



Livestock Saleyards Association of Victoria Inc.

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PRESS RELEASE

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ELECTRONIC SHEEP IDENTIFICATION LSAV PROJECT FINAL REPORT

The LSAV study to scope the feasibility of operating an electronic NLIS (Sheep & Goats) system in Victorian saleyards has been completed, said Executive Officer, Mark McDonald.

“In summary, our study has concluded that the operation of an electronic NLIS (Sheep & Goats) system is technically feasible, and will not impose an unreasonable burden on saleyards, saleyard staff, producers, transporters, agents and buyers.”

“The final report and supporting documentation has been delivered to Victoria’s Department of Primary Industries for its consideration”, said Mr McDonald.

“LSAV worked with 13 Victorian sheep saleyards to scope how to best introduce an electronic tagging and scanning system. The project report and associated recommendations rely heavily on information derived from local representatives from all sectors of the sheep industry who attended workshops at participating saleyards.”

“The demonstration of tag scanning technology has also occurred at each site to ‘road test’ available equipment.”

“Participating yards have prepared individual templates that covered the key topics of scanning locations, type of equipment, operational management and related issues.”

“Estimates of equipment and other set up costs were also collected. Expected costs vary widely. Particularly in those yards that are well advanced in planning for an electronic NLIS (Sheep & Goats) future, anticipated infrastructure costs were modest.”

“Importantly, the study has identified an opportunity to greatly improve the efficiency of information management within the supply chain through the introduction of electronic National Vendor Declaration (NVD) forms. At the present time,

information about livestock is passed from vendors through the saleyard system to buyers on paper based NVD forms. This is inefficient and prone to mistakes.”

“A key recommendation is that a series of model yards (preferably three, comprising a small, medium and large yard) be established to fully implement an operational electronic scanning capability. These sites will provide a final test environment to fine tune operational arrangements, test supporting saleyard software and provide training opportunities for other yards prior to implementation elsewhere.”

“Sheep moving through saleyards need to be traceable to enable exotic diseases, such as Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), to be contained and promptly eradicated in the event of an outbreak. This is the clear message in the recently released Matthews report on Australia’s FMD preparedness”, said Mr McDonald.

“There is a growing acceptance that the introduction of electronic sheep identification will be necessary to address the weaknesses in the current visual tag system and that saleyards will be able to cope provided funding is available to support the installation of readers and supporting software.’

“LSAV is keen to work constructively with the Victorian Government and industry partners to ensure that sheep that are traded through our saleyards can be traced if the need arises’, said Mr McDonald.

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