ANNUAL REPORT
2016–17

safe✓meat

Photo: R Shaw

Contents

Message from the Chairman

Dear Stakeholder

I am pleased to present to you the Annual Report for SAFEMEAT for the 2016–17 financial year.

SAFEMEAT continues to promote best practice management systems and implement strategies for the safe and hygienic production of red meat and pork in Australia. Its success can be measured through progress made on key initiatives such as the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS), National Vendor Declarations (NVD) and the adoption of important industry programs such as Livestock Production Assurance (LPA), Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance (APIQ✓®), National Saleyards Quality Assurance (NSQA), National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) and Dairy Food Safety.

This Annual Report describes SAFEMEAT's progress against its terms of reference (ToR) and summarises critical policy issues and work programs overseen by SAFEMEAT during 2016–17. These are reflected in the SAFEMEAT Business Plan.

A number of key outcomes during the year were:

- continuing work on the Implementation Pathway established as an outcome of the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review and the Steering Group's report titled *'Towards an Integrated Integrity System'* including the implementation of enhancements to the LPA program, and the development and roll-out of electronic National Vendor Declarations (eNVDs);

- continued improvement in NLIS systems for cattle and pigs by progressing the SAFEMEAT-endorsed NLIS (Cattle) Standards (replacing the previous NLIS Business Rules), and NLIS Pigs Standards through the Agriculture Senior Officials' Committee (AGSOC) and Agriculture Ministers' Forum (AGMIN);

- working with stakeholders to enhance NLIS compliance in the live animal export sector;

- developing a protocol for the use of cotton trash as potential emergency drought feed;

- providing responses and agreeing to most (17 of 18) recommendations outlined in the Exercise *SheepCatcher II* Report and the oversight of ToR for a new Sheep Traceability Working Group which will work to implement the recommendations outlined in the *Sheepcatcher II* Report to improve Australia's traceability system; and

- progressing the use of the three-hole punch as a permanent identifier for Silirum® vaccinated cattle.

SAFEMEAT continues to meet many challenges through the regulatory and commercial needs of all members and stakeholders who contribute to our deliberations through a combination of trust, good will and common sense. SAFEMEAT has faced its own challenges this year, through the transition in its governance structure, with a number of sub-committees disbanded and working towards the development of the Integrity Systems Policy Group (now

SAFEMEAT Policy Group). I would like to thank those that contributed to SAFEMEAT's sub-committees and make specific mention of John Wyld, Peter Milne, Ian Feldtmann and Stephen Bailey who displayed strong leadership skills throughout their tenure.

I would like to welcome individuals as representatives on the SAFEMEAT Policy Group, be they new or existing SAFEMEAT members, who will support the SAFEMEAT framework through their knowledge, skills in management and program delivery.

The contribution of the committees and working groups within SAFEMEAT continues to provide a valuable mechanism for industry to maintain a high level of food safety and market access for its products and an assurity of such to Australia's domestic and international markets. This work has enabled targeted approaches to improving industry quality assurance programs through education, and fostering a partnership approach between industry and governments. Examples of this can be found in the monitoring of residues in livestock and the improving levels of compliance with NLIS requirements throughout the livestock supply chain.

It has been stated in previous annual reports that SAFEMEAT continues to be the most important vehicle for managing food safety and product integrity issues across the whole red meat, pork and livestock industries in Australia. The success of SAFEMEAT is due to the ongoing commitment and co-operation of its partner members.

I cannot stress enough the importance of maintaining the SAFEMEAT structure and to guard against complacency in times when there are no significant issues of concern or crises. As a strong industry and government partnership, we need to remain vigilant, focussed and committed to ensure we stay abreast of current and emerging issues so that the system can be activated at short notice if this becomes necessary.

I would like to thank the SAFEMEAT Partnership and the SAFEMEAT Executive and their respective member organisations for their continued commitment and contributions in 2016–17. I would also like to acknowledge Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd (MLA), Animal Health Australia (AHA), the Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR), State and Territory jurisdictions, the various industry peak bodies and the Secretariat for their considerable efforts made during the year. It is important that membership continues to be drawn from the senior levels within representative organisations to ensure SAFEMEAT objectives are able to be met.

Yours sincerely

Ross Keane

Chairman
12 December 2017

Photo: P. Simpson

Role of SAFEMEAT

The primary role of SAFEMEAT, as specified in the Meat Industry Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), is to oversee and promote sound management systems to deliver safe and hygienic product to the market place. SAFEMEAT promotes rationalisation of regulation and standards within the industry, drives the implementation of strategies to ensure meat safety and hygiene and monitors industry performance in respect of these.

SAFEMEAT Terms of Reference

a. To work with the objective of establishing world best practice in ensuring the safety of red meat and pork products.

b. To ensure each meat industry sector implements sound management systems to ensure safe and hygienic product is delivered to the market place.

c. To ensure adequate and nationally consistent government standards and regulations relating to meat safety and hygiene.

d. To ensure that effective crisis management strategies are put in place by the appropriate meat industry sectors and, to this end, ensure that there is a fully integrated and effective communications network.

e. To develop and provide relevant information about current and emerging meat safety and hygiene issues.

SAFEMEAT Structure

Partnership

The SAFEMEAT Partnership met on the following dates during 2016–17:

- 29 November 2016
- 27 April 2017
- 27 June 2017

A teleconference for SAFEMEAT Partnership members was also held 24 March 2017.

The SAFEMEAT Partnership members for 2016–17 were:

- **Chair** Mr Ross Keane
- **Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd**
  Ms Simone Jolliffe
- **Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources**
  Mr Daryl Quinlivan; and Dr Mark Schipp
- **Australian Livestock Exporters' Council**
  Mr Simon Crean
- **Australian Lot Feeders' Association**
  Ms Tess Herbert
- **Australian Meat Industry Council**
  Mr Noel Kelson
- **Australian Pork Limited**
  Ms Deb Kerr
- **Cattle Council of Australia**
  Mr Howard Smith
- **Goat Industry Council of Australia**
  Mr Rick Gates

- **Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (representing State/Territory Agriculture Departments)**
  Dr Allison Crook
- **Safe Food Queensland (representing State/Territory Meat Industry Authorities)**
  Dr Barbara Wilson
- **Sheepmeat Council of Australia**
  Mr Jeff Murray

Observers:

- **Animal Health Australia**
  Ms Kathleen Plowman and Mr Duncan Rowland
- **Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association**
  Mr Andy Madigan
- **Dairy Australia**
  Dr Robin Condron, and Helen Dornom
- **Australian Livestock Markets Association**
  Ms Kate McGilvray
- **Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd**
  Mr Richard Norton
- **Wool Producers Australia**
  Mr Steven Harrison

Executive Group

The SAFEMEAT Partnership is supported by the Executive Group. The Executive Group met on 22 September 2016 and 7 April 2017. Teleconferences or special meetings to address particular issues were also held during the year and involved industry, government and the Executive Group. In 2016–17 the Executive Group comprised the following members:

- **Chair** Mr Stephen Bailey
- **Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd**
  Mr David Basham
- **Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources**
  Dr David Cunningham
- **Australian Livestock Exporters Council**
  Ms Alison Penfold, then Simon Westaway
- **Australian Lot Feeders' Association**
  Ms Polly Bennett, then Christian Mulders
- **Australian Meat Industry Council**
  Mr Christian Mulders, then Patrick Hutchison
- **Australian Pork Limited**
  Ms Deb Kerr
- **Australian Renderers Association**
  Mr Dennis King
- **Cattle Council of Australia**
  Mr Bob Barwell
- **Dairy Australia**
  Dr Robin Condron, then Helen Dornom

Executive Group (cont.)

- **Goat Industry Council of Australia**
  Mr Duncan Bruce-Smith
- **PrimeSafe Victoria (representing State/Territory Meat Industry Authorities)**
  Dr Brendan Tatham
- **Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries — Dr Allison Crook (representing State/Territory Agriculture Departments)**
- **Sheepmeat Council of Australia**
  Mr Mark Harvey-Sutton, then Dr Katherine Giles

Observers:
- **Animal Health Australia**
  Mr Duncan Rowland
- **Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association**
  Mr Andy Madigan
- **Australian Livestock Markets Association**
  Ms Kate McGilvray
- **Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority**
  Dr Jason Lutze
- **Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd**
  Dr Jane Weatherley and Ms Jo Quigley
- **Wool Producers Australia**
  Ms Jo Hall

Sub-committees

The SAFEMEAT Executive has a number of sub-committees to progress specific SAFEMEAT activities. In 2016–17 the sub-committees were:

- **Cotton Trash Working Group**
  Chair: Mr Bob Barwell (Cattle Council of Australia)
- **National Vendor Declaration (NVD) Management Committee**
  Chair: Mr Stephen Bailey (SAFEMEAT); Committee suspended December 2016
- **NLIS (Cattle) Advisory Committee**
  Chair: Mr Peter Milne (SAFEMEAT); Committee suspended December 2016
- **NLIS Monitoring Committee**
  Chair: Mr Stephen Bailey (SAFEMEAT)
- **NLIS (Pork) Consultative Committee**
  Chair: Mr Andrew Johnson (Australian Pork Limited)
- **NLIS (Sheep and Goats) Advisory Committee**
  Chair: Mr Ian Feldtmann (SAFEMEAT); Committee suspended December 2016
- **PFOS/PFAS Working Group**
  Chair: Mr Stephen Bailey (SAFEMEAT)
- **SAFEMEAT Bobby Calves Residue Solutions Taskforce**
  Chair: Mr Bob Barwell (Cattle Council of Australia)
- **Stockfeed Working Group**
  Chair: Mr Dugald MacLachlan (Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources)
- **Targeted Testing Working Group**
  Chair: Mr Bob Barwell (Cattle Council of Australia)
- **Three-hole punch Working Group**
  Chair: Bob Barwell (Cattle Council of Australia)

As a result of progression of the new governance arrangements the NVD and the NLIS (Cattle) and NLIS (Sheep & Goats) Advisory Committees were suspended in December 2016.

SAFEMEAT Secretariat

The SAFEMEAT Secretariat for 2016–17 was provided by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, 18 Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra.

Funding

Funding to attend meetings and undertake projects is provided by the individual SAFEMEAT members.

Funding for the SAFEMEAT Secretariat is provided through Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd, the Australian Meat Processor Corporation (AMPC), LiveCorp and Australian Pork Ltd (APL). The cost of running the Secretariat was $200,000 for the 2016–17 financial year.

Significant Events in 2016–17

Significant progress was made on implementing the recommendations of the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review (the review), including:

- endorsement from Partners for the ToR for the Policy Group;
- LPA program transfer from AUS-MEAT to the Integrity Systems Company (ISC; formerly NLIS Ltd); the ISC is now fully responsible for the management and delivery of industry's integrity programs (NLIS, LPA and NVDs);
- LPA program enhancements planned for roll-out over the latter half of 2017, including reference to animal welfare and biosecurity and the implementation of a three-yearly LPA reaccreditation process, underpinned by LPA Learning and an online assessment;
- advertisement for the SAFEMEAT Policy Group Chair; and
- the development of an integrated eNVD system.

The Report for the *SheepCatcher II* exercise was published in November 2016. SAFEMEAT developed responses to the recommendations listed in the report and is assembling a working group with ToR (endorsed by Partners at the June 2017 Meeting) to address the responses.

SAFEMEAT endorsed the use of a permanent marker, (a three-hole ear punch) as a visual identifier for cattle administered with Silirum® and is now working with the States to have it recognised as such under legislation. Cattle administered with Silirum® vaccine are likely to test positive when screened for tuberculosis (caudal fold test) or Johne's disease (blood antibody test) which might have serious implications on the Australian exports of live cattle if detected overseas.

Photo: D Woodford

SAFEMEAT was involved in the Australian Chief Veterinary Officer's National Animal Health and Biosecurity Review which identified 5 key priority issues:

1. Animal health surveillance;
2. Emergency anticipation, prevention, preparedness and response;
3. Antimicrobial resistance
4. Animal welfare; and
5. International representation.

Antibacterial residues in bobby calves have been a concern for a number of years and continue to be detected in the structured residue monitoring program. Improvements have been noted over recent calving seasons as a result of the actions taken by industry and regulatory agencies in relation to these detections.

SAFEMEAT Business Plan

The strategic directions of SAFEMEAT are set out in its Business Plan. The Business Plan outlines the strategic approach to managing red meat and pork safety and hygiene within Australia and seeks to achieve this through a number of targeted projects under the following nine key programs of industry priority:

1. Standards and Regulations

2. Emergency Management

3. Animal Diseases

4. Residues

5. Pathogens

6. Systems Development and Management

7. Communications and Education

8. Emerging Issues

9. SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review

Under each key program there are defined projects, with milestones, funding arrangements and responsibilities.

1.

Standards and Regulations

The purpose of this program is to contribute to the implementation of nationally consistent standards and regulations relating to meat safety and hygiene.

In doing this, SAFEMEAT will support the development of harmonised and scientifically-based national and international standards and promote minimisation of regulations that are necessary to produce safe food, ensure consumer protection, and prevent market disruption.

Progress made against the program

SAFEMEAT, through its member network, continued to promote international acceptance of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)-based quality assurance schemes to assist with the recognition and acceptance of major industry and government initiatives in order to maintain and enhance Australia's position as a world leader in the export of meat and meat products.

On an on-going basis SAFEMEAT works with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) and contributes to assessments, as required, on national agricultural and veterinary chemical registration issues, particularly where ESIs and WHPs need to meet sensitive export market requirements. SAFEMEAT addressed inconsistencies between SAFEMEAT and APVMA ESI advice.

New NLIS (Cattle) Standards and NLIS (Pigs) Standards were agreed to by the AGSOC in March 2017. The Standards will be presented to AGMIN for approval in July 2017. This will ultimately result in pig movement reporting to the NLIS database becoming mandatory in all jurisdictions during 2018.

A SAFEMEAT Working Group has provided feedback to NSQA on having its draft National Standard for the Operation of Australian Saleyards recognised by the State/Territories as an equivalent system for ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements. Further work during 2017–18 is needed to bring this to finality.

SAFEMEAT is a contributor to the development of the Australian Feed Standard for Food Producing Animals.

SAFEMEAT contributed to the development of a national standard for the registration of goat depots to control the movement of untagged harvested goats going direct to slaughter.

SAFEMEAT worked with the Australian Livestock Exporters' Council (ALEC), jurisdictions and DAWR to improve compliance with NLIS requirements in the livestock export sector.

SAFEMEAT worked with the Livestock Production Assurance Advisory Committee (LPAAC) to improve the level of understanding of the importance of producer compliance with NLIS requirements relating to property-to-property (P2P) movements.

Photo: S Krouse

2.

Emergency Management

The purpose of this program is to ensure that effective emergency management strategies are in place and activated at appropriate times to minimise market disruption.

Progress made against the program

During the year, no incidents arose which necessitated SAFEMEAT to initiate any emergency management arrangements under the SAFEMEAT Incident Response Manual. However, on an ongoing basis, SAFEMEAT working groups continue to refine strategies to deal with the market access impacts of food safety incidents should they arise.

The SAFEMEAT Incident Response Manual is reviewed annually to ensure that it is appropriately structured to address any emergencies.

SAFEMEAT recognises the importance of facilitating appropriate linkages between SAFEMEAT emergency management arrangements and other related arrangements including AUSVETPLAN, the National Food Incident Response Plan and industry emergency response plans.

3.

Animal Diseases (as they relate to food safety)

This program is designed to ensure the red meat and pork sectors deal effectively with food safety issues arising from disease outbreaks in cattle, sheep, goats and pigs.

The objectives are to minimise market disruption arising from the public health aspects of animal disease outbreaks and to contribute, where appropriate, to the development and implementation of national policies and programs designed to protect Australia from exotic animal diseases.

Photo: P Simpson

VISITORS

PLEASE RESPECT

FARM BIOSECURITY

Please contact the manager before entering.

Do not enter property without prior approval. Keep to roadways and laneways.

AnimalHealth Australia

farmbiosecurity

Progress made against the program

SAFEMEAT, through its representative bodies and associated technical committees, continued to actively promote Australia's food safety measures in order to maintain market confidence in the safety of Australian livestock products.

SAFEMEAT kept a watching brief, and provided advice as appropriate, on international and domestic developments regarding zoonotic diseases that have the potential to impact on Australia's livestock and meat industries.

The Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE) Freedom Assurance Program met all of its objectives in the last 12 months. All sheep and cattle samples collected tested negative for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) and classical scrapie in 2016–17.

AHA provided a strong platform for the national co-ordination of TSE related projects, focussing on the collection of surveillance data (National TSE Surveillance Program) and inspections of the stockfeed chain (Ruminant Feed Ban) in order to maintain Australia's internationally recognised status of "negligible risk" for BSE.

4.
Residues

This program aims to develop and implement sound management systems to deliver safe and hygienic food with adequate and nationally consistent government standards and regulations relating to residues.

SAFEMEAT will actively promote the observance of withholding periods (WHPs) and export slaughter intervals (ESIs) in order to prevent residues being present above the corresponding Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) for all markets. It is the objective of this program that any potential residue problems will be identified and appropriate management strategies will be developed and implemented, taking into consideration cost-efficient and equitable funding implications. This will minimise market disruption arising from residue violations.

Progress made against the program

Since its establishment in 1998, SAFEMEAT has had a key role in:

- identifying potential residue problems and developing appropriate strategies to deal with them taking into consideration cost efficient and equitable funding implications;
- minimising market disruption arising from residue incidents; and
- actively promoting the observance of WHPs and ESIs in order to prevent residues being present above the corresponding MRL requirements in export markets.

SAFEMEAT also assists in progressing residue monitoring activities through the:

- National Organochlorine Residue Management Program (NORM) program;
- National Antimicrobial Residue Minimisation (NARM) program;
- Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing (TART) program;
- Sheep Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing (START) program;
- Pig Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing (PTART) program; and
- Device-Based Status Working Group.

The NARM Program continued during 2016–17. Export NARM sampling for 2016–17 found 0.04% of calves with violative residues during the spring and 0.03% of calves with violative residues during autumn (violative residues are those that exceed the relevant Australian Standard and are subject to trace-back investigation).

Domestic NARM sampling for the spring and autumn period found 0.21% of calves with violative residues during the spring and 0.13% of calves with violative residues during autumn.

During 2016–17, the National Residue Survey (NRS) reported that 970 cattle had been tested under their random sampling program for antibacterials, including 31 bobby calves. No violative residues were detected in the samples from bobby calves.

The Bobby Calf Residues Solution Taskforce has continued to work on a range of options to help minimise the number of residue violations in bobby calves.

The TART for cattle and the sheep equivalent, START, continued to operate in 2016–17. There were no detections in the nine sheep samples, and no violative levels in the 18 cattle samples.

The management of residue risks is partly controlled through the assignment of statuses for individual animals or for 'at risk' properties. Meat processors are expected to take action where these statuses are flagged. SAFEMEAT is working with all jurisdictions to ensure these statuses are managed in a nationally consistent manner.

SAFEMEAT Business Plan (PROGRAMS CONT.)

SAFEMEAT has worked with DAWR, the jurisdictions and the processing sector to develop a response mechanism where breaches of Australia's hormonal growth promotants (HGP) requirements are detected or suspected.

SAFEMEAT maintained specific working groups to:

- investigate the potential use of cotton trash as drought feed (its use was not initially endorsed due to market risk perceptions) for stock feed; however, after considering strengthened control measures, SAFEMEAT revised this decision and is currently preparing advisory information on cotton trash use as feed, including a Producer Agreement and Approved Supplier List, to be made available to livestock producers who sign commitments to comply with the conditions of use; and

- maintain a watching brief on PFAS contamination associated with the use of firefighting chemicals.

The issue of national consistency in interpreting and applying NLIS rules by the jurisdictions continued to be raised and strategies to overcome these differences are regularly discussed and acted on where appropriate in various SAFEMEAT forums.

5.

Pathogens

The purpose of this program is to implement sound management systems to deliver safe and hygienic food that meets consumer and regulatory requirements. This involves the development of pathogen and microbiological quality management programs with an emphasis on risk management as appropriate.

Progress made against the program

The work under this key program continues to be supported by MLA's research and development (R&D) program.

R&D projects are conducted by MLA in the areas of chemical usage, microbiological food safety, and post-mortem inspection.

One of the key components of this program is related to microbiological food safety and examines the use of scientific approaches to understanding food-safety risks and develops systems and new technologies to manage identified risks.

The Program Advisory Group (comprising representatives of peak industry councils, DAWR, MLA and AMPC) provides additional guidance and oversight of the microbiological program.

In recognition of current issues concerning the presence of antibiotic resistance bacteria in the red meat supply chain, SAFEMEAT continued to support research to address the prevalence of antimicrobial resistant bacteria in the supply chain.

The 2016–17 activities in MLA's food safety research and development program continue to be reported against specific projects, budget allocations and timelines and are linked, where appropriate, to the SAFEMEAT Business Plan.

Photo: R Shaw-Velzen

The MLA food safety program, generally aligning with SAFEMEAT Key Program 5, is now aligned with two Red Meat Industry Strategic Plan 2020 imperatives:

- reducing technical barriers to trade; and
- livestock and produce assurance through integrated integrity systems.

SAFEMEAT Business Plan (PROGRAMS CONT.)

6.

Systems Development and Management

This program enables SAFEMEAT to facilitate the development and establishment of key management systems to underpin red meat and pork safety and hygiene programs in order to provide a through-chain, 'world best practice' approach for managing food safety risks in the red meat and pork industries.

Progress made against the program

There were a number of NLIS developments during 2016–17.

The NLIS (Cattle) Standards (to replace the NLIS Cattle Business Rules) — endorsed by SAFEMEAT in June 2015 — were endorsed by AGSOC in March 2017 and will be considered by AGMIN in July 2017. These provide a minimum set of standards which can be adopted into legislation and enable jurisdictions to impose additional requirements if necessary. They set out the responsibilities of all participants in the production chain and enable NLIS to become auditable via industry food safety and quality assurance schemes.

Following issues in 2013 in progressing the then draft NLIS Pork Business Rules, SAFEMEAT endorsed their replacement in June 2016 with a newly drafted NLIS (Pigs) Standard which were agreed to by AGSOC in March 2017. The Standards will be presented to AGMIN in July 2017 and will seek agreement for the mandatory adoption of NLIS (Pigs) Standard including pig movement reporting in all jurisdictions in 2018. This will bring the pig industry in line with the cattle, sheep and goat industries under State and Territory legislation.

Work has commenced to convert the draft NLIS Sheep and Goat Business Rules into a Standard. This will recognise the initiative commenced in Victoria requiring all sheep and goats born after 1 January 2017 to be identified by an electronic device. Mandatory movement reporting will be implemented according to a timetable decided by the Victorian Government. SAFEMEAT will monitor developments and provide any support and assistance to this important component of the Sheep and Goat NLIS system.

PigPass, the traceability system for pigs which is an important part of the Australian Pork Supply Chain Integrity Program, has now been integrated with the NLIS database. PigPass will remain the 'front-end' for entering movement details with automatic and immediate upload into the NLIS database. The NLIS database will be the central national repository of movement records for all species of livestock.

SAFEMEAT has continued to address long-standing issues regarding NLIS compliance in the live animal export sector through a number of SAFEMEAT committees. The factors affecting compliance relate to internal exporter processes and inconsistencies between species and jurisdiction regulation. With the support of SAFEMEAT, ALEC has developed sector specific NLIS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Work Instructions for livestock exporters and industry awareness materials.

SAFEMEAT has negotiated with the goat industry for new accreditation conditions for goat depots which will allow the movement of untagged feral goats from depots direct to abattoirs. This addresses concerns raised by a number of jurisdictions about the origins and traceability of feral goats which cannot be tagged because of health and safety concerns.

The NLIS Standards Committee has continued its involvement in a number of areas, including working with Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) on a project on device integrity, examining the incidence of lost and non-reading tags at saleyards and working with the pig industry regarding the accreditation of NLIS pig tags.

Work is continuing on the review commissioned by MLA into all Property Identification Code (PIC) and regulatory and non-regulatory device-based statuses in the database.

The Refresh of the NLIS database was completed during 2016–17, with new features such as a producer dashboard and new Application Programming Interfaces delivered as a part of the project. The full decommissioning of the old NLIS platform will be completed in 2017/18 once the data migration process is completed.

AHA coordinated Exercise *SheepCatcher II*, a traceability audit against the National Livestock Traceability Standards, in June 2016. The *SheepCatcher II* Report was published in November 2016. SAFEMEAT endorsed all but one recommendation arising from the results of the report and is putting together a working group to address SAFEMEAT's responses to the recommendations.

SAFEMEAT was provided with regular reports of NLIS monitoring activity conducted by State and Territory jurisdictions during 2016–17.

SAFEMEAT endorsed the use of a permanent marker, the three-hole punch as a visual identifier and is now working with the States to have it recognised as such under legislation. Cattle administered with Silirum® vaccine are likely to test positive when screened for tuberculosis (caudal fold test) or Johne's disease (blood antibody test) which might have serious implications on the Australian exports of live cattle.

NLIS Database Activity

Cattle

From July 1 2016 — June 30 2017

7,211,441 database transactions

27,146,807 devices transferred

As at 1 July 2017

221,722 PICs with devices transferred or issued (Active status)

81,196 total database accounts

Total active cattle devices	**70,672,358**
— Active devices	70,672,358
Total inactive cattle devices	**117,980,856**
— Devices recorded as processed	100,619,560
— Devices on EEEEEEEE[1]	8,041,616
— Devices moved to 'DECEASED'	64,268
— Devices on AAAAAAAA[2]	977,790
— Devices flagged as Inactive	8,277,622
Total cattle devices on database	**188,653,214**

[1] 8E: code signifies the animals have been exported (live)
[2] 8A: code signifies the PIC of a property is not known

Sheep

From July 1 2016 — June 30 2017

19,575,254 sheep in **174,277** mobs moved

26,063,223 million sheep in **128,688** mobs processed

12,630 total database accounts

Goat

From July 1 2016 — June 30 2017

1,575,606 goats in **8,578** mobs moved

1,825,702 goats in **6,372** mobs processed

4,182 total database accounts

SAFEMEAT Business Plan (PROGRAMS CONT.)

7.

Communication and Education

The purpose of this program is to facilitate communication, education and awareness of meat safety and hygiene issues by all stakeholders. Specifically, to establish a fully integrated and effective communication network within and outside SAFEMEAT, to encourage the ongoing development of expertise on meat safety and hygiene within the industry, government and academia and to raise the level of awareness of food safety and hygiene within the broader community.

Progress made against the program

SAFEMEAT continues to:

- meet face-to-face to address all matters related to its ToR
- hold teleconferences as circumstances determine (these were particularly relevant for the working groups on drought feeding (cotton trash) and ESI list rationalisation)
- keep AGSOC and AGMIN informed of significant developments
- produce educational material as needed
- maintain linkages to other committees by providing them with updates on the progress of the work outlined in the Business Plan
- provide presentations on SAFEMEAT roles and responsibilities such as to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) Performance of Veterinary Services Evaluation
- post material on current issues on the SAFEMEAT website
- respond to media enquiries as they arise.

8.

Emerging Issues

The purpose of this program is to monitor and implement a range of strategic initiatives in relation to emerging issues to ensure that the industry is positioned to meet changing market and consumer demands as they arise. Issues such as advancements in biotechnology policy are closely monitored, both domestically and internationally, to ensure a well-informed industry.

Progress made against the program

SAFEMEAT maintains a watching brief on food chain security and critical infrastructure protection issues and participates in numerous forums to discuss matters of concern.

SAFEMEAT is regularly briefed on current and emerging market access issues for Australian exports by DAWR. Such briefings assist in communicating issues specific to certain markets to the relevant industry stakeholders and in coordinating an industry wide response.

Antimicrobial resistance has re-emerged as an issue and SAFEMEAT endorsed incorporating further work into research programs to address the prevalence of antimicrobial resistant bacteria in the red meat supply chain.

9.

SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review

The purpose of this program is to action recommendations endorsed by SAFEMEAT through the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review. The program aims to deliver more robust industry assurance programs that incentivise participation and uptake, promote greater efficiency in their delivery, and encourage continual improvement.

The delivery of a responsive and fully integrated through-chain risk management system, accompanied by technology enhancements to drive operational efficiencies, will ensure that Australia's systems continue to be recognised as world's best practice, underpinning the sustainability and prosperity of the meat and livestock industries into the future.

Photo: D Woodford

Progress made against the program

At its 17 November 2015 meeting, SAFEMEAT Partners unanimously endorsed the recommendations outlined within the SAFEMEAT Initiatives Review Steering Group's report — *'Towards an integrated integrity system'*, subject to the funding arrangements for industry's integrity system being resolved, and the development of a more detailed transition plan to underpin the implementation pathway.

The Steering Group identified that a sustainable red meat integrity system into the future must be based on a sound strategic foundation, delivered through strong governance and empowered management, and underpinned by secure and adequate resourcing.

The Steering Group identified a range of actions to implement the required changes and deliver a fully auditable and responsive whole-of-chain risk management system that maintains market access, food safety, product integrity (including traceability and animal welfare) and biosecurity.

Several actions are in the process of being implemented and others will be implemented by SAFEMEAT, integrity program owners as well as by the SAFEMEAT Policy Group. Activities achieved and underway include:

- endorsement from Partners for the ToR for the SAFEMEAT Policy Group
- LPA program transfer from AUS-MEAT to ISC; ISC is now fully responsible for the management and delivery of industry's integrity programs (NLIS, LPA and NVDs)
- LPA program enhancements planned for roll-out over the latter half of 2017, including animal welfare and biosecurity and the implementation of a three-yearly LPA recommitment process, underpinned by eLearning and online assessment
- advertisement for the SAFEMEAT Policy Group Chair
- the development of an integrated eNVD system.

Annual Report Acronyms

AGMIN	Agriculture Ministers' Forum
AGSOC	Agriculture Senior Officials' Committee
AHA	Animal Health Australia
ALEC	Australian Livestock Exporters Council
ALPA	Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association
AMPC	Australian Meat Processor Corporation
APIQ✓®	Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance
APL	Australian Pork Limited
APVMA	Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DAWR	Department of Agriculture and Water Resources
DRIS	Decision Regulation Impact Statement
eNVD	electronic National Vendor Declaration
ESI	Export Slaughter Interval

HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
HGP	Hormonal Growth Promotant
ISC	Integrity Systems Company
LPA	Livestock Production Assurance
LPAAC	Livestock Production Assurance Advisory Committee
MLA	Meat and Livestock Australia
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRL	Maximum Residue Limit
NARM	National Antimicrobial Residue Minimisation Program
NFAS	National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme
NLIS	National Livestock Identification System
NORM	National Organochlorine Residue Management Program
NRS	National Residue Survey
NSQA	National Saleyards Quality Assurance
NVD	National Vendor Declaration

OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
PFAS	Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances
PIC	Property Identification Code
PTART	Pig Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing
P2P	Property-to-property
R&D	Research and Development
RMAC	Red Meat Advisory Council
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
START	Sheep Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing Program
TART	Targeted Antimicrobial Residue Testing Program
ToR	Terms of Reference
TSE	Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy
WHP	Withholding period

Australian Government Department of Agriculture

A: 18 Marcus Clarke Street Canberra ACT AUSTRALIA
P: +61 2 6272 2456
E: SAFEMEAT@agriculture.gov.au

safemeat.com.au