Management of the biosecurity risk

The purpose of this procedure is to advise staff on how to report prohibited matter, other notifiable pests and diseases of animals, biosecurity events and other significant events.

Scope

The *Biosecurity Act 2015* (the Act) promotes biosecurity as a shared responsibility between government, industry and communities. This procedure is a State Priority for NSW and should be read in conjunction with the policies ‘Surveillance for Animal Pests and Diseases’, ‘Prohibited Matter Exotic Pests and Diseases of Animals’, ‘Prohibited Matter Sporadic Pests and Diseases of Animals’ and ‘Endemic Pests and Diseases of Animals’. The procedure applies to the NSW Department of Primary Industry (NSW DPI), an office within the NSW Department of Industry, and Local Land Services (LLS) in their role as authorised officers under the Act.

This procedure details the reporting process and responsibilities for:

1. prohibited matter
2. other notifiable pests and diseases of animals (that are not prohibited matter)
3. biosecurity events and other significant events.

Biosecurity legislation summary

The pests and diseases of animals that are classified as prohibited matter are listed in Schedule 2 of the Act. This list includes exotic animal diseases (such as foot and mouth disease) and other emergency animal diseases (such as anthrax and Australian bat lyssavirus virus.) A person who owns or is caring for animals, or a person working in their professional capacity such as a veterinarian, has a duty to *immediately* notify an authorised officer if they suspect, or are aware, that the animals are infested or infected with prohibited matter.

The pests and diseases of animals that are notifiable, but are not prohibited matter, are listed in Schedule 1 of the Biosecurity Regulation 2017 (the Regulation). A person who owns or is caring for animals, or a person working in their professional capacity such as a veterinarian, has a duty to notify an authorised officer *within one working day* if they suspect, or are aware, that the animals are infested or infected with a notifiable pest or disease of animals which is not prohibited matter.

A *biosecurity event* is defined in the Act and includes events where there is an adverse effect related to:

- the introduction, presence, spread or increase of a disease/ disease agent or pest into or within the State or any part of the State
- stock food or fertilisers
- animals or animal products becoming chemically affected.

Biosecurity events could include new or emerging disease events, prohibited feed events (e.g. feeding of 'swill' to pigs, or feeding of restricted animal material to ruminants) or chemical contamination events.

**Other significant events** that present with an adverse animal health impact may also require notification, and should be reported in the same process as outlined below for biosecurity events. Other significant events could include:

- an abnormally high mortality rate or morbidity rate in animals
- a sudden and unexplained fall in production relating to animals
- the occurrence or suspicion of a known disease in a new species
- an abnormal appearance of disease across multiple species.

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 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.

**Work Health and Safety**

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* places an obligation on the agency (NSW DPI and LLS) 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 DPI and LLS will work together to create a safe and supportive work environment when undertaking any activities for this procedure.
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Reporting prohibited matter and other notifiable pests and diseases and other biosecurity events procedure

1. Chain of authority

The chain of reporting for NSW DPI and LLS staff is detailed within this procedure. Where an officer or staff member of NSW DPI or LLS in not available to undertake a reporting responsibility outlined in this procedure, an equivalent officer can fulfil this role. If an equivalent officer is unavailable, the next most senior position will assume this responsibility and must be contacted.

The document, ‘Chain of authority NSW DPI (Animal Biosecurity and Welfare)’, outlines the chain of authority and has links to relevant contact details for reporting positions outlined in this procedure.

2. Reporting prohibited matter for pests and diseases of animals and biosecurity events

2.1 Responsibility of the public

The duty to report the occurrence of prohibited matter and biosecurity events is outlined in the Act and the Regulation. A person (including the owner, or person in charge of a carrier or premises or thing, or a person consulting in their professional capacity) who becomes aware of or suspects the occurrence of a prohibited matter or a biosecurity event has a biosecurity duty to verbally notify an authorised officer immediately. The primefact ‘Notifiable animal pests, diseases and events in NSW’ outlines how the public can contact an authorised officer.

2.2 Responsibilities of NSW Department of Primary Industries staff

Staff working for NSW DPI (if they are not an authorised officer who is a veterinarian) must report any information regarding suspicion or awareness of prohibited matter or a biosecurity event immediately and verbally to an authorised officer who is a veterinarian.

A NSW DPI authorised officer who is a veterinarian and receives a report which in their opinion has a medium to high likelihood of being prohibited matter or a biosecurity event (or is rated as requiring action after using the ‘Response Action Tool for Suspect Prohibited Matter and Biosecurity Events’) must report immediately and verbally to the:

- NSW DPI species/program coordinator (during business hours), and the
- NSW Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer (DCVO)/NSW DPI Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO).

NSW DPI (Laboratory Services) must be advised if samples are being submitted for prohibited matter testing by telephoning 1800 675 623 or by emailing emai.svdl@dpi.nsw.gov.au or by entering details into the live NSW DPI (Laboratory Services) call log sheet.

Contact details for reporting are available from the ‘Chain of authority NSW DPI (Animal Biosecurity and Welfare)’ document.

2.2.1 Responsibilities of NSW Department of Primary Industries Laboratory Services

NSW DPI Laboratory Services in the customer service unit that receives a call relating to prohibited matter will elevate the case for assessment as per the work instruction “EAD Inquiry Calls”.

The NSW DPI Duty Veterinary Pathologist or Virologist who receives notification of, or samples from, a case which in their opinion has a medium to high likelihood of being prohibited matter must report verbally and immediately to the DCVO/CVO.

2.3 Responsibilities of LLS staff

Staff working for LLS (if they are not an authorised officer who is a veterinarian) must report any information regarding suspicion or awareness of prohibited matter or a biosecurity event immediately and verbally to an authorised officer who is a veterinarian.

An authorised officer from LLS who is a veterinarian and receives a report which in their opinion has a medium to high likelihood of being prohibited matter or a biosecurity event (or is rated as requiring action after using the ‘Response Action Tool for Suspect Prohibited Matter and Biosecurity Events’)
must report verbally and immediately to the LLS Team Leader of Animal Biosecurity and Welfare (the team leader) of the LLS region where the suspect prohibited matter or biosecurity event has occurred.

The team leader must report verbally and immediately to the LLS Manager Biosecurity & Emergency Services of the LLS region where the suspect prohibited matter or biosecurity event has occurred.

The LLS Manager Biosecurity & Emergency Services must report verbally and immediately to the DCVO/ CVO during business hours, or to the Animal Biosecurity Emergency Hotline during out of hours.

(In the event that a reporting contact is not immediately available, the next level/s of reporting command must be contacted, e.g. if the LLS authorised officer who is a veterinarian cannot immediately contact the team leader or the LLS Manager Biosecurity & Emergency Services, they must contact the DCVO/ CVO during business hours, or the Animal Biosecurity Emergency Hotline during out of hours.)

Laboratory staff must be advised if samples are being submitted for prohibited matter testing by telephoning 1800 675 623 or by email to emai.svd@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Contact details for reporting are available from the document ‘Chain of authority NSW DPI (Animal Biosecurity and Welfare)’.

2.4 Communication/ distribution of laboratory results for prohibited matter

NSW DPI Laboratory Services maintains a live distribution process document that contains the contact details for distribution of laboratory results.

Communication to the DCVO/ CVO:

- any confirmations of prohibited matter or equivocal test results must be reported verbally and immediately to the DCVO/CVO by the NSW DPI Duty Veterinarian, Pathologist or Virologist
- laboratory reports with negative test results must be reported promptly to the DCVO/ CVO by NSW DPI laboratory staff.

NSW DPI (Laboratory Services) will email Laboratory reports from:

- negative test results for prohibited matter to the DCVOs, CVO, DPI species/program coordinator, the team leader and LLS Manager Biosecurity & Emergency Services for the relevant LLS region and sample submitter
- confirmed and inconclusive prohibited matter cases (following direction from the CVO) to the NSW DCVOs, CVO, NSW DPI species/program coordinator, the team leader and LLS Manager Biosecurity & Emergency Services for the relevant LLS region and sample submitter.

2.5 Responsibilities for the NSW Chief Veterinary Officer

The DCVO/CVO must contact the relevant LLS Manager Biosecurity & Emergency Services for suspect or confirmed cases of prohibited matter that are communicated from NSW DPI Laboratory Services.

The CVO (or their delegate) will notify positive results for a prohibited matter cases to:

- the local LLS District Veterinarian
- LLS Manager Biosecurity & Emergency Services and the team leader of the LLS region where the suspect prohibited matter event has occurred
- NSW DPI Species/ program coordinator
- NSW DPI DDG Biosecurity and Food Safety
- NSW DPI Manager Public Affairs
- NSW Health
- The Australian Chief Veterinary Officer.

2.6 Content of a prohibited matter report
The prohibited matter report from the authorised officer that passes along the reporting chain must include:

- the species affected (including the number affected and number at risk)
- full name and contact phone number of the owner, person in charge (or person reporting)
- details of the suspected prohibited matter event
- the location of the event (including the PIC if the event is on a property with a property identification code), and
- the date of the first known or suspected case.

3. Reporting notifiable diseases that are not prohibited matter

Pests and diseases of animals that are notifiable (and not classified as prohibited matter) are listed in Schedule 1 (Part 1) of the Regulation. This list includes endemic animal diseases such as footrot in sheep and goats, chlamydiosis in poultry and other birds and Johne’s disease.

3.1 Responsibility for owners and private veterinarians to report other notifiable diseases

The duty to report notifiable pests and diseases of animals (that are not prohibited matter) is outlined in the Regulation. A person (which is defined to include the owner, or person in charge of a carrier or premises or thing, or a person consulting in their professional capacity) who becomes aware of or suspects the occurrence a notifiable disease in this category must notify within one working day. The primefact “Notifiable animal pests, diseases and events in NSW” outlines how the public can contact an authorised officer.

3.2 Responsibilities for NSW Department of Primary Industries staff

Staff working for NSW DPI (if they are not an authorised officer who is a veterinarian) must report any information regarding suspicion or awareness of notifiable pests and diseases of animals that are not prohibited matter promptly to an authorised officer who is a veterinarian.

A NSW DPI authorised officer who is a veterinarian and receives verbal, phone or written reports (including notifiable animal disease forms and emergency hotline enquiries) regarding notifiable diseases that are not prohibited matter must contact the relevant LLS team leader with the details for further investigation as required.

A NSW DPI (Animal Biosecurity and Welfare) team member who manages the biosecurity inbox and receives laboratory reports for notifiable diseases from external laboratories other than NSW DPI Laboratory Services (such as private veterinary laboratories) should email these reports promptly to the relevant NSW DPI species/program coordinator and the team leader for the relevant LLS region.

3.2.1 Responsibilities for NSW Department of Primary Industries (Laboratory Services)

Laboratory staff will email the laboratory reports from NSW DPI (Laboratory Services) for all notifiable pests and diseases of animals (that are not prohibited matter) with positive or negative results to the relevant NSW DPI species/program coordinator, and the team leader of the relevant LLS region.

NSW DPI (Laboratory Services) maintains a live distribution process document that contains the contact details for distribution of laboratory results.

3.3 Responsibilities for Local Land Services staff

Staff working for LLS (if they are not an authorised officer who is a veterinarian) must report any information regarding suspicion or awareness of notifiable pests and diseases of animals that are not prohibited matter promptly to an authorised officer who is a veterinarian.

4. Record keeping

Reports and details relating to prohibited matter, notifiable diseases and other biosecurity events are to be entered into the NSW information management system as immediately as is practically possible (including LHMS).
Guidelines for data entry are outlined in the LHMS guidance document.

Responsibilities to enter data around these reports include:

- Animal Biosecurity Emergency Hotline operators are responsible for entering details of a report taken on the hotline into Livestock Health Management System (LHMS).
- The relevant LLS are responsible for entering all laboratory test results for diagnostic disease testing for notifiable diseases into LHMS (including reports from government, interstate and private laboratories).

(Non-diagnostic testing for export purposes, bull sales, National Arbovirus Monitoring Program etc, are captured by Sample Manager and do not need to be entered into LHMS).

5. Zoonotics

NSW Health must be notified immediately when:

- animals are assessed as likely to be infected with a disease with serious zoonotic potential, or animals are confirmed as being infected with a disease with serious zoonotic potential, or
- there has been high risk human contact with a suspect animal (e.g. in a suspect Hendra virus case).

5.1 Responsibilities for NSW Department of Primary Industries staff in notifying NSW Health

The NSW DPI authorised officer who triages a possible or confirmed zoonotic case will notify NSW State Public Health. This could be the NSW DPI Animal Biosecurity Emergency Hotline operator who first receives notification or the species/program coordinator.

Contact details for NSW health are available in the Animal Biosecurity Emergency Hotline procedure.

5.2 Responsibilities for Local Land Services staff in notifying NSW Health

The LLS Livestock Health Management System will notify their local NSW Public Health Unit.

6. Definitions and acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authorised officer</td>
<td>A person who is appointed as an authorised officer under the Biosecurity Act and authorised by that appointment to exercise the function in relation to which the expression is used.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CVO:</td>
<td>NSW Chief Veterinary Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCVO:</td>
<td>Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSW DPI:</td>
<td>New South Wales Department of Primary Industries</td>
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<td>Endemic disease:</td>
<td>A disease that is endemic to NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exotic disease:</td>
<td>A disease that is exotic to NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td>LLS:</td>
<td>Local Land Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>LHMS:</td>
<td>Livestock Health and Management System</td>
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<td>MBES:</td>
<td>Manager Biosecurity and Emergency Services</td>
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<td>TLABW:</td>
<td>LLS Team Leader Animal Biosecurity and Welfare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authorised officer who is a veterinarian:</td>
<td>An authorised officer who is also a veterinarian working for NSW DPI or LLS.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veterinarian:</td>
<td>Is a person who is registered under the Veterinary Practice Act 2003.</td>
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7. Documentation

Policy – Prohibited matter sporadic pests and diseases of animals
Policy - Prohibited matter exotic pests and diseases of animals
8. Records

Reports and details relating to Prohibited matter, notifiable diseases and other biosecurity events are to be entered into the NSW information management system (including LHMS/ BIS).

Guidelines for data entry are outlined in the LHMS guidance document.

Records relating to properties placed under biosecurity restrictions must be maintained for at least ten years.

9. Revision history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date issued</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>By</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>01/07/2015</td>
<td>Complete revision - response to the <em>Biosecurity Act 2015.</em></td>
<td>Animal Biosecurity and Welfare</td>
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10. Contact

Biosecurity NSW – General Enquires
1800 808 095
biosecurity@dpi.nsw.gov.au
Reporting prohibited matter

NSW DPI authorised officer (who is a veterinarian) → NSW DPI species/program coordinator

NSW DPI authorised officer (who is a veterinarian) → LLS MBES of the affected region/s → NSW DCVO/CVO

LLS authorised officer (who is a veterinarian) → LLS team leader of the affected LLS region/s → LLS MBES of the affected LLS region/s → NSW DCVO/CVO