

Rural and Regional Adjustment (Sheep and Goats Electronic Identification Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2024

Explanatory Notes for SL 2024 No. 119

made under the

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994

General Outline

Short title

Rural and Regional Adjustment (Sheep and Goats Electronic Identification Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2024

Authorising law

Sections 3, 10, 11 and 44 of the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994* (the Act).

Policy objectives and the reasons for them

In 2022, Federal, State and Territory Agriculture Ministers agreed to work with industry to implement a mandatory national individual electronic identification for sheep and goats.

In Queensland, under this policy, all sheep and managed goats born after 1 January 2025 will need to be identified with an NLIS-accredited electronic identification (eID) before they leave the property of birth. All other sheep and managed goats leaving a property will need to be identified with an NLIS-accredited eID device from 1 January 2027. The eID technology has been used for cattle in Australia since 2005. The national eID system has three elements to enable quick tracing of livestock:

- Each location has a property identification code (PIC).
- Each animal is fitted with a device with a microchip inside to allow individual identification.
- Information about the movement of each animal is entered into the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) database.

The policy objective of the *Rural and Regional Adjustment (Sheep and Goats Electronic Identification Rebate Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2024* (the Amendment Regulation) is to introduce a new scheme of financial assistance that will be administered by QRIDA, the Sheep and Goats Electronic Identification Rebate Scheme (the Scheme).

The Queensland Government has committed to \$6.344 million to deliver the Scheme. The Federal Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has previously announced \$20 million of funding available for sharing across states and territories as a co-investment to support industry and producers with on-farm and off-farm traceability improvements, including to support transition to an individual eID system for sheep and goats.

On 15 February 2024, the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities executed the 'Strengthen Australia's frontline biosecurity capability and domestic preparedness Federal Funding Agreement' for the Federal Government's \$1 million commitment.

The industry subsidy levels reflect government decisions and the available funding from both the Australian and Queensland Governments. The Scheme is to be implemented from within existing resources, including administration costs.

To support producers, saleyards, processors, livestock agents and agricultural show sub-committees to implement the mandatory eID system for sheep and managed goats, the Queensland Government has established the Queensland Sheep and Goat eID Assistance Package of which the Scheme is a component.

The following categories will be eligible for assistance under the Scheme:

- primary producers (those with more than 30 sheep and/or goats in Queensland) and one or more PIC; and
- Queensland livestock agents that hold an NLIS account as agent.

Producers (with 30 or more sheep and/or goats) can obtain a rebate of 50 per cent of costs for eligible items (approved devices per Schedule 4 of the *Biosecurity Act 2014* such as ear tags and eID readers (fixed panel or handheld)) that can be used to scan an approved device, capped at \$1600 per PIC.

Livestock agents can receive a rebate of up to 50 per cent of costs for eligible items (eID readers (fixed panel or handheld)) capped at \$1600. The rebate only applies to the reader itself not ancillary expenses related to the reader (ie software, batteries, cables etc).

The Scheme will open on the day stated on QRIDA's website for opening and will close on 30 June 2025 with the possibility of a six-month extension if the Minister is satisfied that eligible applicants need more time to apply for the assistance. Eligibility for assistance is subject to QRIDA having sufficient assistance funds to pay for the assistance.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries will manage assistance for saleyards, processors and agricultural show sub-committee outside of the Scheme as the number of these entities is relatively small.

Achievement of policy objectives

The policy objective to be achieved is efficient sheep and goat traceability which will help the government and livestock industry respond to an emergency animal disease outbreak. The Scheme introduced by the Amendment Regulation will support the uptake of eID in the sheep and goat industry by providing a rebate on eligible items.

Consistency with policy objectives of authorising law

The Amendment Regulation is consistent with the policy objectives of the Act. The Act establishes QRIDA primarily to administer assistance schemes that foster the development of a more productive and sustainable rural and regional sector in Queensland including schemes offered by the Australian Government.

QRIDA may also administer approved assistance schemes to assist primary producers, small business and other sectors during periods of temporary difficulty, or to otherwise benefit the Queensland economy. As the Scheme is targeted at primary producers in the sheep and goat industry and livestock agents, it is consistent with the objectives of the Act.

Inconsistency with policy objectives of other legislation

This Amendment Regulation is not inconsistent with the policy objectives of any other legislation.

Benefits and costs of implementation

Improvements in the traceability of sheep and goats will improve the viability and reputation of primary production in the sheep and goat industry and will assist in managing an emergency animal disease outbreak should one occur.

The Queensland Government has committed \$6.344 million to support Queensland sheep and goat producers, saleyards, processors and livestock agents implement mandatory eID. The Federal Government has committed \$1 million to the delivery of the scheme.

Consistency with fundamental legislative principles

The amendment regulation has been drafted with regard to, and is consistent with, the fundamental legislative principles as defined in section 4 of the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*.

Consultation

The Queensland Traceability Advisory Group (QTAG) was consulted in the development of the policy to support eID in the sheep and goat industry. The QTAG is made up of key government agencies and industry representatives across the sheep and goat supply chain and includes representatives from AgForce, Australian Livestock Marketing Association, Australian Livestock and Property Agents, Australian Lot Feeders Association, Australian Meat Industry Council, EastAUSmilk, Industry Systems Company, Rural Stock and Crime Squad of the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Dairy Organisation.

The Queensland Sheep and Goat eID Implementation Plan of which the Scheme is a component received in-principle support by the QTAG.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries held a number of information workshops through the major sheep and goat production areas of Queensland to identify the needs of all sectors to assist with the implementation for sheep and goat eID. The consultation with industry helped inform the eligibility criteria and assistance available under the Scheme.

©The State of Queensland 2024