

# New regulatory framework for the export of Australian livestock

## Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS)

The Australian Government has put in place new rules for the livestock export trade. These reforms are designed to assure the welfare of exported Australian livestock.

The new framework, called the Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS), places the responsibility on exporters to guarantee measurable animal welfare outcomes throughout the entire supply chain in overseas market places, through to the point of slaughter.

Australian exporters seeking a permit to export feeder and/or slaughter livestock must show that their supply chain:

- meets World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) guidelines for animal welfare;
- enables animals to be effectively traced or accounted for by exporters within a supply chain through to slaughter;
- has appropriate control through reporting and accountability; and
- is independently verified and audited.

### Timeline for implementation of ESCAS

Tranche 1	(75% by end Feb 2012)	Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Turkey
Tranche 2	(99% by end Aug 2012)	Israel, Japan, Jordan, Malaysia, Oman, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Singapore
Tranche 3	(100% by end Dec 2012)	Brunei, Mauritius, Russia, Vietnam, other markets
(Implementation occurred for Indonesia in June 2011)		

### OIE animal welfare guidelines

The OIE animal welfare guidelines are recommendations developed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

These guidelines cover the welfare of food animals at stages throughout the supply chain, including the handling of livestock, land transport, feedlotting, slaughter with stunning and slaughter without stunning.

Under ESCAS, each element of the supply chain now has defined animal welfare outcomes, drawn from the OIE Code. To consistently meet these outcomes a checklist has been developed, drawing out the key performance indicators contributing to animal welfare outcomes titled "Guidance on meeting OIE Code animal welfare outcomes".

Performance against this checklist under ESCAS is independently audited. The targets included in the checklist have been drawn from international practice and industry experience. It is anticipated that these will be refined with experience in using and auditing against these animal welfare standards.

### Control

The exporter must obtain and provide evidence of supply chain control from the point of unloading the vessel to the point of slaughter. If the exporter doesn't own the supply chain, control can be achieved through commercial contracts with importers and other businesses involved in the supply chain. This is important to ensure exported animals remain within the approved supply chain.

### Traceability

Under ESCAS, all cattle in an export consignment must be individually identifiable and traceable from the Australian registered premises through to the overseas abattoir.

For sheep and goats, a process of animal accountability must be in place at each point in the supply chain, including the abattoir, with data retained for each point to allow auditing and reconciliation by an independent auditor.

## **Audits**

The controlled supply chain assurance system must be audited by an independent, suitably qualified auditor. The audit is to assess if the supply chain meets the checklist and that appropriate control and traceability for animals exists.

The role of the independent auditor is to verify compliance of the supply chain with the ESCAS regulatory framework.

Prior to the export of animals into a new supply chain a formal independent audit report must assess and confirm, or otherwise, the compliance of the exporter's proposed supply chain with the regulatory requirements.

From there, the system of independent auditing proposed is based on regular auditing of supply chains.

## **What happens if a breach occurs?**

The Australian Government has the power to apply sanctions where breaches occur.

Sanctions include revoking licences, applying conditions to licences, such as additional audits or the stationing of animal welfare officers at facilities, through to criminal sanctions for the most serious offences.

### **ESCAS audit process**

#### **Initial - independent audit**

- Before any animal is exported the auditor conducts an assessment to ensure control and traceability systems are in place
- Additionally, a complete audit of the supply chain is conducted to ensure the OIE animal welfare checklist is satisfied.

#### **Approval of export consignment by the Australian Government (DAFF)**

- DAFF reviews the audit reports and contracts before granting approval for export.

#### **Performance audit**

- The auditor conducts a performance audit while the animals are in the supply chain to ensure the control, traceability & OIE standards are being met.

#### **Reporting**

- At the completion of each shipment the exporter must provide DAFF with an end of process report, including the performance audits.
- This reporting is made publicly available through the DAFF website.

#### **For further information visit:**

[www.daff.gov.au/aqis/export/live-animals/livestock/escas](http://www.daff.gov.au/aqis/export/live-animals/livestock/escas)

[www.liveexports.gov.au](http://www.liveexports.gov.au)