

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

Animal Biosecurity unit, NSW DPI

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More information

Author: Ian Bell, Manager, Biosecurity Traceability Systems

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Preamble

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 NSW. These requirements are prescribed in the [Biosecurity \(NLIS\) Regulation 2017](#).

In summary:

- all sheep and goats must be identified with an NLIS visual tag 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 tags 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 being consigned to a saleyard must be identified with an NLIS approved visual ear tag. The use of the correct year of birth colour is strongly recommended. Current tag exemptions for harvested 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 emergency (saleyard or district) tags before sale.

Saleyard tags can be obtained from Local Lands Services (LLS) or from the saleyard manager, if authorised by the Local Land Service (LLS). A vendor's property tags must not be attached in a saleyard except with the prior approval of an inspector.

It is an offence for any person to cause unidentified sheep to leave a property or for sheep to be sold or otherwise disposed of at a saleyard if they are 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, stock transportation and product integrity and is the only option when stock 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 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 printed 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 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, and the time the sheep have been held, be indicated on the NVD.

- 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 sell or otherwise dispose of the stock unless the delivery information (the NVD) has been obtained.

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 Local Land Services) and saleyard identifier (EUSY number, assigned by Integrity Systems Company (ISC) Ltd). An account can be opened through 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 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.
- 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, however it uploads one mob at a time and can be time consuming.
- 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 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 (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 bought by each person)

- This should be a 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 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'.
- 8As (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').
- Other PICs listed on the NVD or found on the sheep tags for non-vendor bred 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
- 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 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 and the carrier's phone number.

4. Agent codes

An agent code may be used instead of a destination 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 agent PIC' function on their Agent database account, to the destination property PIC within 2 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 (or post-sale summary or Buyer's Reconciliation) 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) Biosecurity and Food Safety unit monitors the performance of sheep saleyards each quarter from the NLIS database and provides a report to each

saleyard and to relevant LLS 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

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 'Timeliness' (Uploads within 2 or more days), 'Required NVD data' and 'Traceable PIC status'.

Over 99% is achievable. 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 measure of performance.

Total data uploaded to the NLIS database

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 MLA's Market Information Service, 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.

Timeliness

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 monitoring 'Mobs uploaded within 2 days, within 7 days and uploads after 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 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. 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 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 and/or NVD images are not being uploaded. Incomplete NVDs is one of areas of the mob-based system that generally needs further improvement.

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] + [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 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, which is unlawful and negate traceability, or inactive 'From' and 'To' PIC.

Limitations

Monitoring reports from the NLIS Mirror 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 database: www.nlis.com.au

NLIS Support: info@integritysystems.com.au or 1800 683 111

- Your software provider

NLIS rules, PICs, saleyard tags:

- Local Land Services: 1300 795 299 or visit <https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/>
- NSW DPI NLIS information: <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/nlis>
- NSW DPI Biosecurity and Food Safety: 1300 720 405 or enquiries.nlis@dpi.nsw.gov.au
- NSW DPI 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 \(mla.com.au\)](https://www.mla.com.au/prices-and-markets)
- Phone 02 9463 9333 or 1800 023 100, or email info@mla.com.au

Checklists – vendors, buyers, agents, saleyard operators

Refer pages 10 to 12

- 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 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 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 that all required 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.
 - NVD serial number
 - Whether the stock are vendor bred (and how long owned if 'No').

- 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