For stock destined for slaughter, this should be the abattoir or holding paddock PIC. Any sheep sent to a knackery must be uploaded to the knackery PIC.
 - If the buyer doesn't have a PIC, the district code may be used as above but this should be discouraged.
 - If an agent has bought the sheep and the final property of destination is unknown, the agent's code (see section 4. below) may be used but this should be discouraged.
 - Any sheep dead on arrival or which die in the saleyard should be uploaded with the To PIC of 'DECEASED'.
 - 8A (AAAAAAA) is not a lawful PIC and must not be used.
- NVD or TSS serial number
- Whether the stock are vendor bred (and how long owned if 'No').
 - Although this field is not currently mandatory on the NLIS database, it is required by legislation and must be entered.
 - If your software does not upload this data to the NLIS database even though it is entered, an NVD image must be uploaded instead*.
- Other PICs listed on the NVD or found on the sheep.
 - Although this field is not mandatory on the NLIS database, it is required by legislation and any other PICs written on the NVD must be entered.
 - If your software does not allow this data to be entered or uploaded to the NLIS database, an NVD image must be uploaded instead*. As software and the database only accept a single page for each consignment, lists of attached PICs must be mentioned on the NVD and retained with the agent's records.
- PIC and serial numbers of any special tags attached to the sheep.
 - This data should be entered at the designated field for these PICs, if available, otherwise they may be listed under 'Other from PICs'. If your software does not allow this data to be entered or uploaded to the NLIS database, the numbers should be recorded on the NVD by an inspector or other authorised person and the NVD image uploaded instead*.

*Ideally, all required data should be entered and uploaded together with the NVD image, as this provides the most complete set of tracing information – the entered data can be more readily searched on the database, and the NVD image provides additional useful information such as the age of the sheep and the carrier's phone number.

4. Agent codes

An agent code may be used instead of a property PIC if the sheep are bought by an agent and the final property of destination is not known by the close of business on the sale day. The agent must keep a record of the location of the sheep at all times and do a mob-based transfer, using the *Mob-based movement off PIC* function on their Agent database account, to the destination property PIC within 7 days.

5. Records

The **selling agent** must provide a copy of the NVD to the buyer within 7 days. If bought for immediate slaughter, the NVD must be sent to the abattoir before or when the sheep are delivered. For other buyers, a copy may be provided with the account. The copies must include any attached list of other PICs. A post-sale summary (PSS) may be provided instead of the NVD *provided* other PICs are listed on the PSS.

The **selling agent** must keep a copy of the NVD for at least 2 years, although this requirement is met if a copy of the NVD is uploaded to the NLIS database.

The **buyer** must keep a copy of the NVD for at least 7 years.

6. Compliance and performance monitoring

The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) regularly monitors the performance of sheep saleyards from the NLIS database and provides a report to each saleyard and to relevant LHPA and DPI staff and management. Pooled data is also provided to state and national NLIS committees to monitor the overall performance of the NLIS.

The monitoring data assesses how well vendors, agents and saleyard operators are complying with the requirements of the NLIS and whether the system at each saleyard is continuously improving. On a State-wide basis, it provides an overall measure of traceability and whether the NLIS as a whole is working.

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

Overall score and rank

These figures provide an overall estimate of how well all stakeholders in the market chain at each saleyard, namely vendors, agents, buyers and saleyard operators, are complying with the NLIS and providing data that allows effective tracing.

The percentage figure is an average of the three performance measures detailed below, namely 'Uploads within 7 days', 'Required NVD data' and 'Traceable PIC status'. Over 98% is achievable. Over 95% is acceptable at this stage of implementation of the NLIS for sheep and goats but needs improvement. Under 90% means that prompt corrective action is essential.

The rank lists each saleyard out of the 30 or so active sheep saleyards in NSW. The lower the figure (1 = 1st) the better.

Sale days

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

This figure should be compared with actual sale days. For example, if there are regular weekly sales and no public holidays, then there should be 13 sale days uploaded each quarter and a lower figure suggests that some sale days were not uploaded. This is for guidance only and is not included in the overall measure of performance.

Sheep and mobs uploaded

This is the total number of sheep, vendor mobs and buyer mobs uploaded during the monitoring period.

This figure should be compared with actual sale data. A lower number suggests that some lots or sales were not uploaded to the NLIS database.

For saleyards reported by the National Livestock Reporting Service (NLRS), the number of sheep reported as sold by the NLRS may also be included. This is for guidance only and is not included in the overall measure of performance.

Uploads within 7 days

This is a measure of timeliness of uploads. The Regulation requires sale data to be uploaded by the close of business on the next working day after the sale, however routine monitoring is based on 7 days to allow for weekends and public holidays.

This figure should always be 100%. A lower figure suggests that one or more uploads have been very late.

Required NVD data

This is a measure of whether all of the required data from NVDs has been uploaded. It is a combination of the following parameters: [Vendor bred or NVD image] + [Non-vendor bred with other PICs or saleyard tags or NVD image] – [Invalid NVD serial numbers].

The value of NVD images is 'discounted' by an amount determined through a random State-wide sample of NVDs uploaded during each monitoring period. NVDs are deemed to be 'complete' if the sheep were vendor-bred, or non vendor-bred with other tag PICs, or non-vendor bred with the vendor's tag PIC recorded to indicate that pink tags have been applied to all sheep. NVDs that have no other PICs recorded for non-vendor-bred sheep are deemed incomplete.

A low figure (<80%) suggests that most or all of the data or NVD images are not being uploaded. Incomplete NVDs is one of areas of the mob-based system that generally needs further improvement. The easiest way of improving this figure is to upload NVD images.

Traceable PIC status

This measures whether the status of all vendor and buyer PICs provides good traceability. It is a combination of the following parameters: [Active From and To PICs] + [Inactive From PICs] + [District codes / 2] + [Agent codes / 2] + ['Deceased' To PIC]. Details of the number of agent codes, district codes and 8As uploaded are also provided.

The PIC status performance measure should be 99.5% or higher. A lower figure may be due to:

- Using district codes or agent codes. Although these 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%.
- Using 8As, which is unlawful and provides no traceability.
- Using disbanded (cancelled) or blocked PICs, which is unlawful and negate traceability, or an inactive To PIC (an inactive From PIC is acceptable).

Limitations

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

- Number of sheep actually sold
- Number of sheep tagged
- Whether all PICs on tags (if more than one) have been written on the NVD
- Whether the vendor and buyer PICs are for the correct properties

7. Further information

Using the NLIS database:

- Help tools on your NLIS database account
- NLIS Ltd, phone 1800 654 743, email: nlissupport@mla.com.au
- Your software provider

NLIS rules, PICs, saleyard tags:

- Livestock Health and Pest Authority

Compliance and monitoring:

- Department of Primary Industries, phone 02 6391 3511, email enquiries.nlis@industry.nsw.gov.au
- Legislation: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/nlis/policy

NLIS Sheep – Vendor’s Checklist

PIC:

Date:

NVD number:

Before sale:

- Obtain an NVD with the pre-printed PIC for the property the sheep are being consigned from.
- Check all sheep shortly before or at loading.
- Replace any missing tags with either a breeder tag (preferably with the correct year of birth colour) or a pink post-breeder tag with the PIC for that property.
- If any sheep were purchased or born on a different property, write all PICs on tags attached to those sheep on the NVD under ‘PICs on ear tags / brands’
or
attach a pink post-breeder tag to all sheep and write that PIC on the NVD under ‘PICs on ear tags / brands’ to show that post-breeder tags have been used.
- Complete the rest of the NVD.

NLIS Sheep – Buyer’s Checklist

PIC:

Date:

NVD number:

Before sale:

- Check that the sheep that you intend bidding on appear to all have tags.

After purchase:

- Provide the PIC of the property to which the sheep are being delivered to the selling agent at the time of purchase.
- Obtain a copy of the NVD of post-sale summary after the sale and keep it somewhere where it can be readily found for at least 7 years.

NLIS Sheep – Agent’s Checklist

Saleyard:

Date:

NVD number:

Before sale:

- Remind each vendor of their obligations (see vendor’s checklist)
- On delivery, sight all sheep while unloading or after penning.
 - Replace any missing tags with saleyard (special or ‘emergency’) tags (*not* property tags).
 - If most or all of the consignment is untagged, advise the vendor that the sheep cannot be sold and make alternative arrangements.
- Confirm that an NVD has been completed by the vendor.
 - If the answer to question 3 is ‘No’, confirm that other tag PICs have been written under ‘PICs on ear tags / brands’ on the NVD. If not, advise the vendor that the sheep cannot be sold and make alternative arrangements.

After sale:

- Obtain each buyer’s PIC. Avoid using your agent code if possible.
- Provide the following information to the saleyard operator as soon as possible on the day of sale:
 - Copies of vendor’s NVDs
 - For each NVD, number of sheep sold to each buyer’s PIC
 - PIC and serial numbers of any saleyard tags attached to those sheep.
- If responsible for NLIS database uploads, upload all required information to the NLIS database no later than the day after sale (see Saleyard Operator’s Checklist).

NLIS Sheep – Saleyard Operator’s Checklist

Saleyard:

Date:

Preparation:

- Open a ‘Saleyard’ NLIS database account.
- If using commercial software, confirm with the software provider what data can be entered and uploaded to the NLIS database, and how to upload NVD images.
- If uploading directly to the NLIS database, obtain a copy of the Tech Tip *Sheep and goats saleyard mob-based movement*.

After sale:

- Obtain from each selling agent the following information as soon as possible on the day of sale:
 - Copies of NVDs
 - Number of sheep sold to each buyer’s PIC
 - PIC and serial numbers of any saleyard tags used.
- Scan all NVDs.
- Enter and upload to the NLIS database the following information on the sale day or the next business day:
 - Species (sheep or goats)
 - Saleyard PIC or EUSY number
 - Date of sale
 - Vendor’s PIC (From PIC) and number of head
 - Each buyer’s PIC (To PIC) and the number of sheep bought.
Do not use 8A (AAAAAAAAA).
 - NVD serial number
 - Whether the stock are vendor bred (and how long owned if ‘No’). If your software does not upload this data, the NVD image must be uploaded instead.
 - Other PICs listed on the NVD or found on the sheep. If your software does not record or upload this data, an NVD image must be uploaded instead.
 - Saleyard tag PICs and serial numbers. This data should be entered at the designated field for these PICs if available, otherwise listed with ‘Other from PICs’ or uploaded with the NVD image.
 - NVD image