



NLIS
National Livestock Identification System



Department of Agriculture and Food
Government of Western Australia



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

NLIS Fact Sheet No. 10

This Fact Sheet outlines NLIS compliance considerations that relate to abattoirs, such as:

- Minimum identification requirements for accepting cattle
- Options for dealing with incorrectly identified animals
- Dispatching cattle from an abattoir
- Exemptions for specific groups of cattle

What is NLIS?

The National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) has been developed to enable lifetime traceability of all Australian livestock in the event of a disease outbreak or food safety or residue contamination issue.

All owners of cattle, including those with only one or two animals, must comply with NLIS requirements. All cattle must be identified with an NLIS identifier before they are moved off the property for sale or moved to a location with a different PIC.

The NLIS will enable individual animals to be tracked from their property of birth through all changes of ownership and geographic location until they are sent for slaughter, sold overseas or die.

The NLIS database contains a complete record of all the locations an individual animal has been throughout the course of its life.

All cattle industry participants have specific responsibilities under the NLIS. Adhering to these requirements will uphold the international reputation of Australia's cattle industry by underpinning the integrity and safety of our cattle, beef and dairy products.

Requirements for Abattoirs

Abattoir operators and NLIS

Abattoirs must comply with NLIS regulations and should make sure all staff and consigners of cattle are aware of their NLIS identification requirements.

Abattoir operators are required to:

- Obtain a completed waybill or National Vendor Declaration (NVD) Waybill for all cattle dispatched to the abattoir
- Make sure cattle have a brand and/or an earmark and an NLIS identifier
- Advise an inspector if cattle are presented without appropriate identification
- Notify the NLIS database of the movement of cattle within 7 days

All premises used to slaughter cattle must obtain a unique Property Identification Code (PIC). The PIC is required to update the NLIS database of the location and movement of cattle fitted with NLIS electronic devices. Cattle with the devices must have them read when they are moved into and out of (if necessary) the abattoir premises.

To obtain a PIC, contact the Brands Office - phone 9780 6100 or email brands@agric.wa.gov.au - and complete an application form supplying the location of the abattoir, the trading name and contact details of the operator.

NLIS identification requirements

Cattle dispatched from their property of birth directly (without any offloading during transit) to an abattoir require, as a minimum, a transaction tail tag. They can have a transaction ear tag or a white NLIS electronic device. If the animals will be off-loaded on the way to the abattoir, they **MUST** have an electronic NLIS device.

Cattle dispatched from a property other than the one they were born on must have an orange NLIS device fitted if they have not previously been electronically identified.

Failure to follow this procedure can result in the consignment being returned to the consigner and the notification of Stock Inspectors by the abattoir operator.

Remember:

All cattle received by an abattoir must have a brand and/or earmark.

Incorrectly identified cattle

The abattoir operator has the option of refusing to accept cattle that are incorrectly identified. They can be returned to the property of dispatch prior to unloading.

If an abattoir operator chooses to accept cattle that are not correctly identified, the onsite inspector may:

- Give consent for the animal(s) to be slaughtered.
- Require an orange NLIS electronic device registered to the abattoir be applied. Owners will be charged for the devices and their application.
- Require an approved tag displaying the PIC of the property from which the animals came be applied. Owners will be charged for the tags and their application.

If more than 10% of a line of cattle arrive at an abattoir without the appropriate identification, (i.e. brands, earmarks and tail or ear tags or NLIS devices) the abattoir operator **must** notify an inspector who will advise on the appropriate action to take.

Action (and potential prosecution) will be taken against the supplier of the cattle for moving animals without the appropriate identification.

Lost Identification

If cattle in a lot have lost their identification, the abattoir inspector may choose to give consent for the slaughter of those animals provided they can be fully traced. If cattle cannot be traced, the abattoir should contact a Department of Agriculture and Food Stock Inspector who will direct the action to be taken.

Non-Reading devices

NLIS devices that do not read electronically must be read visually. This information can be manually entered onto the NLIS database.

Dispatching cattle

Cattle moved to an abattoir and not slaughtered can be moved to another property providing the following requirements are met:

- Cattle with transaction ear or tail tags must be identified with an orange NLIS electronic device registered to the abattoir, applied before the cattle are moved. Within 48 hours of applying the device, the abattoir operator must notify the NLIS database of the movement.
- Cattle already identified with NLIS electronic devices are required to be scanned and the movement updated on the NLIS database by the abattoir operator.
- Information required to update the NLIS database in addition to the cattle's NLIS numbers, includes firstly the PIC of the property the animal was dispatched to the abattoir from, the PIC of the abattoir, the serial number of the NVD Waybill and the date the animal was moved to the abattoir. Secondly, the operator will require the abattoir PIC, the PIC of the destination property the animals will be dispatched to from the abattoir, the new waybill serial number and the date of dispatch.

Special arrangements or exemptions for specific groups of cattle

Special exemptions apply to specific groups of cattle during the implementation phase of the NLIS. These transitional arrangements will be in place until appropriate infrastructure is available to identify and record the movements of the exempted animals.

Exemptions from NLIS identification requirements can be issued as either a 'general exemption', where a permit is not required, or as a 'specific exemption' which will require a permit to be issued. Permits are applied for through local Stock Inspectors. Agreement by the abattoir to accept these cattle must be obtained prior to dispatch.

Mature bulls (no permit required)

Bulls born **before 1 July 2003** do not require an NLIS electronic device when sold directly for slaughter either to an abattoir or via saleyards to an abattoir. These bulls must be identified with a tail tag and paint mark and be accompanied by an NVD Waybill. A permit is **not** required and the exemption will be valid until 30 June 2008.

Difficult cattle (permit required)

Difficult cattle that are unable to be safely identified with NLIS identifiers can be moved with a permit to an abattoir lairage for slaughter. The owner must apply a transaction tail tag to the animals prior to movement.

Stranger cattle (pastoral cattle only)

Stranger cattle that have wandered onto a neighbouring property and have been caught up in a muster can be moved, with the agreement of the owner, to an abattoir. If moved to an abattoir, the cattle must have a transaction tail tag registered to and applied on the property the cattle were mustered on. The abattoir must be advised that the animals will be arriving with alternative identification.



The person in charge of the abattoir must keep copies of the waybill provided by the transporter. While the animals are recorded at the abattoir as having come from the property of birth, their tail or ear tags, along with the accompanying written records, will show that

the animals were moved via the neighbour's property. More precise procedure can be found in NLIS Fact Sheet No. 14, Requirements for Stranger Cattle.

Database notification

Cattle fitted with NLIS electronic devices must be scanned on arrival at the abattoir. It is the responsibility of the abattoir operator to notify the NLIS database of the details of the consigning property and that the animals have been slaughtered.

Abattoirs will need the appropriate computer software to assist with the process of updating the NLIS database. The software supplier will provide training and an operator's manual for the software.



Stranger cattle need to be correctly tagged and clearly identified with a paint mark

To update the NLIS database you will require:

- the external NLIS ID number or the internal electronic RFID number of the device.
- the PIC that the cattle came from (PIC From)
- the PIC of the abattoir (PIC to)
- the serial number of the WAYbill or NVD Waybill
- the date the cattle were moved to the abattoir

If the NLIS electronic devices of the incoming cattle are not registered to the vendor's PIC on the NLIS database (i.e. were not transferred on the database to the current owner), the abattoir will receive a message alerting them to this. The PIC entered by the abattoir on the database must then be

checked against PIC recorded on the NVD Waybill. If they do not match, the NLIS database administrators must be notified of the correct PIC.

Disposal of removed devices

NLIS devices must be disposed of once removed from the carcass. Abattoirs **MUST NOT** sell or return NLIS devices for re-use. Devices can only be returned to the manufacturer with approval from a registered Department of Agriculture and Food Inspector.

There is currently no approved recycling program for devices.

Further information:

For further detail on NLIS or Brand and Property Identification Code (PIC) registration, please contact the Department of Agriculture and Food, Bunbury.
Telephone: (08) 9780 6100.

Please note: Failure to comply with the cattle and buffalo NLIS requirements under the Enzootic Disease Regulations 1970, can result in fines of up to \$5000 for each offence.

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The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Agriculture and Food and the State of Western Australia accept no liability whatsoever by reason of negligence or otherwise arising from the use or release of this information or any part of it.

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