

# Property Identification Code (PIC) and the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS)

## Information for smallholders and hobby farmers

If you buy, sell, agist, loan or borrow any livestock (even a single animal) you **MUST** obtain a Property Identification Code (PIC).



And you **MUST** comply with the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS).

Here's how you can do that.

## About the NLIS

The **National Livestock Identification System (NLIS)** applies to anyone with cattle, sheep, pigs or goats. Even if you are a hobby farmer, you **MUST** comply.

The NLIS is a system that identifies animals so that we can trace them quickly if we need to. The benefits are:

- If there is an outbreak of an emergency disease (for example foot and mouth disease), we can quickly trace back to identify animals that might already be infected, and trace forward to identify animals that are at the greatest risk of infection. By this means, we can ensure our resources are quickly targeted at the animals at the greatest risk, thereby maximising the chances of containing and eradicating the disease before it becomes well-established.
- If chemical residues are found in meat, milk or wool, we can trace back to identify which property caused the problem. By this means we can deal quickly with the problem at the specific property and that maximises the chances of preventing it becoming an industry-wide problem. Tasmania has a great reputation, both nationally and internationally, for its primary produce. And that has huge economic benefits for all Tasmanians. NLIS helps ensure that any producer who lets the industry down is quickly identified.
- Compulsory identification of animals helps reduce the risk of livestock being stolen and increases the chances of livestock being returned if it strays or is stolen.

## Property Identification Code (PIC)

A **Property Identification Code**, more commonly known as a **PIC**, is very important to biosecurity. The PIC defines your property spatially where your animal lives and is used to identify your property on: movements document forms; vendor declarations; on the NLIS database and; the PIC is printed on your NLIS tags. To obtain a PIC you must make an application for the registration of your property. A PIC is assigned and remains permanently associated with that property.

### Cattle

#### If you sell a cow:

- You must have a Property Identification Code (PIC).
- The cow must have an NLIS ear tag.
- You must supply a vendor declaration form to the buyer or carrier and retain a copy.
- You should supply an animal health statement. There are different animal health statement forms for beef and dairy cattle.

#### If you buy a cow:

- You must have a PIC.
- You must notify the NLIS database of the cattle movement. If you buy through an agent, your agent may do this on your behalf.
- You should insist on the vendor providing you with an animal health statement. There are different animal health statements for beef and dairy cattle.
- You should receive a vendor declaration for your records.

#### If you already have a cow on your property:

- You should have a PIC.
- If you move the cow off your property for any reason (including to agistment or loaning a bull to a friend), it must have an NLIS ear tag and this will mean you will need to obtain a PIC.
- You will also need to record details of the movement on the NLIS database.

**Both the seller and the buyer must keep a copy of the vendor declaration for at least TWO years.**

## Sheep

### If you sell a sheep:

- You must have a PIC
- The sheep must have an NLIS ear tag.
- You must supply a vendor declaration form to the buyer or carrier and retain a copy.
- You should supply a sheep health statement.

### If you buy a sheep:

- You must have a PIC.
- You should insist on the vendor providing you with an animal health statement.
- You should receive a vendor declaration for your records.

### If you already have sheep on your property:

- You must have a PIC.
- If you move the sheep off your property for any reason (including to agistment or loaning a ram to a friend), it must have an NLIS ear tag and this will mean you will need to obtain a PIC.

***Both the seller and the buyer must keep a copy of the vendor declaration for at least SEVEN years.***

## Goats

The NLIS requirements for goats are the same as those above for sheep (except that, for the time being, NLIS requirements do not apply to a dairy goat unless it is going to a saleyard or directly to an abattoir).

## Pigs

### If you sell a pig:

- You must have a PIC.
- You must have a registered tattoo and any pig over 10 weeks old must have that tattoo before leaving the property.
- You must supply a vendor declaration form to the buyer or carrier. You can purchase a vendor declaration available through Pig Pass. If you are just selling a few pigs occasionally within Tasmania, you can use a standard vendor declaration provided by DPIPWVE.

### If you buy a pig:

- You must have a PIC.
- You must provide the vendor (or agent or saleyard) with your PIC.

### If you already have a pig on your property:

- You must have a PIC.
- You will need to get a registered tattoo before moving any pig older than 10 weeks off your property.

***Both the seller and the buyer must keep a copy of the vendor declaration for at least TWO years.***

## What you need to do (to comply with NLIS tagging requirements)

### Step 1:

If you do not already have one, get a **PIC**.

You can apply online at <https://pras.biosecurity.tas.gov.au/pras/ui>

### Step 2:

Once you have a PIC, you will need to register with DPIPWVE for authorisation to order and use **NLIS tags**. You can get this form online at [www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/livestockid](http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/livestockid).

These two steps apply the first time you order NLIS tags. When re-ordering in future years, if you have the same property, you simply order the NLIS tags through your rural merchandiser or tag manufacturer, quoting your PIC.

**Note:** The requirement for pigs (over 10 weeks old) is for a registered tattoo on the shoulder instead of an NLIS ear tag. Application forms are available online at: [www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/livestockid](http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/livestockid).

### Accessing forms and databases

For cattle, sheep and goats, vendor declaration forms are available online at [www.mla.com.au](http://www.mla.com.au)

Many small farmers prefer to order a book of vendor declaration forms. To do this phone the MLA on **1800 683 111**.

If you are just selling a few cattle, sheep or goats privately within Tasmania, you may find it easier to use DPIPWE's standard vendor declaration form — available online at: [www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/livestockid](http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/livestockid)

Cattle buyers or their agents must notify the NLIS database of cattle movements.

You can do this online at [www.nlis.com.au](http://www.nlis.com.au)

For pigs, you can purchase a vendor declaration available through PIGPASS or, if you are just selling a few pigs within Tasmania, you may find it easier to use a standard vendor declaration form provided by DPIPWE.

You are encouraged to contact PIGPASS and register to use the PIGPASS database to report pig movements.

PIGPASS can be found at [www.pigpass.com.au](http://www.pigpass.com.au) or phone the helpdesk on **1800 001 458**.

## Animal Health Statements

While the compulsory vendor declaration forms do supply some information about the health of the animals, everyone buying or agisting livestock is strongly encouraged to go further and insist on a more detailed animal health statement from the seller or the agistor. Sellers are strongly encouraged to supply these statements.

Animal Health Statement forms for sheep, goats, beef cattle and dairy cattle are available online from [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au)

While there are no animal health statement forms for pigs, everyone who buys or borrows a pig should satisfy themselves about its health status before it comes onto the property.

## Non-compliance

It is in the industry's strong interest that everyone complies with NLIS requirements. We have inspectors at saleyards. You can also expect agents and producers to report any livestock that is not NLIS identified.

If livestock arrive at a saleyard untagged, you should expect the agent to return them to your property at your expense. You should also expect to be fined.

Industry and government have spent a lot of time and effort to develop a system that is made for ease-of-use by hobby farmers and smallholders in complying with the NLIS requirements.

## Further Information

Further information about your NLIS obligations is available online at: [www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/livestockid](http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/livestockid)

If you require further assistance please contact DPIPWE on **1300 368 550**.

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### Contact:

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DPIPWE Livestock  
Identification Information