



Department of  
Primary Industries and  
Regional Development

GOVERNMENT OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



## Lumpy skin disease: know the signs and report early

Lumpy skin disease (LSD) is a viral disease which infects all breeds of cattle and buffalo. It does not infect humans. The disease is primarily spread by biting insects. The disease can also be spread by contaminated equipment or infected hides and may occur directly from animal to animal.

LSD does not have a high death rate but can cause severe loss of condition, damage hides, reduce reproductive rates, cause significant animal welfare issues and would substantially impact international agricultural markets if introduced to Australia.

### Where is LSD found?

LSD first occurred in Africa. From the late 1980s it was detected in parts of the Middle East, from 2012 in Europe, and from 2019 in mainland South-East Asia, gradually moving east. In March 2022, it was detected in Singapore and Indonesia. LSD has never been recorded in Australia, but its presence in near neighbours has increased the likelihood of introduction.

### What does LSD look like?

- Affected cattle and buffalo develop a fever of up to 41.5°C and may also have watery eyes, nasal discharge and excess salivation (drooling).
- Within 1–2 days, raised nodules up to 50mm in diameter commonly appear around the head, neck, limbs and genitals and may cover the entire body.
- Scabs form on these nodules and may fall off, leaving large holes in the hide that can become infected.
- The brisket and legs may appear swollen.
- Cattle may look lame or be very reluctant to move.
- **Note: *Bos indicus* (northern) breeds may be less severely affected and may only show subtle signs which can be difficult to identify.**



Image 1 – native Lao cattle with LSD lesions (Source: unknown)

## How could LSD be introduced into and spread within Australia?

The two main methods of likely entry of the LSD virus to Australia are through:

- introduction of infected biting arthropods such as ticks, biting flies and mosquitoes, and
- movement of contaminated equipment.

Arrival of infected insects on the wind or via boats or planes is possible. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment has heightened border controls to reduce this risk and to detect virus-contaminated items in personal luggage, mail and freight.

If LSD is introduced, disease transmission by direct contact between animals can occur and movement of infected cattle and hides, contaminated vehicles, feed and water, and re-use of equipment such as hypodermic needles will all be important methods of spread. Infected bulls can excrete the virus in semen and experimental transmission has been demonstrated.

## What should you do if you suspect LSD?

Eradication of LSD is difficult and **early detection is essential** for successful control and eradication. If you see any cattle or buffalo with signs similar to LSD, whether recent or recovering, call:

- the emergency animal disease watch hotline on **1800 675 888**
- your private veterinarian or your local [DPIRD field veterinarian](#).



Image 2 – a calf with lumpy skin lesions over the body (Source: [Pirbright](#))

## More information

- DPIRD field veterinarians: [agric.wa.gov.au](http://agric.wa.gov.au): [Animal biosecurity contacts](#)
- Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment: [awe.gov.au](http://awe.gov.au): [Lumpy skin disease](#)

## Important disclaimer

The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development 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.

© State of Western Australia (Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development), 2022