

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

Animal Biosecurity, NSW DPIRD, Orange.

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## More information

DPIRD Livestock Traceability, email: [livestock.traceability@dpird.nsw.gov.au](mailto:livestock.traceability@dpird.nsw.gov.au)

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Author: Ian Bell, Manager, Biosecurity Traceability Systems

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## Introduction

This publication provides guidelines to stock and station agents and saleyard operators about complying with the requirements of the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) whenever sheep and goats are sold by public auction in New South Wales (NSW). These requirements are prescribed in the NSW *Biosecurity (NLIS) Regulation 2017*.

In summary:

- all sheep and goats must be identified with an NLIS approved permanent identifier before they are sold
- all sheep and goats must be accompanied by a completed National Vendor Declaration (NVD) or Transported Stock Statement (TSS), which lists all of the Property Identification Codes (PICs) on devices in the consignment, before they are sold
- sale data must be uploaded to the NLIS database by the next working day.

NSW is currently transitioning to mandatory individual electronic identification (eID) for sheep and goats.

This is an enhancement to the existing mob-based system as part of the NLIS. This means a change from a visual tag and mob-based traceability system to one where individual animals can be tracked and traced using electronic identification devices.

Using permanent electronic identifiers for sheep and goats will ensure more accurate and timely traceability to help manage and recover from any emergency animal disease or residue incident. Key dates for industry groups are staggered between June 2024 and full implementation in January 2027, when mandatory electronic identification devices will be required for all sheep and goats leaving a property in NSW.

### 1. Approved permanent identifiers

All sheep and goats being consigned to a saleyard must be identified with an NLIS approved permanent identifier. The use of the correct year of birth colour is strongly recommended. Current tag-free pathways for harvested rangeland 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 permanent identifiers with either a breeder (year of birth colour) device if born on that property, or a post-breeder (pink) device for that property if the livestock were born elsewhere or their origin is uncertain,

and

- write on the NVD, under 'PICs on ear tags/brands', all other PICs on visual tags that differ from the pre-printed PIC on the NVD (this includes purchased sheep/goats and sheep/goats bred by the vendor on a different property),

or

- attach a pink post-breeder device (with the PIC of the property the livestock are being consigned from) to all the sheep/goats. For livestock with visual permanent identifiers, 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 devices have been used.

The selling agent should sight the livestock as they are being unloaded at the saleyard. If any missing permanent identifiers are noticed or electronic permanent identifiers fail to scan, arrangements must be made to identify those sheep or goats with emergency (saleyard or district) devices before sale. Saleyard identifiers can be obtained from Local Lands Services (LLS) or from the saleyard manager if authorised by the LLS. A vendor's property device must not be attached in a saleyard except with the prior approval of an Authorised Officer.

It is an offence for any person to cause unidentified sheep or goats to leave a property or for sheep or goats to be sold or otherwise disposed of at a saleyard if not properly identified.

## 2. Vendor declarations

All sheep and goat movements must be accompanied by an NVD, eNVD, or a Transported Stock Statement (TSS). The NVD is preferable as it provides all the information required for tracing, livestock transportation and product integrity and is the only option when livestock is moved off a property for sale.

A TSS is suitable for all movements with no change of ownership, e.g., from a saleyard to a destination PIC or agistment, however, Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) rules require that an NVD also be used for these livestock movements.

The vendor must provide the following information on the NVD:

- PIC of the property where the journey commenced. This is pre-printed on the NVD. If the sheep or goats 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 and goats
- All other PICs printed on identifiers attached to the sheep and goats. This includes purchased sheep or goats, and sheep or goats 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 written on the NVD.
- Whether the sheep or goats are vendor bred (question 3). If the answer is 'No', then the other PICs must be written on the NVD as above, and the time the sheep or goats have been held, be indicated on the NVD.
- Date of movement.

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

The selling agent must 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 must contact the vendor and arrange to record the other identifier PICs.

It is an offence for the vendor not to provide this information and for the agent to offer to sell or otherwise dispose of the livestock unless the delivery information (the NVD) has been obtained.

## 3. NLIS database uploads

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

### Who

The saleyard operator (manager or lessee) is responsible for uploading sale data. If several stock agents operate independently at a saleyard, each agent is responsible for uploading their data on 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 LLS) and saleyard identifier (EUSY number, assigned by Integrity Systems Company (ISC) Ltd). An account can be opened through [www.nlis.com.au](http://www.nlis.com.au) or by contacting Integrity Systems Company (ISC) Ltd on 1800 683 111.

## 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, i.e., Monday to Friday, except public holidays; for example, a Friday sale may be uploaded the following 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:

1. Using commercial saleyard software. This is the best option for larger saleyards with regular sales. The same software may be used for cattle, sheep and goat sales.
2. Typing in the details on-line. This may be the easiest option for small and occasional sales, and NVD images can also be uploaded with this method for mob-based transfers, however it uploads one mob or one RFID at a time and can be time consuming.
3. Entering the data into a spreadsheet which is uploaded to the NLIS database. Details on this option are available in the Tech Tip 'Saleyard mob movement' available for sheep (mobs) or goats (mobs) livestock type or in the Tech Tip 'Saleyard livestock movements' available for sheep (individual) or goats (individual) livestock type from the 'Help tools' tab on a saleyard NLIS database account.

## What

The following data must be uploaded as a mob-based movement for all livestock sold until 1 January 2027:

- Species (sheep or goats)
- Saleyard PIC or EUSY number (linked to the account)
- Date of sale
- From PIC (Vendor's PIC)
- To PIC/number of head (each buyer's PIC and the number of sheep or goats bought by each person)
  - This should be a PIC for store livestock. For livestock destined for slaughter, this should be the abattoir or holding paddock PIC. Any sheep or goats sent to a knackery must be uploaded to the knackery PIC.
  - If an agent has bought the sheep or goats 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 or goats dead on arrival or which die in the saleyard should be uploaded with the To PIC of 'DECEASED'.
  - 8As (AAAAAAAA) is not a lawful PIC and must not be used.
- NVD or TSS serial number
- Whether the livestock are vendor bred (and how long owned if 'No').
- Other PICs listed on the NVD or found on the sheep or goats devices for non-vendor bred sheep or goats
  - 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
- PIC and serial numbers of any emergency devices attached to the sheep or goats.
  - This data should be entered at the designated field for these PICs, if available, otherwise they may be listed under 'Other from PICs'. If the 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 uploaded with the NVD image.

- Image of the NVD
  - All required data must be entered and uploaded together with the NVD image, as this is a legal requirement and 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 or goats and the carrier's phone.

The following data must be uploaded as device-based for livestock with electronic identifiers from 1 January 2025 and for all livestock from 1 January 2027:

For livestock moved into the saleyard:

- Saleyard ID (EUSY ID number linked to the account)
- RFID or NLIS ID
- From PIC
- NVD/Waybill serial number
- Sale date
- P (for possession)

For livestock moved out of the saleyard:

- Saleyard ID (EUSY ID number linked to the account)
- RFID or NLIS ID
- To PIC
- NVD/Waybill serial number
- Sale date
- S (for sale)

## 4. Agent codes

An agent code may be used instead of a destination property PIC if an agent buys the sheep or goats 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 or goats at all times and do:

- a mob-based transfer, using the 'Mob-based movement off agent PIC' function for sheep and goat (mobs) livestock type, and
- a device-based transfer using the 'Livestock moved from my current holdings' function for sheep and goats (individual) livestock type

on their Agent database account, to the destination property PIC within two days.

## 5. Records

The selling agent must provide a copy of the NVD to the buyer within seven days. If bought for immediate slaughter, the NVD (or post-sale summary or Buyer's Reconciliation) must be sent to the abattoir before or when the sheep or goats 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 two 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 seven years.

## 6. Compliance and performance monitoring

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) Animal Traceability Team (Traceability Team) monitors the performance of sheep and goat saleyards each quarter using the NLIS database. A report is sent to each saleyard, relevant LLS, and DPIRD staff and management. Pooled data is also provided to state and national NLIS committees to monitor the NLIS's overall performance.

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

These figures estimate 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 'Timeliness' (Uploads within two or more days), 'Required NVD data' and 'Traceable From and To PIC status'.

- Over 99.5% is the desired measure.
- Over 96% is acceptable but needs improvement.
- Less than 96% means that prompt corrective action is essential.

### 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 performance measure.

### Total data uploaded to the NLIS database

This is the total number of sheep or goats, vendor mobs (into saleyard) and buyer mobs (out of saleyard) uploaded during the monitoring period.

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

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

### Timeliness

This is a measure of the 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 monitoring includes a review of mobs/livestock uploaded within two days, within seven days and uploads after seven 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 or corrections to upload errors were not done on time.

### **Required NVD data**

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

NVDs are deemed to be ‘complete’ if the sheep or goats were vendor-bred, or non-vendor bred with other PICs, or non-vendor bred with the vendor’s PIC recorded to indicate that pink devices have been applied to all sheep or goats. 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 and/or NVD images are not being uploaded. Incomplete NVDs is one area of the mob-based system that generally needs further improvement.

For device-based transfers, this measure determines the degree of missing NVD information when compared to the overall number of transferred devices. It is calculated as: [count of NVD serial numbers uploaded for each RFID – Invalid NVDs (e.g., 0,1111111, 1234567, etc.) - blank NVDs] / total devices transferred into a saleyard.

### **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 / 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 inactive ‘From’ and ‘To’ PICs, 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 by 50%
- Using 8As which is unlawful and provides no traceability.
- Using disbanded (cancelled) district codes or blocked PICs is unlawful and negates traceability requirements.

### **Current Holdings**

This measure is for device-based transactions to monitor whether saleyards transfer all devices to buyer PICs. It is defined as the count of devices that have been transferred to the saleyard in the monitoring period and have been on the saleyard PIC for more than seven days relative to the time of reporting. When sales are fully recorded, there should be no devices in the saleyard's current holdings.

The reason devices stayed in the saleyard’s possession could be an upload error, an unknown destination PIC, or devices simply not being recorded as sold, moved, or deceased at the time of running the report. The figure is calculated as the total of (active + inactive devices moved to a saleyard > 7 days) / total devices moved off the saleyard.

### **Limitations**

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

- Number of sheep and goats actually sold
- Number of sheep and goats tagged
- Whether all PICs on devices (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 database: [www.nlis.com.au](http://www.nlis.com.au)
- NLIS Support: [info@integritysystems.com.au](mailto:info@integritysystems.com.au) or 1800 683 111
- Your software provider

### NLIS rules, PICs, saleyard approved permanent identifiers:

- Local Land Services: 1300 795 299 or visit <https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au>
- NSW DPIRD NLIS information: <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/nlis>
- NSW DPIRD Traceability Team Phone 1300 720 405 or email: [livestock.traceability@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:livestock.traceability@dpi.nsw.gov.au)
- NSW DPIRD Policy and Legislation: <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/nlis/policy>

### Market Information:

- MLA's Prices and Markets at [Prices & Markets | Meat & Livestock Australia \(mla.com.au\)](http://Prices & Markets | Meat & Livestock Australia (mla.com.au))
- Phone 02 9463 9333 or 1800 023 100, or email [info@mla.com.au](mailto:info@mla.com.au)

### Checklists – vendors, buyers, agents, saleyard operators

- Refer pages 10 to 12

## NLIS Sheep & Goats (Public Auction)– Vendor's Checklist

**PIC:** **Date:** **NVD number:**

### Before sale:

- Obtain an NVD with the pre-printed PIC for the property the sheep or goats are being consigned from.
- Check all sheep or goats shortly before or at loading to ensure that they are fit to load and have the correct permanent identifiers attached.
- Replace any missing or non-reading permanent identifiers with either a breeder tag if they are currently on their property of birth or a pink post-breeder tag with the PIC for that property.
- If any sheep or goats were purchased or born on a different property, write all PICs on tags attached to those sheep or goats on the NVD under 'PICs on ear tags/brands'

or

attach a pink post-breeder tag to all sheep or goats 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 & Goats (Public Auction)– Buyer’s Checklist

**PIC:**

**Date:**

**NVD number:**

### Before sale:

- Check that the sheep or goats that you intend bidding on appear to all have correct permanent identifiers attached.

### After purchase:

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

## NLIS Sheep & Goats (Public Auction) – Agent’s Checklist

**Saleyard:**

**Date:**

**NVD number:**

### Before sale:

- Remind each vendor of their obligations (see vendor’s checklist)
- On delivery, sight all sheep or goats while unloading.
  - For sheep and goats with electronic permanent identifiers, ensure that they are scanned using appropriate reading hardware.
  - Replace any missing or non-reading electronic permanent identifiers with saleyard emergency identifiers (not property devices).
  - If most or all of the consignment is untagged, advise the vendor that the sheep or goats 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 or goats cannot be sold and make alternative arrangements.

### After sale:

- Obtain each buyer’s PIC. Avoid using your agent code as a destination PIC if possible.
- Provide the following information to the saleyard operator as soon as possible on the day of sale:
  - Copies of vendors’ NVDs
  - For each NVD, number of sheep or goats sold to each buyer’s PIC
  - PIC and serial numbers of any saleyard tags attached to those sheep or goats.
- 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 & Goats – Saleyard Operator’s Checklist

**Saleyard:**

**Date:**

**Preparation:**

- Open a 'Saleyard' NLIS database account.
- If using commercial software, confirm with the software provider that all required data can be entered and uploaded to the NLIS database, and how to upload NVD images.

**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 or goats sold to each buyer's PIC
  - PIC and serial numbers or NLIS ID of any emergency tags used.
- Scan all NVDs
- Enter and upload to the NLIS database the inward movement file (take possession file) for each sale lot before sheep or goats leave the saleyard, including:
  - Species (sheep or goats)
  - Saleyard PIC or EUSY number
  - Date of sale
  - the PIC of the property from which the sheep or goats were dispatched and number of head
  - RFID / NLIS ID of all stock in the inbound consignment
  - NVD or TSS serial number
  - Whether the livestock are vendor bred (and how long owned if 'No').
  - Other PICs listed on the NVD or found on the sheep or goats. 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
  - Each buyer's PIC (To PIC) and the number of sheep or goats purchased
  - RFID / NLIS ID of all stock in the outbound consignment