NLIS Trials Information Pack for Suppliers

The assessment of animal identification technologies for use under the NLIS is of critical importance. A three-year field trial is required to assess any devices suitability in relation to retention, readability (visual and electronically) and welfare.

NLIS identification must be able to remain with an animal for its lifetime to ensure lifetime traceability which underpins biosecurity, food safety and access for Australian red meat to over 100 export markets. Under the NLIS AIT Program, this is for eight years.

Three-year field trials are a very important step and the tolerances for failure are absolute. Trials will terminate immediately if the following are not met:

- 2% of devices fail to apply.
- Limit of 3.5% of trial devices can be lost over the three-year trial period.
- Of the 3.5% - a maximum of 0.5% can be from non-reading transponders.

This document provides information on trial conduct.

GETTING STARTED

Experimental Approval

- You must make an application for Experimental Approval and provide all supporting evidence, sample devices and applicators for assessment. Contact ISC for an application form.
- ISC will, in conjunction with the NLIS Device Standards Committee, assess your application in line with the NLIS AIT Program Rules and Requirements.
- If the design is found to be in line with NLIS requirements your sample devices will be sent for electronic testing.
- ISC Compliance Team will arrange an audit of your facility to confirm your processes.
- On confirmation of satisfactory tests results and audit ISC can issue an Experimental Approval Agreement.
- This approval will have a six-months validity period, so must be issued when you are ready to commence applying trial devices to all properties and livestock.
- Assessments can take between 2-6 months to complete, which should be considered when making an application.

STARTING A NEW TRIAL

Before starting a trial

You must have an executed Experimental Approval Agreement and approval from ISC for your:

- Field Trial Properties.
- Field Trial Supervisors.
- Field Trial Plan.

Requests to start a field trial must be made to ISC **at least 6 weeks before a trial starts.**

Field Trial Properties	• All trial properties must be approved by ISC. • Annex B of the NLIS AIT Rules contain the number and types of properties required for each species. • ISC has a panel of field properties that can be made available to you to assist with sourcing field trial properties. • If you find a new field trial property and want it included, you must seek approval from ISC by submitting the Additional Field Trial Property Form. • Young female breeding animals are the preferred choice as they are most likely to be retained for the duration of the trial.
Field Trial Plan	A Field Trial Plan must be provided and include details on • Property locations. • Number, breed and age of the animals in trial. • Period of time over which initial application of the devices will occur. • Proposed dates of application on each Field Trial Property. • Method of cross referencing between the trial device and a uniquely numbered reference device. • Name and contact details of your personnel responsible for the Field Trial
Field Trial Supervisor	• Field Trial Supervisors must be approved by ISC. • ISC can provide a list of approved Field Trial Supervisors for you or a new one may be put forward for approval. • Field Trial Supervisors must have no conflicts of interest with either the property or you as a Device Supplier. • ISC does not pay Field Trial Supervisors or act as Field Trial Supervisors.
Bucket files	• At least **five** (5) working days prior to the application of the devices you must provide ISC with an electronic file listing the RFID's, NLISID's and corresponding uniquely numbered reference devices to be used for the property. • Trial devices must be uploaded to the corresponding PIC in the NLIS Database before they are applied as they will serve as the animals NLIS identification.
STARTING THE TRIAL	
Applying devices to livestock	• Trial devices can be applied by the Field Trial Supervisor, your personnel or producer in accordance with the application instructions provided. • It should be your goal to have the best application and placement to ensure the best results during the trial. • Field Trial Supervisor should apply some devices to assess the applicator and application process. • If more than 2% of devices fail to engage/apply correctly during device application, then the trial will terminate.

Species	Location RFID trial device	Ear for visual reference
Cattle	Right Ear	Left
Sheep	Either ear	Opposite
Goats	Either ear	Opposite
All	Internal	Right ear

Readers	• A panel reader must be used for at least one assessment throughout the three-year trial on each property. • An Aleis brand reader is preferred due to operational bandwidth. • An Aleis brand reader must be used for at least one assessment throughout the trial on each property. • If the Field Trial Supervisor needs an Aleis branded reader, ISC have some available for use. • It is recommended you provide the Producer with a reader for their own use to assist with scanning animals that are moved, sold or perish during the trial so the NLIS Database can be kept updated.
Scan applied devices with the Reader	• After devices are applied, the Field Trial Supervisor will scan the devices to ensure they are reading. • ISC will cross check scanned devices to the bucket file. • Any unused trial devices should not be provided to the producer for further use. • The scan file from the reader must be provided to ISC within **5 days** of the device application by the Field Trial Supervisor. • Any failed applications, slow or non-readers will be reported by the Field Trial Supervisor.
Reporting to ISC	The Field Trial Supervisor (not the Supplier) must provide to ISC in **5 days:** • Completed Property Details & Device Application Report. • Scan File from the reader. • Pictures and any additional information collected during the application. You will be provided with copies of reports and documents. Email for reports: operations@integritysystems.com.au
TRIAL ASSESSMENTS	
6, 12, 24, 36 Month Assessments	• At the required intervals, assessments must take place. • The Producer will need to muster the trial animals for assessment and scanning by the Field Trial Supervisor. • You must notify ISC of the assessment date. • The first assessment at six months is critical for determining conditional approval status. • All trial properties must be assessed at the six-month mark to enable any consideration of conditional approval. • All properties are assessed collectively at each interval for a retention rate so all properties must have undergone that interval assessment for that calculation to occur. **Reader for assessments** • Alies brand preferred. • Make sure it is charged and working. • Make sure the session is cleared before starting. • Make sure the file is downloaded after the assessment. **Animals not presented for assessment** • Where the Producer does not present all trial animals for assessment the Field Trial Supervisor needs to record reasons why they were not presented. • This could be due to sales, movements, lost stock, mis-mustering. • Discussions with the Producer are important.

6, 12, 24, 36 Month Assessments	**Assessment Process**
	• On arrival, the livestock should be penned/yarded.
	• The Field Trial Supervisor will need:
	  – Reader – charged and new session.
	  – Device Assessment Report template.
	  – Photo/Camera.
	• Run the livestock through the race.
	• The Field Trial Supervisor shall:
	  – Tally/count animals assessed.
	  – Scan each device.
	  – Check for signs of infection, rips, damage, missing devices or deterioration.
	  – Record reference or RFID numbers of any non-readers, slow readers, infection/ damaged ears and lost devices.
	
	Lost Devices
	• Are physically missing for any reason (i.e. ripped or otherwise).
	• Regardless of why they are lost they are counted as lost.
	• If a single piece device (i.e. a loop) remains in-situ but has split on the bend, this is not counted as lost if it still scans.
	
	Non-Readers
	• If a device does not read on the first scan, a second scan should be conducted.
	• A different reader can be used if available.
	• Failure to read a second time is a non-reader and needs to be carefully removed and sent to ISC for testing.
	• The RFID / Visual Ref number needs to be noted on the report by the Field Trial Supervisor.
	
	Slow readers
	• If a device does not read on the scanner on the first scan, but scans on the second time or on a different reader, it is a slow reader.
	• Ensure the RFID number or the visual tag number is noted as a slow reader on the report. These devices can stay in trial.
	
	Infections/damaged ears
	• During the assessment, the Field Trial Supervisor should note any devices that correlate to infected or damaged ears, not if they appear as a rip or there is just a hole and no rip.
	• Photos should be taken to demonstrate/show this.
	• Add notes about assessment and any trial animals not presented for assessment and why.
	• Photos of any lost or infected/damaged or even well-functioning devices are encouraged.
	
	Device Assessment Report
	• Field Trial Supervisor shall complete the Device Assessment report in full.
	• Using the scan file and count, total the number of animals presented for assessment.
	• Detail all non-readers, slow readers, lost devices, damaged ears.
	• Total number of animals scanned.
	
	Scan File
	• The file from the reader must be obtained.
	• The original scan file should be supplied to ISC.
	• The Field Trial Supervisor should compare the scan file to the list of devices applied.
	• If animals are not presented but appear at a later assessment that is okay.

Field Trial Supervisor Report	The Field Trial Supervisor (not the Supplier) must provide to ISC in **5 days:** • Completed Device Assessment Report. • Scan File from the Reader. • Comparison between device list and scanned devices. • Pictures and any additional information collected during the application. You will be provided with copies of reports and documents. Email for reports: operations@integritysystems.com.au
ISC Review	On receipt of the report and scan file, ISC Compliance team will check the report and scan file to account for: • Total presented. • Total not presented and why. • Lost. • Non-reading. • Slow reading. • Damaged/infections. • Movements of trial animals off the PIC. • Comparison from devices applied and any previous assessments. ISC track and calculate overall retention rate and once all properties are assessed for a specific time interval, the retention rate is calculated using an independent biometrician. The biometrician result is provided to the NLIS Device Standards Committee for review and recommendation on: • After the six-month assessment if conditional approval can be issued. • After 12, 24 month assessment – if the trial can continue. • At the 36 month assessment – if full approval can be granted and the trial can be ended.