

DPI Primefact

NLIS rules for on-property sheep sales

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Animal Biosecurity Unit, NSW DPI

National Livestock Identification System (NLIS)

The National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) underpins access of Australian livestock products to international markets. NLIS allows for traceability of livestock through a combination of permanent identifiers, movement documents and database records.

The NLIS database holds information on sheep movements from birth to slaughter, to protect and enhance Australia's reputation as a producer of animal products that are free of chemical residues and exotic diseases.

NLIS ear tags or devices printed with a Property Identification Code (PIC) are required to be attached to all livestock and all properties with livestock should have a PIC.

In NSW the NLIS is supported by the Biosecurity (NLIS) Regulation 2017.

Transition to eID for NLIS (Sheep and Goats)

Currently for sheep, the NLIS is a mob-based system (a mob may be only one animal, such as one ram). This means in NSW all visual tags, movement documents, and movements recorded in the NLIS database are done as mobs to ensure traceability.

NSW is transitioning to individual electronic identification for sheep and farmed goats from 1 January 2025, meaning that sheep movements will be recorded individually in the NLIS database, rather than on a mob-basis.

Sheep sales

Currently at any on-property sheep sale, whether a public auction or a private treaty sale, all sheep being moved to and from the sale must:

- be accompanied by one of the following NLIS movement documents:
 - Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) National Vendor Declaration (NVD) and Waybill,
 - Electronic or eNVD (see National Vendor Declaration | Integrity System, or available through licensed eNVD software providers), or

- A Transported Stock Statement (TSS) available from Local Land Services (LLS).
- be properly identified with approved NLIS tags
- have their movements recorded in the NLIS database as a mob..

Breeders (vendors) must ensure:

- all sheep leaving the property of sale are tagged with an approved NLIS breeder or pink post-breeder ear tag, AND
- there are enough copies of a single NVD that include total number of sheep they are selling at the on-property sale, to give each buyer a copy (this will be attached to the TSS needed by the buyer for their trip home or elsewhere), OR
- they provide an original NVD to each buyer for the number of sheep sold in that transaction.

Buyers must ensure:

- to inform the vendor or the sale operator (e.g. stock agent) of the correct address and PIC of the property to which the bought sheep will be moved after the sale ('To PIC' or destination PIC).
- to obtain a copy of the vendor or breeder's NVD, if the sale is conducted on the breeder's property, which includes total number of sheep sold that day, or they obtain an original NVD for the sheep they have bought, and
- they complete a TSS to cover the trip from the property of sale to the destination PIC and attach the copy of the vendor's NVD (not needed if given an original NVD by the vendor).

Sheep Health Declaration

A completed [National Sheep Health Declaration](#) should be made available to prospective buyers to inspect before the sale and a copy given to purchasers after the sale if they request it. It is compulsory for sheep entering NSW from another state to be accompanied by a National Sheep Health Declaration. These can be found at:

<http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au/toolkit/declarations-and-statements/>

NLIS Responsibilities

Public auction sale

A public auction or 'fall of hammer' sale, or a 'helmsman' sale, can be an on-property sale or a regional or group sale held at a central location.

A helmsman sale is where prices are submitted on paper and written on a board and all lots are up for sale at once. After a certain time has passed without any more bids, the sale is closed, and buyers are identified.

The NLIS rules for all these types of sales are the same as those for a sheep saleyard:

- The person responsible for providing an NVD to the buyers is the breeder or vendor, or sale operator, e.g., stock agent.
- The person responsible for obtaining a TSS for the trip home from the sale is the person transporting the sheep from the sale site.
- The person responsible for providing the Sheep Health Declaration is the sheep breeder or vendor.

- The person responsible for recording the sale information in the NLIS database is the person who is in charge of the sale (the saleyard operator); often this is the stock agent who has access to the NLIS database.
- All sale data must be recorded in the NLIS database by close of business the next working day after the sale.
- The person responsible for providing the agent with the destination PIC is the sheep buyer.

Note: the destination PIC is the 'To PIC' i.e., the PIC of the property to which the sheep are going after the sale.

Private sales

- The person responsible for providing an NVD detailing the sheep sold is the breeder or vendor.
- The person responsible for obtaining a TSS is the person transporting the sheep from the sale site (often a property) to the destination PIC.
- The person responsible for providing the Sheep Health Declaration is the sheep breeder or vendor.
- The person responsible for uploading the movement of sheep to the destination PIC in the NLIS database within 2 days, is the buyer or the owner of the sheep at the destination property (PIC).

Note: another person may record the movement of sheep bought privately to the NLIS database on behalf of the new owner of the stock. This could be the ram breeder, or a stock agent. But it is still the responsibility of the owner of the sheep at the destination property to check and ensure the movement is recorded in the NLIS database.

Interstate movements

Buyers intending to move sheep interstate should always check with the animal health authority in the destination state or territory about relevant entry requirements.

More information

[NSW DPI NLIS \(Sheep and Goats\) website](#)

[NSW DPI NLIS \(Sheep and Goats\) individual electronic identification](#)

[Integrity Systems Company – NLIS identification and traceability](#)

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