The Australian experience with animal RFID systems

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Why?

- Exotic disease control
- Food safety
- Endemic disease control
- Market access

Australia exports over 60% of its beef production.
NLIS Implementation

• Commenced in the State of Victoria in early 1999
• The two main drivers were the need to trace cattle following chemical residue detections and the need to have a ‘whole of life’ system to support assurances about ‘HGP Freedom’.
• Phased in nationally on a mandatory basis from 2002
• NLIS is now a mature system.
• Successful because industry and Government have worked in partnership during implementation
Crucial Components

• Each State maintains a register of cattle properties (premises)
• Each property has a Property Identification Code (PIC)
• RFID ear tags / boluses for individual animals
• RFID hardware and software to read (scan) and record RFID devices.
• National database
PICs are linked to land

3MRDF022
NLIS Tags are allocated to PICs
NLIS Tags

- NLIS Breeder Tags (White): used to identify cattle on their property of birth. ALL cattle must be identified with an NLIS tag before they leave their property of birth.

- NLIS Post Breeder Tags (Orange): used to identify introduced cattle not already identified with a NLIS tag, e.g. tag torn out.
How does NLIS work?

All cattle movements are recorded on the NLIS Database.
NLIS Database statistics

• On average the NLIS Database receives between 90,000 – 120,000 cattle movement records per day

• 99.5% of transactions are received electronically, typically within 24 hours of the movement
Traceability expectations

• System must facilitate traceback of a suspect animal and traceforward of all companions within 24 hours for movements within the previous 30 days. *Currently, this can be achieved within 2 hours.*

• System must facilitate traceback over the life of a suspect animal and traceforward for all companions within 48 hours. *Currently, this can be achieved within 4 hours.*
Taking it to the next level
Visual overlay
Overcoming the obstacles

- Communication with all levels of the industry.
- Basic understanding of technology
- Human factors…# 1 reason for failure is hardware was not turned on.
- Effective compliance monitoring.
- The ‘plateau’ factor.
- Review, review, review and then review.