



BIOSECURITY ACT 2015

## Discussion Paper:

# Livestock Identification and Traceability

December 2015



Images: NLIS Ltd; L.Davison, NSW DPI; NSW DPI

**Comments on this paper close on 12 February 2016**

*Email your comments to:*  
*Post your comments to:*

[submissions.biosecuritylegislation@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:submissions.biosecuritylegislation@dpi.nsw.gov.au)  
Biosecurity Act 2015  
NSW Department of Primary Industries  
Locked Bag 21  
Orange NSW 2800

Published December 2015

**For more information**

See: [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurityact](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurityact)

Email: [submissions.biosecuritylegislation@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:submissions.biosecuritylegislation@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

Ref: INT15/124206

---

© State of New South Wales through the Department of Industry, Skills and Regional Development, 2015. You may copy, distribute and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the NSW Department of Primary Industries as the owner.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (December 2015). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser.

## Summary

The *Biosecurity Act 2015* will repeal the *Stock Diseases Act 1923* and the *Stock Diseases Regulation 2009*, which currently includes the regulatory requirements for the identification and traceability of livestock in NSW consistent with the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS). The *Biosecurity Act 2015* will also repeal the *Non-indigenous Animals Act 1985* which currently includes identification requirements for American bison, water buffalo and banteng cattle.

Having considered existing regulatory arrangements, it is proposed to implement similar arrangements for the identification and traceability of livestock under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*. Specifically, it is proposed that identification and traceability of livestock will be managed by requirements prescribed by **Regulation** with some administrative requirements identified in enforceable Standards. This identification and traceability scheme will also apply to American bison, water buffalo and banteng cattle.

## Background Information

### The NLIS

The National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) is a SAFEMEAT program. SAFEMEAT is a partnership between the Australian red meat livestock industry and state and federal governments. SAFEMEAT membership includes Australia's peak meat industry groups, Federal and State industry authorities and Departments of Agriculture.

The operation of the NLIS is the responsibility of Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) Ltd. The 'NLIS Database' in which all cattle, sheep and goat movements are recorded, is managed by NLIS Ltd, a subsidiary of MLA.

The NLIS is underpinned by the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program. The LPA program is administered by AUS-MEAT Ltd, the authority responsible for establishing and maintaining National Industry Standards for Meat Production and Processing. LPA accreditation requires farmers to comply with food safety and NLIS requirements. Accredited farmers are authorised to issue an LPA National Vendor Declaration (NVD) when selling their livestock.

A robust and well supported NLIS helps Australia maintain its internationally recognised status of freedom from major epidemic diseases of cattle, sheep and pigs such as Foot and Mouth Disease, Scrapie and Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy ('Mad cow disease'). Part 3 of the *Stock Diseases Regulation 2009* provides the necessary legislative underpinning to support the NLIS.

### Why is it important?

The NLIS is Australia's permanent, whole-of-life identification system which aims to ensure that individual cattle, sheep, pigs and goats can be traced from property of birth to slaughter for biosecurity, food safety, product integrity and market access purposes. The NLIS enhances Australia's ability to respond quickly to a major disease or food safety incident and is critical in obtaining and maintaining access to high value export markets.

Australia's red meat industries are highly dependent on export markets. Exports account for around 60 per cent of total sheep meat production and almost 70 per cent of total beef production. A number of Australia's export markets already require or are moving towards requiring mandatory identification and traceability of Australian products from property of birth through to the consumer.

American bison and water buffalo production are emerging livestock industries in both NSW and Australia, while small numbers of banteng cattle are also kept in captivity in NSW. All three

animal species are susceptible to some of the major diseases and food safety issues which impact on cattle production.

### What is the outcome we are seeking?

The desired outcome is to ensure the effective operation of the NLIS in NSW, including identification and traceability for our cattle, sheep, pig and goat industries.

Permanent identification of American bison, water buffalo and banteng cattle in NSW will improve traceability, biosecurity and food safety.

## Proposed Management under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015

In September 2015 a report by the SAFEMEAT 'Initiatives Review Steering Group' outlined the rationale for reform and proposed a future co-regulation model for the red meat industry including agreed Standards for traceability.

The reforms proposed by the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review Steering Group will be the subject of ongoing consultation between SAFEMEAT and government and industry stakeholders. It is proposed to maintain the current regulatory arrangements for NLIS with some simplifications and streamlining where appropriate, for the foreseeable future. Any changes to regulatory arrangements in response to the Review will be considered in the future.

The proposed stock identification and traceability **Regulation** under the Biosecurity Act will include:

- Mandatory identification of cattle, sheep, pigs and goats. There will be provision for the expansion of NLIS Pork including the requirement for electronic recording of all pig movements in a central database;
- Information requirements for movements of cattle, sheep, pigs and goats;
- Voluntary permanent identification of equines and camelids such as horses and alpacas;
- Mandatory Property Identification Codes for properties where cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, bison, buffalo, deer, horses, camelids and poultry are held in captivity;
- Registers that will continue to be maintained by LLS and DPI; and
- Miscellaneous provisions such as the approval of the authorised administrator (NLIS Ltd) and the mandatory requirements for the sale, supply and use of NLIS devices and tags.

It is also proposed that the regulation will include requirements for the mandatory, lifetime, permanent identification of American bison, water buffalo and banteng cattle with NLIS devices as these animals will no longer be the subject of a licence or registration.

In addition to the proposed livestock identification and traceability requirements, the *Biosecurity Act 2015* includes a **General Biosecurity Duty** (GBD). The GBD requires that anyone who deals with any biosecurity matter such as cattle, sheep, pigs and goats and who knows or ought to reasonably know of the biosecurity risks associated with that dealing must take measures to prevent, minimise or eliminate those risks as far as is reasonably practicable. For example, the owner of livestock should ensure that stock sent to a saleyard are free of disease.

How you can discharge your GBD may be outlined in Industry Standards, Codes of Practice, guidelines or through other advisory or education material.

### What do you think?

We value your comments on how we can improve our biosecurity system and look forward to receiving your input into this important process.

Please complete the following survey on 'Livestock Identification and Traceability' at:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/livestockidentificationandtraceability>.

Alternatively, submit your feedback **by Friday, 12 February 2016** via [email](#) or post to:

Biosecurity Act 2015

NSW Department of Primary Industries

Locked Bag 21

Orange NSW 2800

For more information about the *Biosecurity Act 2015* and regulatory framework, please visit  
[www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurityact](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurityact).