

NATIONAL LIVESTOCK STANDSTILL

WHAT IS A NATIONAL LIVESTOCK STANDSTILL?

A key component of Australia's national veterinary emergency disease plan (AUSVETPLAN) is an immediate national livestock standstill if an incursion of Foot and Mouth Disease is strongly suspected or confirmed in Australia.

If a national livestock standstill is called, it is not possible to move any animals that are susceptible to FMD off a property, or receive any of these animals onto a property, unless the animals were already on the road when the standstill was called, or a movement permit has been issued by the relevant state/territory authorities.

The purpose of the national livestock standstill is to restrict the spread of the disease and allow authorities time to conduct surveillance activities and trace the movement of affected livestock.



Susceptible animals must not be moved in any region while a standstill is in place - even if they don't look sick or FMD hasn't been detected in your area. Government and industry need the support of every member of the livestock industries for a livestock standstill to be effective. Everyone in the livestock supply chain needs to understand how a livestock standstill works and follow the requirements of the standstill. This includes livestock owners, transporters, produce agents, and those who work in abattoirs, saleyards and feedlots.

It is important to note that FMD is currently the only exotic disease that would trigger a national livestock standstill. The reason for that is FMD is highly, highly contagious, and so the best way to stop the spread of it is by stopping the movement of animals.

The plan for the national livestock standstill has been agreed by federal, state and territory governments and industry representative organisations. The plan was developed in non-outbreak times to ensure a quick and effective response can be implemented to an emergency animal disease incident such as an outbreak of FMD.

WHO CALLS THE STANDSTILL?

The group with the authority to put a national livestock standstill in place under the AUSVETPLAN is the National Management Group. The decision would be based on advice from the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases. These groups are the national government-industry committees which are convened during emergency animal disease outbreaks to ensure rapid decisions are made for effective responses.

WHAT SPECIES ARE AFFECTED BY THE STANDSTILL?

Pigs, cattle, sheep, goats, deer, camelids (alpaca, llama, camels), bison, buffalo and some zoo animals will be prohibited from starting a new journey in a national livestock standstill.

HOW LONG WILL THE NATIONAL LIVESTOCK STANDSTILL BE IN PLACE?

The standstill would be in place for at least 72 hours under the currently agreed rules.

The duration of a standstill will ultimately depend on the nature of the outbreak. The standstill could be extended if the outbreak is quite large and it is taking longer to trace all the animals.

It is possible that the standstill may be revoked at different times in different jurisdictions depending on the results of tracing and surveillances in each jurisdiction.

When the standstill order of a jurisdiction is revoked, other emergency orders may be declared to manage the risk of spread of FMD until the outbreak is confirmed to be eradicated.

HOW WILL THE STANDSTILL BE IMPLEMENTED?

A national livestock standstill would be implemented through legal orders issued by each state and territory government.

The actions required to implement the standstill will be set out by state and territory authorities as per their respective legislation.

HOW WILL ANIMALS THAT ARE ALREADY IN TRANSIT BE MANAGED?

In the event of a standstill, state/territory authorities will advise livestock transporters how to manage animals that are on the road when the standstill is issued.

Options may include completing their journey, returning to the property of origin, or off-loading them at a designated site.

The preference for dealing with livestock in transit at the time of a standstill would usually be to let them complete their journey, recognising that the logistics of trying to offload animals or return them back to the property of origin may be very difficult, especially for loads with stock from multiple properties.

It is likely that permission will be required for animals in transit to cross a border.

ARE THERE PENALTIES FOR NOT COMPLYING WITH THE NATIONAL LIVESTOCK STANDSTILL

Penalties for breaching movement restrictions are in place in each state and territory and can include fines and imprisonment.

People who do not comply with the standstill may contribute to the disease spreading, increasing the time and cost required to contain and eradicate it. Delays in eradication of this disease would not only affect agriculture industries, but as seen in the United Kingdom's FMD outbreak in 2001, would extend well beyond the farm gate with significant economic and environmental repercussions, including delays to the reopening of Australia's livestock export markets.

JURISDICTIONAL WEBSITES



NSW DPI standstill page includes detailed QAs www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/beef-cattle/health-and-disease/viral-diseases/fmd/livestock-standstill-for-foot-and-mouth-disease-fmd