

Tasmanian Standards for the

IDENTIFICATION OF SHEEP

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Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to specify requirements for the correct identification of sheep under part 15(a) of the *Biosecurity (Livestock Traceability) Regulations 2023*.

By conforming with these Standards, industry participants will be compliant with Tasmanian legislation relating to the identification of livestock. These Standards also need to be read in conjunction with the *Biosecurity (Livestock Traceability) Regulations 2023*, to ensure compliance with broader traceability obligations including the requirement for property identification codes and the reporting of livestock movements.

The expected outcome associated with the application of these Standards is that sheep within Tasmania will be traceable in line with Australia's National Livestock Traceability Performance Standards.

Scope

These Standards apply to:

1. All sheep, including the intact carcasses of dead sheep.
2. All persons responsible for the management and husbandry of sheep and/or their dispatch to, receipt at, or transportation from premises including farms, residential properties, saleyards, transit depots, abattoirs, knackeries and agricultural show venues.

Importance of livestock identification

Livestock identification is important for several reasons, including verification of ownership and biosecurity management.

Correct identification of animals enables livestock movements to be traced and is a cornerstone of the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS). A robust traceability system is important not only for biosecurity and product integrity but to maintain market advantages and consumer confidence.

Definitions

Breeder device means a livestock identifier containing the property identification code of the premises on which the identifiable livestock that is to carry the identifier was born.

Chemical brand means a brand that is imposed on the skin of sheep by means of a depilatory substance on the skin.

Electronic identification device (eID) means a device containing a radio frequency identifier microchip that can be read by a handheld scanning wand or panel reader.

Emergency means an emergency that poses an imminent danger to livestock but does not include an outbreak of disease.

NLIS device means a breeder or post breeder visual or eID tag that is fully or conditionally accredited by the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS).

Post breeder device means a livestock identifier containing the property identification code of the premises on which identifiable livestock that is to carry the identifier are being farmed or kept but were not born.

Wool Brand means a body-brand that is intended to be imprinted or imposed on the wool of sheep.

Part 1: Permanent identification devices

S1.1 NLIS devices

S1.1.1

All sheep must be identified with a permanent NLIS accredited device before they move off property.

S1.1.2

From 1 January 2025, the NLIS accredited device must be an electronic identification device (eID) for sheep born on or after this date.

S1.1.3

From 1 January 2027, the NLIS accredited device must be an eID (regardless of when the sheep were born).

S1.1.4

Sheep born on a property must be tagged with either a generic yellow or colour-coded year of birth NLIS breeder device assigned for use on that property.

S1.1.5

Introduced sheep and those of unknown or uncertain origin without an existing NLIS device, including those that have lost their original NLIS device, must be tagged with a pink NLIS post-breeder device assigned for use on that property.

S1.1.6

Sheep must be identified with only one visual breeder device at any one point in time.

S1.1.7

More than one visual post-breeder device may be attached to sheep at any one point in time.

S1.1.8

Sheep must be identified with only one eID at any one point in time.

S1.1.9

Sheep must only be identified with NLIS devices accredited for use on sheep.

S1.1.10

NLIS devices must only be attached to sheep on the premises to which the property identification code (PIC) on the identifier relates.

S1.1.11

Only an authorised person, or a person acting under the direction of an authorised person, may attach an NLIS device.

S1.1.12

NLIS devices must not be removed from sheep unless:

- a) The sheep have been slaughtered at an abattoir or knackery, or
- b) The sheep have died or been slaughtered on a farming premises, or
- c) The device has ceased to function, or
- d) The person responsible for sheep has approval from the Secretary to remove the device, and
- e) The person removing the device is an approved person.

S1.1.13

If sheep lose a NLIS device or the device ceases to function, it must be replaced and the NLIS database updated.

S1.2 Authority to use NLIS devices

S1.2.1

A person responsible for sheep must apply to the Secretary for authorisation to order and use NLIS devices.

S1.2.2

To apply for authorisation, the person responsible for sheep must:

- a) have an authorised Property Identification Code (PIC), and
- a) complete a form approved by the Secretary, and
- b) pay any prescribed fee.

S1.2.3

The granting of authority to order and use NLIS devices is at the discretion of the Secretary.

S1.2.4

If authority to order and use NLIS devices is granted, the applicant will receive written notification from the Secretary and will be issued with a copy of the *Tasmanian Standards for the Identification of Sheep*.

S1.2.5

If authority to order and use NLIS devices is refused, the applicant will receive written notification from the Secretary noting the reason for the refusal.

S1.3 Movement of unidentified sheep

S1.3.1

If the application of a NLIS device would cause a work, health and safety, or animal welfare issue, the person responsible for sheep may apply to the Secretary for a permit to move unidentified sheep.

S1.3.2

If an emergency (such as flood or bushfire) is threatening the property where sheep are kept, sheep may be moved without being properly identified and without a permit issued by the Secretary. In these circumstances:

- a) Unidentified sheep moved during an emergency must be properly identified as soon as is practicable after they arrive at the property of refuge, unless they are returned directly to the original property from which they were moved within a timeframe approved by the Secretary.
- b) The person responsible for the sheep must make a record of the emergency movement using an approved movement document and keep a copy of the movement document for 2 years.
- c) The person responsible for the sheep must notify the Secretary of the emergency movement within 7 days.

S1.3.3

If unidentified sheep die, or are slaughtered on a farming premises, the carcass does not require a NLIS device to be applied before moving off property if the carcass is moved directly to a waste management facility.

Part 2: Brands and earmarks

S2.1 Body brands

S2.1.1

The use of body brands is optional, however if a body brand is used it must be registered.

S2.1.2

A registered body brand must:

- a) consist of a chemical brand or wool brand,
- b) be constructed so that no part of the face of the brand is more than 7 millimetres wide, and
- c) be at least 50 millimetres, but no more than 110 millimetre high (unless it consists of a letter within a sign, in which case the body-brand may be up to 130mm high), and
- d) contain no more than three letters of the English alphabet.

S2.1.3

The prescribed branding preparation for sheep is a branding fluid that contains a scourable dye.

S2.1.4

A brand registered for sheep must only be used on sheep.

S2.1.5

A person must not remove, deface, alter or make illegible a body brand.

S2.2 Earmarks

S2.2.1

The use of earmarks is optional, however if an earmark is used it must be registered.

S2.2.2

An earmark must be of the nature and within the dimensions specified in Appendix A.

S2.2.3

The width of the earmark must not exceed the length of the earmark.

S2.2.4

Sheep must be earmarked before they reach 6 months of age.

S2.2.5

An earmark cannot remove more than a third of the ear.

S2.2.6

The earmarks must be:

- (a) of the shape and dimensions shown on the Certificate of Registration, and

(b) on the portions of the ear as indicated on the Certificate of Registration.

S2.2.7

All earmarks must be made using earmarking pliers. It is illegal to use any instrument other than earmarking pliers.

S2.3 Registration, transfer and cancellation of body brands and earmarks

S2.3.1

To register, transfer or cancel a body brand or earmark, the person responsible for sheep must:

- a) complete a form approved by the Secretary, and
- b) pay any prescribed fee.

S2.3.2

The granting of registration, transfer or cancellation of a body brand or earmark is at the discretion of the Secretary.

S2.3.3

If the registration or transfer of a body brand or earmark is granted, the applicant will receive written notification from the Secretary and will be issued with a Certificate of Registration.

S2.3.4

If the registration or transfer of a body brand or earmark is refused, the applicant will receive written notification from the Secretary noting the reason for the refusal.

S2.3.5

If a body brand or earmark has been cancelled, the proprietor of the body brand or earmark will receive written notification from the Secretary advising the body brand or earmark has been cancelled.

Part 3: Identification to prevent the spread of disease

S3.1

The Chief Veterinary Officer may require sheep to be identified for the purposes of:

- a) preventing the spread of disease, or
- b) facilitating the diagnosis of a disease, or
- c) facilitating an investigation, or
- d) facilitating the conduct of an experiment.

S3.2

A person required to have sheep identified under S3.1 must comply with that requirement:




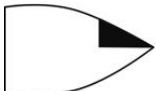
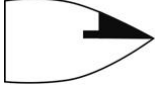


- a) Within such times as the Chief Veterinary Officer specifies when making the requirement, or
- b) If no time is specified by the Chief Veterinary Officer, as soon as practicable after the requirement is made.

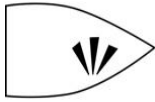
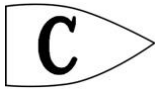
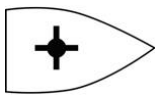
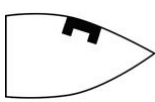

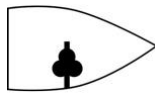

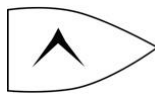
S3.3

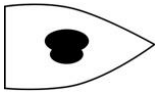
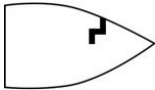

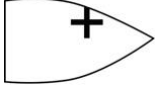




A person required to have sheep identified under S3.1 must ensure that the design of the body brand or tattoo applied to sheep is:


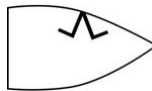

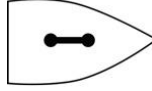




- a) the appropriate design (if any) specified in Appendix B, or
- b) the appropriate design registered in the name of the Department.

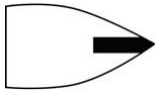
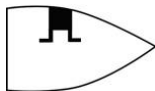

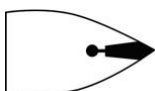



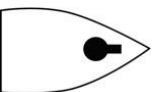
Appendix A – Nature and dimensions of earmarks for sheep

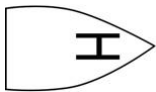
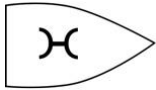

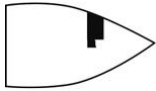




Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (millimetres)	Width not exceeding (millimetres)
The A		19	13
The anchor		19	19
The B		16	13
The bayonet		26	19
The bayonet and slit		32	19
The bolt		19	10
The boot		19	10









Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (millimetres)	Width not exceeding (millimetres)
The broad arrow		26	16
The C		19	13
The capstan		19	19
The castle		13	13
The club		19	13
The club and slit		26	13
The comma		19	13
The compass		19	19

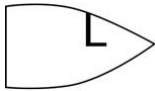
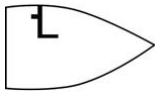





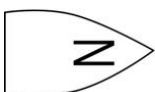
Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)	Width not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)
The cottage loaf		19	16
The crank		19	13
The cricket bat		32	13
The cross		19	16
The crotchet		19	10
The D		16	13
The diamond		16	13
The diamond and slit		22	13


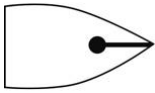
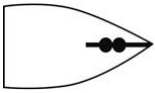
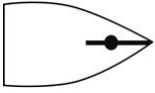

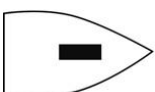


Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)	Width not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)
The diamond and slits		19	19
The double L		19	13
The double U		16	13
The dumb-bell		19	10
The E		19	13
The F		19	13
The fish hook		19	13
The flag		26	10

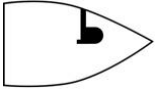

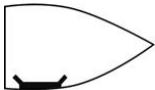





Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (millimetres)	Width not exceeding (millimetres)
The fork		19	13
The fork and double L		19	16
The fork and holes		22	19
The fork and note		22	13
The fork and slit		16	13
The fork and slit		16	13
The G		19	13
The gourd		19	16

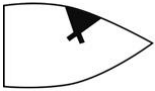







Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)	Width not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)
The H		19	13
The H (script)		19	13
The half circle		16	6
The half cleaver		16	13
The half halfpenny		16	10
The half halfpenny and fork		16	16
The half halfpenny and slit		16	16
The half halfpenny and swallow-tail		16	16

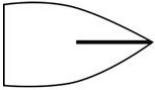
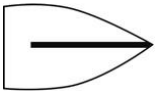
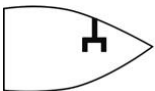
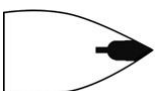




Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)	Width not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)
The hat		19	13
The hat and T		19	19
The heart		13	13
The hole		13	13
The holes conjoined		19	13
The hole and slit		22	13
The J		19	13
The K		19	13

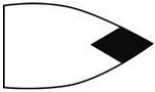
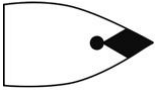






Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (millimetres)	Width not exceeding (millimetres)
The L		19	13
The L and slit		19	16
The lion		16	13
The M		16	16
The M inverted		16	13
The mushroom		16	13
The N		16	13
The N (centre)		19	13

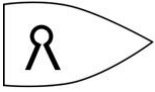

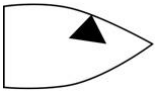
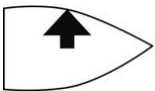




Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (millimetres)	Width not exceeding (millimetres)
The notch		16	10
The note		19	13
The notes conjoined		26	13
The note and slit		22	13
The note and slits		26	19
The oblong		16	10
The oval		16	10
The oval and slit		16	10









Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (millimetres)	Width not exceeding (millimetres)
The P		19	13
The parallelogram		19	6
The parallelogram and slits		19	13
The pick		19	16
The pointed fork		19	13
The primrose		16	16
The rowlock		16	13
The S		19	13

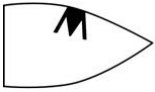

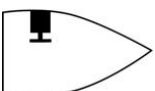



Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)	Width not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)
The saw frame		16	13
The scalene		19	13
The shear handles		19	19
The shears		16	13
The slash		26	3
The (centre) slash		19	3
The (round) slash		22	3
The slit		19	3

Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)	Width not exceeding (<i>millimetres</i>)
The (long) slit		38	3
The (extra long) slit		64	5
The spanner		16	13
The spur		19	13
The square		13	13
The stamp		13	13
The star		19	19
The star (curved)		19	19

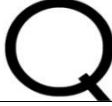



Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (millimetres)	Width not exceeding (millimetres)
The swallowtail		16	13
The swallowtail and hole		16	13
The swallowtail and L		26	13
The swallowtail and note		22	13
The swallowtail and slit		19	16
The T		13	13
The T (sloping)		16	13
The thistle		16	13

Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (millimetres)	Width not exceeding (millimetres)
The tongs		19	13
The trapezoid		22	10
The triangle		16	13
The triangle and fork		19	13
The triangle and slit		19	13
The triangle and slit		19	13
The triangle and swallow tail		16	13
The U		16	13

Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (millimetres)	Width not exceeding (millimetres)
The U inverted		19	13
The U inverted (sloping)		19	13
The U and note		22	13
The V		16	16
The V and slits		19	16
The V and slits		19	16
The V and swallowtails		19	16
The W		19	19

Name of earmark	Shape of earmark	Length not exceeding (millimetres)	Width not exceeding (millimetres)
The W inverted		22	13
The W and slit		26	13
The wine glass		19	13
The Y		19	13
The 3		19	13
The 6		19	13

Appendix B – Identification to prevent the spread of disease (sheep)

1. Brand for isolated sheep:-	
2. Sheep <i>Brucellosis</i> reactors: - Earmark (Registration Number 734B)	
3. Sheep reacting to a test for tuberculosis or Johnes disease or tests for both those diseases: - (a)Body-brand	
4. Sheep reacting to a test for <i>Brucella abortus</i> infection, <i>Brucella melitensis</i> infection, <i>Brucella</i> <i>ovis</i> infection, or <i>Brucella suis</i> infection: - (a)Body-brand	



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