



PIC DECLARATION & THE WOOL TRACEABILITY HUB

The potential for Foot-and-Mouth disease to have a devastating impact on the wool industry is well known and recently illustrated by outbreaks in South Africa and the United Kingdom. As such, planning for, and mitigating the risks associated with such an outbreak in the Australian sheep flock has been an industry focus.

A vital tool in managing any Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) outbreak is being able to track and locate any wool which may have come from contaminated sites, ranging from the farm to the wool store, dump or shipping containers and all the way to processing locations.

The **Property Identification Code (PIC)** and its declaration is the key to enabling a rapid and thorough response to an EAD event, with the goal of re-establishing trade in the shortest possible timeframe.

Brokers and merchants started voluntarily transmitting PIC details to AWTA via the EDI system for central storage approximately 18 months ago. The proportion of lots with a declared PIC grew very quickly initially, but has recently plateaued. As at March 2024 the national PIC adoption rate is ~50%, which is significantly lower than would be required to adequately deal with an EAD event. In some states this figure is still critically low.

Currently PIC declaration rates are reported on the AWTA Website
(<https://www.awtaooltesting.com.au/index.php/en/statistics/declaration-rates>).

The PIC will also be an *essential* part of the soon-to-be launched **Australian Wool Traceability Hub (AWTH)**. This hub will coordinate PIC's, matching Test Certificates, Combinations and Delivery orders, enabling an efficient response and quarantine should an outbreak happen. AWTA, as an independent industry owned body, will manage and operate the hub on behalf of the industry, as overseen by Wool Industries Australia (WIA).

Capturing PIC details for all lots is essential to initiate a response which would allow the concerns of both the Australian Veterinary Service (who sign off on quarantine certificates) and our overseas clients (mainly China).

It is important to note that sellers (brokers/growers) information is protected under the existing AWTA data sharing agreement. *Sellers can opt in or out* of sharing test information (which includes PIC) to the AWTH, and once launched, can also request a data purge from the AWTH at any time.

Sellers are encouraged to declare PIC information to AWTA, which can already be done via the EDI system. AWTH onboarding of users will commence after the April 2024 launch of the hub at IWTO in Adelaide. AWTA will launch a web-page specifically to help with this process.

Planning for an EAD event is the prime motivation for PIC declarations with the additional benefit of commercial traceability of bales in the AWTH. It will not prevent an outbreak of an EAD, but it will provide a key response tool to help minimize the inevitable trade disruptions that would follow.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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