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NSHMP

National Sheep Health Monitoring Project

ANNUAL REPORT 2024–25

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Sheep Health Monitoring Project (NSHMP) operated throughout 2024–25 in 10 abattoirs around the country. Meat inspectors inspected 9,815,482 sheep in 40,271 lines from 9,343 property identification codes (PICs) for 19 animal health conditions. The 2024–25 period saw the total number of inspected sheep decrease compared to the previous financial year. This was due to technical issues, and efforts are in place to address them during the 2025–26 financial year.

This report contains an analysis of the data from the project, including summaries of the monitored conditions, thus providing a snapshot of the health of a significant proportion of the Australian sheep flock. Of the conditions monitored in the 2024–25 financial year (FY), bladder worm and nephritis had the highest levels of incidence in inspected sheep throughout Australia at 2.8% and 2.3% of total inspected sheep, respectively (Table 1).

Table 1: The percentage of inspected sheep that were affected by nineteen conditions in the 2022–25 FYs

CONDITION	PERCENTAGE OF ANIMALS AFFECTED		
	22/23	23/24	24/25
Arthritis	0.8	0.7	0.6
Bruising	0.4	0.4	0.3
Bladder worm	2.9	2.6	2.8
Cheesy gland	1.0	0.8	0.8
Cirrhosis	0.1	0.04	0.03
Dog bite	0.04	0.04	0.02
Fever septicaemia	<0.01	0.01	0.01
Grass seed	1.1	1.0	0.6
Hydatids	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Knotty gut	0.3	0.4	0.3
Liver fluke	0.9	1.0	0.9
Lungworm	0.9	1.2	0.6
Nephritis	1.3	1.4	2.3
Pneumonia	0.5	0.6	0.3
Pleurisy	1.8	1.8	1.6
Rib fractures	0.1	0.1	0.05
Sarcocystosis	0.2	0.2	0.1
Sheep measles	1.4	1.4	1.3
Vaccination lesions	1.2	1.1	1.1

OBJECTIVES OF THE NSHMP

- To monitor sheep for a range of significant animal health diseases and conditions which reduce productivity in the sheep value chain or can impact market access.
- To facilitate feedback to producers through state departments and MLA's myFeedback about the diseases and conditions occurring in their flock.
- To explore options for a comprehensive and cost-effective animal disease monitoring/ surveillance system and post-mortem inspection service.
- To provide accurate and timely animal health information as a driver for:
 - » further improvements in Australia's sheep health status
 - » maximising market access
 - » improving profitability
 - » informing future investment into research and development (R&D)
 - » enhancing productivity within the sheep value chain by improving the quality of product entering the chain and therefore reducing wastage

LOCATION OF PARTICIPATING ABATTOIRS

A total of 10 abattoirs participated in data collection in 2024–25 (some part-time) and provided national coverage of the significant sheep producing regions of Australia (Table 2).

Table 2: Location of abattoirs participating in the NSHMP July 2024 – June 2025

STATE	ABATTOIR
New South Wales	Cowra, Dubbo, Gundagai, Tamworth
South Australia	Lobethal**
Tasmania	Cressy**
Victoria	Ararat, Geelong*, Brooklyn*
Western Australia	Narrikup

*Abattoirs participating part-time in the project.

**Abattoirs where data was not collected the whole year.

NUMBER OF SHEEP INSPECTED

The total numbers of sheep, lines and PICs inspected in 2024–25 have decreased slightly compared to the previous two years, however the total number of sheep remains comparable with the 2022–23 FY (Table 3). These reductions in numbers can be attributed to technical issues that affected two abattoirs midway through the year.

Table 3: Total number of sheep, properties (PICs) and lines inspected in Australia over the past three FYs

INSPECTED NUMBERS	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025
Sheep	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
PICs	10,255	11,524	9,343
Lines	42,756	52,530	40,271

SOURCE OF SHEEP

Sheep were sourced from all Australian states. Of the 9.8 million sheep inspected during 2024–25, 7 million were from direct lines and 2.8 million were from saleyards. For the state-specific data described in this report, only vendor consigned (direct lines) sheep are included. This is due to sheep from saleyards (indirect lines) possibly originating from states that differ from the one where the saleyard is located. Earlier reports used both indirect and direct data for the report analysis. However, since 2023–24, only direct line data is used to improve the accuracy of the state figures. This may change in future reporting with the mandatory use of electronic identification (eID) in all states commenced in 2025, which will allow sheep to be more easily traced back to their PIC of origin.

Of the direct lines of sheep, 45.9% were from New South Wales, 16.7% from Western Australia, 15.1% from South Australia, 10.6% from Victoria, 6.8% from Queensland and 4.9% from Tasmania. The total number of sheep inspected from each state (for most diseases and conditions) as well as those from direct lines only are provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Total number of sheep, properties (PICs) and lines inspected from each state over the 2024–25 FY

STATE	NO. OF SHEEP INSPECTED (DIRECT LINES ONLY)	NO. OF LAMBS INSPECTED (DIRECT LINES ONLY)	NO. OF LINES INSPECTED	NO. OF PICS INSPECTED
NSW	3,211,560	2,209,375	21,430	3,088
Qld	476,728	205,366	1,593	363
SA	1,058,479	476,818	5,675	2,109
Tas	339,843	211,939	2,378	595
Vic	745,347	221,909	4,698	1,474
WA	1,168,548	371,585	4,497	1,714
Total	7,000,505	5,654,253	40,271	9,343

MEAT INSPECTION

Carcasses and viscera are examined grossly by certified meat inspectors. Laboratory confirmation of conditions is not utilised, except for Johne's disease. The presence or absence of pathology consistent with diseases and conditions is recorded by inspectors.

Responsibility for product disposition for market access and food safety rests with the on-plant veterinarian and company management.

NSHMP FEEDBACK AND REPORTING

All producers now have online access to feedback via MLA's myFeedback. Once producers log in, they have access to information about lines of sheep they have consigned to participating abattoirs, as well as information on prevention methods to help manage any conditions affecting their flock.

Regional quarterly reports providing a summary of the main sheep health conditions identified in a region and if the conditions have changed over time are provided to District Veterinarians and others on request.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES UTILISING DATA

In 2024–25 the data on pleurisy and pneumonia for sheep processed in WA was provided to Murdoch University for analysis and a paper will be presented by them at the International Sheep Veterinary Congress in October 2025.

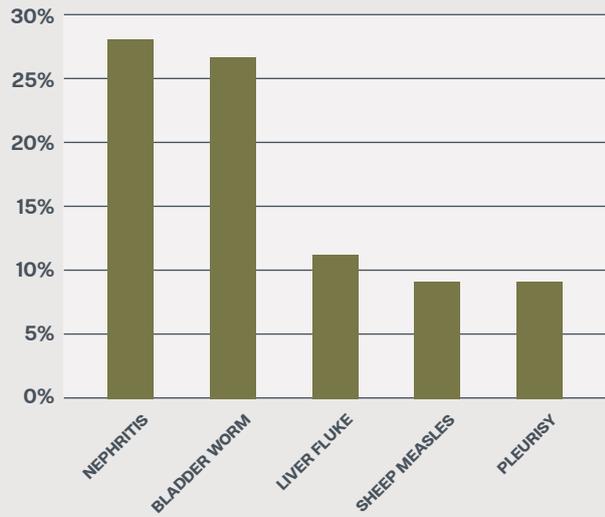
ANIMAL HEALTH INFORMATION

- This report contains a 'snapshot' of the health of the Australian sheep flock for the 2024–25 FY using data collected through the NSHMP. Summary data sets from previous years have been utilised for some conditions to provide a comparison.
- The data collected by the NSHMP is stored securely in the Endemic Disease Information System (EDIS), hosted by Animal Health Australia.
- The NSHMP collects information on 20 conditions:
 - » Arthritis
 - » Bruising
 - » Bladder worm
 - » Caseous lymphadenitis (CLA, cheesy gland)
 - » Cirrhosis
 - » Dog bites
 - » Fever/septicaemia
 - » Grass seeds
 - » Hydatids
 - » Knotty gut
 - » Liver fluke
 - » Lungworm
 - » Nephritis
 - » Pneumonia
 - » Pleurisy
 - » Rib fractures
 - » Sarcocystosis
 - » Sheep measles
 - » Vaccination lesions
 - » Johne's disease (*only on request by the producer*)
- Johne's disease is not included in this report, as numbers of sheep inspected for it have been significantly lower than for the other conditions.
- For state-level analyses the information has been obtained from direct (vendor consigned) only. Ages of sheep are recorded in this report as all inspected animals are greater than two years (which includes some mixed age lines), and less than two years of age (mostly lamb).
- The PIC analysis data method has been revised for this report, which may affect comparisons with 2023–24 Annual Report results.
- Bruising and lungworm only present PIC analysis data for the current FY, as data from previous years for these conditions are not readily accessible in EDIS for retrospective adjustments.

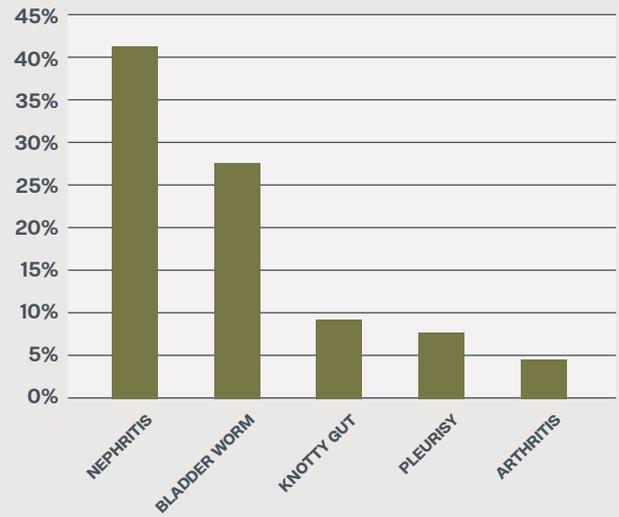


**TOP FIVE
CONDITIONS
FOR EACH STATE
DURING 24/25
(DIRECT LINES ONLY)**

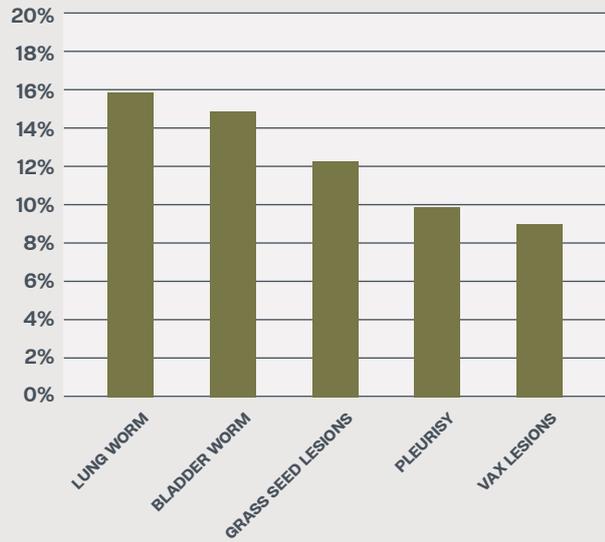
NEW SOUTH WALES



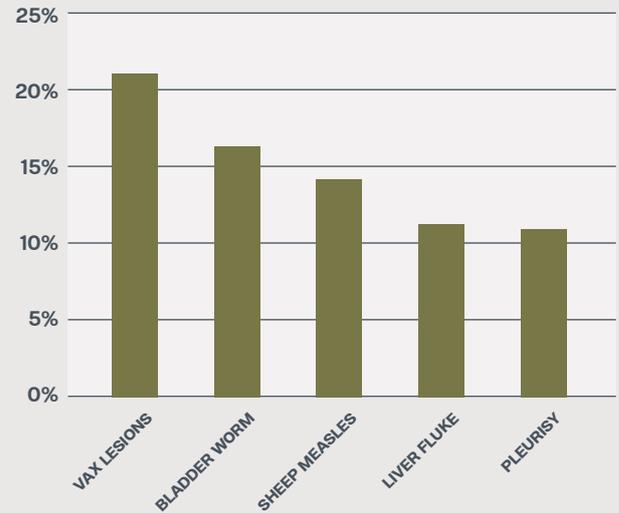
QUEENSLAND



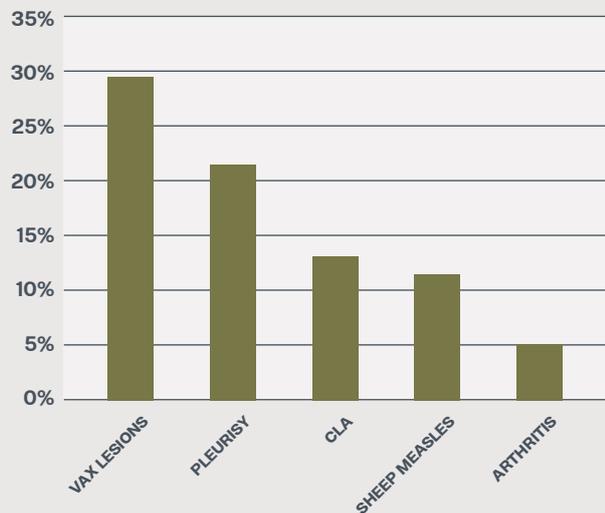
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



TASMANIA



VICTORIA



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

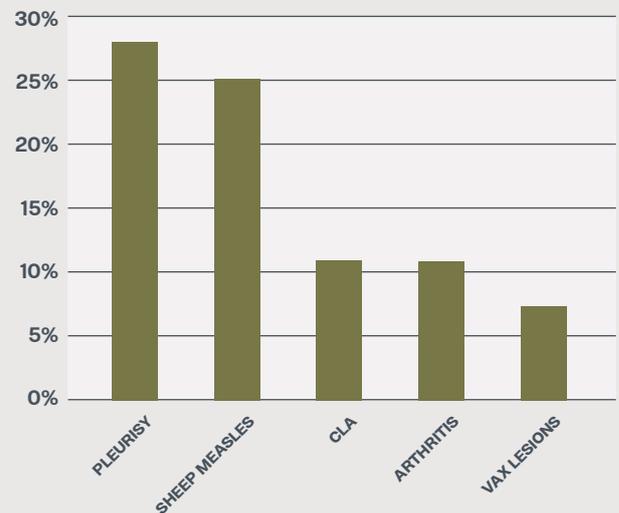


Figure 1: The five most common conditions recorded in each state during 2024–25, displayed as a percentage of the total recorded conditions (direct lines only)

ARTHRITIS

Arthritis in sheep is usually caused by a bacterial infection of the joints. It usually occurs in young sheep when bacteria localise in the joints after entering the body through the umbilical cord (navel ill) or any wound (e.g. at lamb marking). Arthritis causes lameness and a reduced growth rate.

Carcases affected with arthritis undergo trimming of affected joints and may possibly be condemned.

The percentage of total animals reported to have arthritis has reduced slightly by 0.1% compared to last FY (Table 5). The number of animals <2 years

affected by arthritis has also reduced by 0.1%. The percentage of PICs with at least one affected animal has showed little variation in most states across the last three FYs. In the current reporting period, Western Australia showed the highest proportion of affected PICs (67%) (Figure 2).

Victoria recorded the highest percentage of affected animals at 1%, closely followed by South Australia and Queensland at 0.8% (Figure 3).

Table 5: The number of sheep inspected and affected by arthritis during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	77,900 = 0.8%	84,027 = 0.7%	55,411 = 0.6%
Total <2yr animals affected	25,085 = 0.4%	25,858 = 0.4%	15,413 = 0.3%

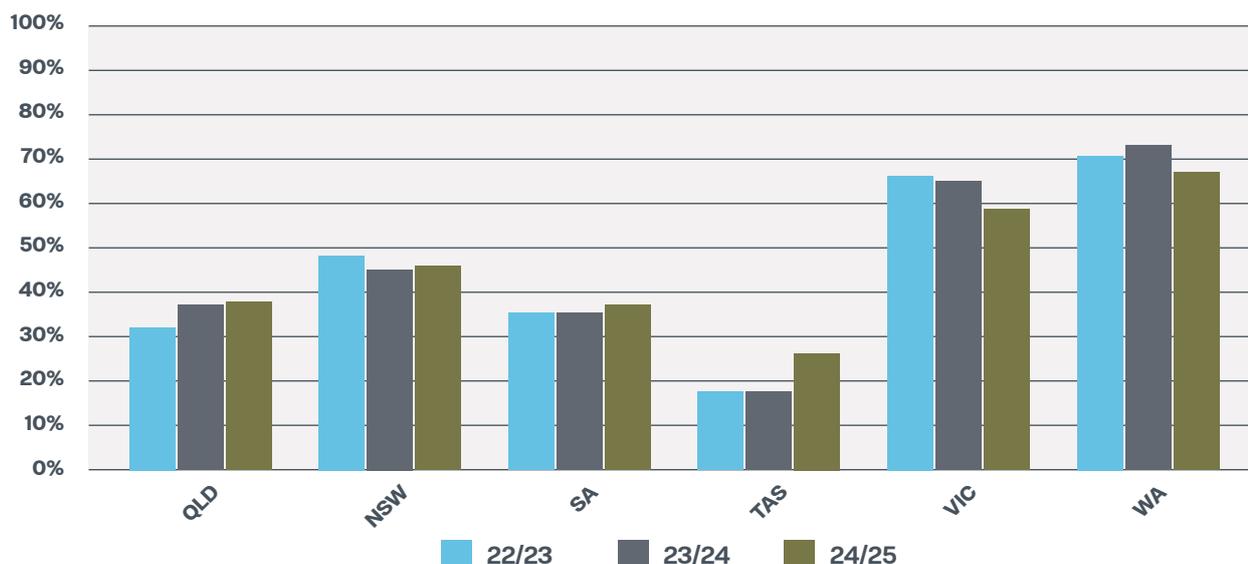


Figure 2: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by arthritis in 2022–25



Figure 3: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by arthritis in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

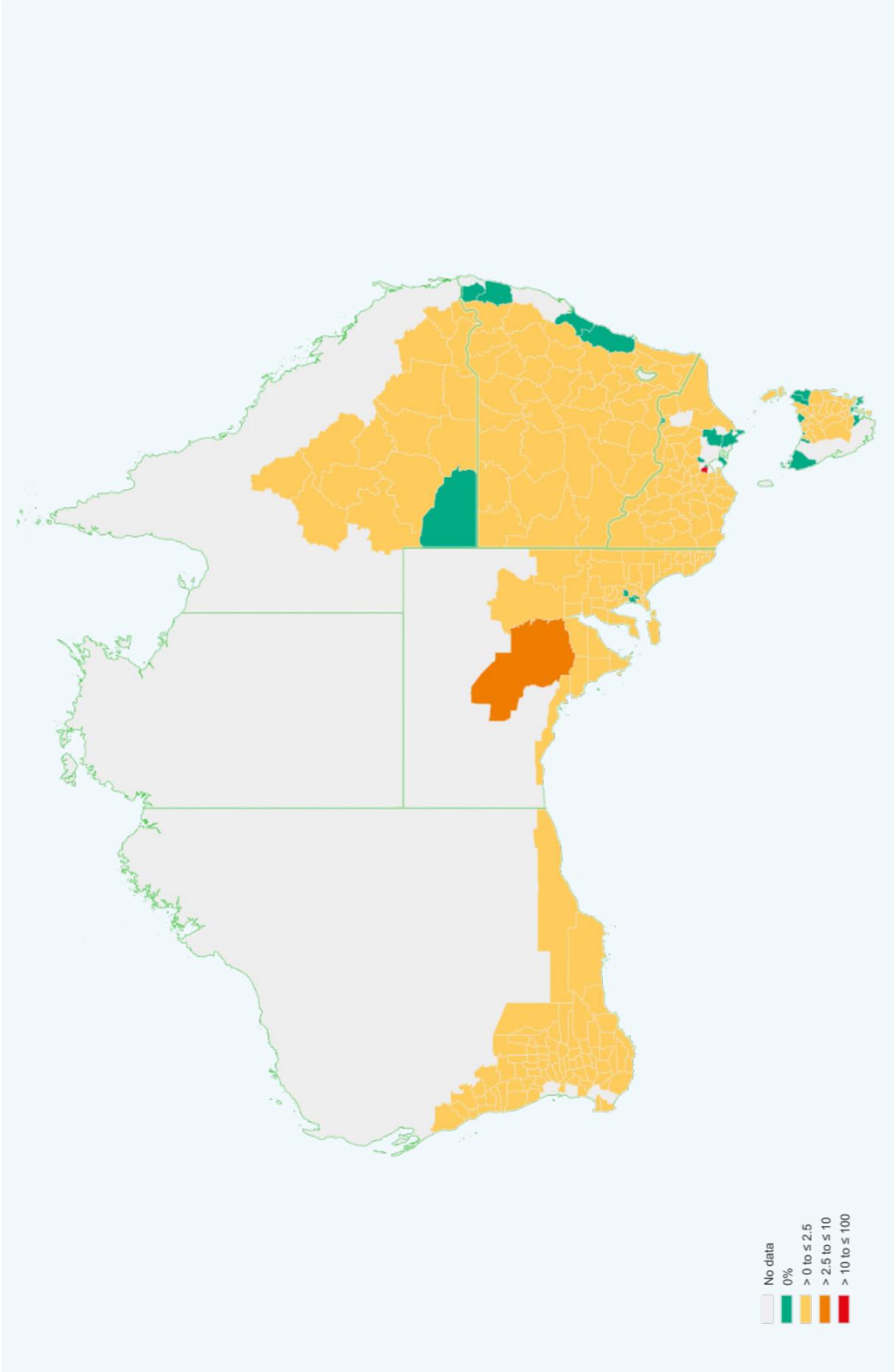


Figure 4: Percentage of sheep affected by arthritis in each LGA in 2024-25

BLADDER WORM

Bladder worms are infective cysts from the dog tapeworm *Taenia hydatigena* and are found in the liver and the abdominal cavities of sheep. Bladder worm has little or no effect on sheep health or production, but occasionally heavy infestations can predispose sheep to the fatal bacterial infection, Black disease.

Affected carcasses usually have livers trimmed or condemned.

Bladder worm has been the most reported condition over the last three years. Compared to the

previous year, the percentage of total sheep affected by bladder worm increased by 0.2% in the 2024–25 FY, while the percentage of affected lambs increased by 0.3% (Table 6). Compared to other states, NSW had the highest prevalence of the condition across PICs, with 53% of PICs in NSW reporting at least one case of the condition (Figure 5). Tasmania saw a substantial drop in the number of affected PICs, reporting 26% in 2024–25 FY compared to 61% the previous year. Queensland had the highest percentage of inspected sheep affected by bladder worm at 4.6%, followed by South Australia at 4.1% (Figure 6).

Table 6: The number of sheep inspected and affected by bladder worm during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	281,370 = 2.9%	310,954 = 2.6%	275,854 = 2.8%
Total <2yr animals affected	126,406 = 2.2%	148,219 = 2.2%	118,761 = 2.5%

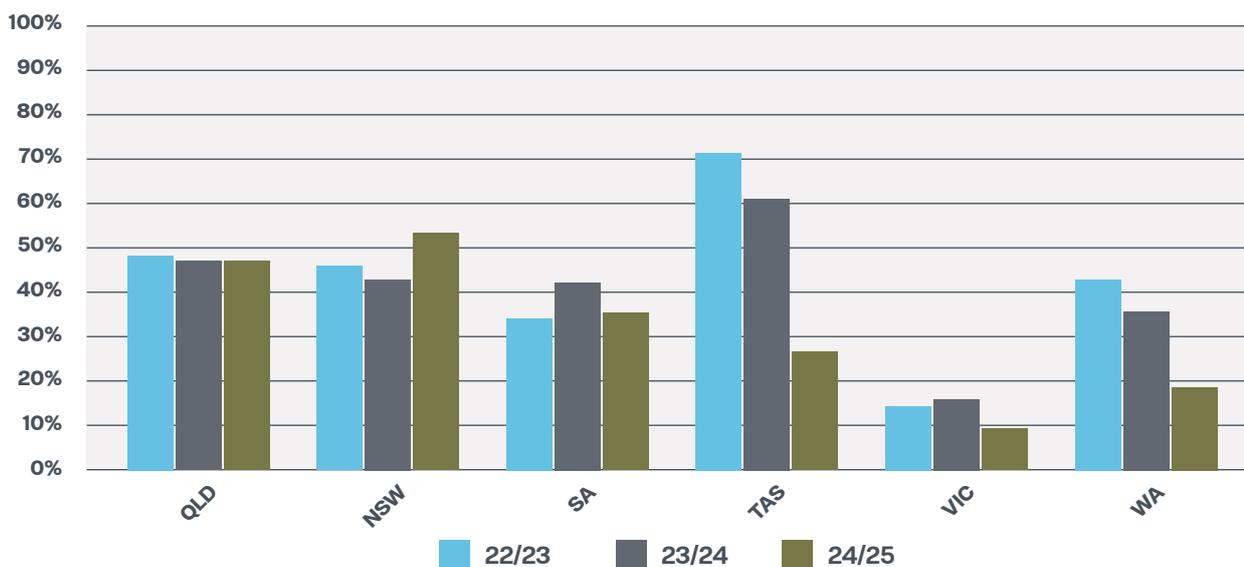


Figure 5: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by bladder worm in 2022–25

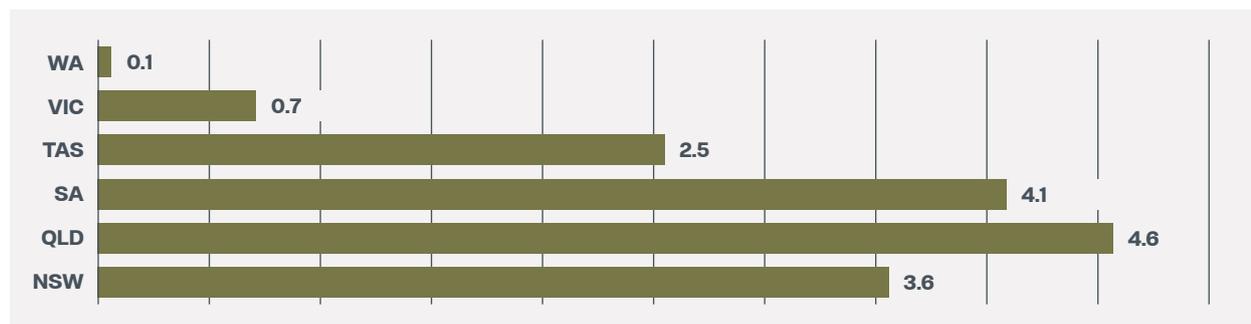


Figure 6: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by bladder worm in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

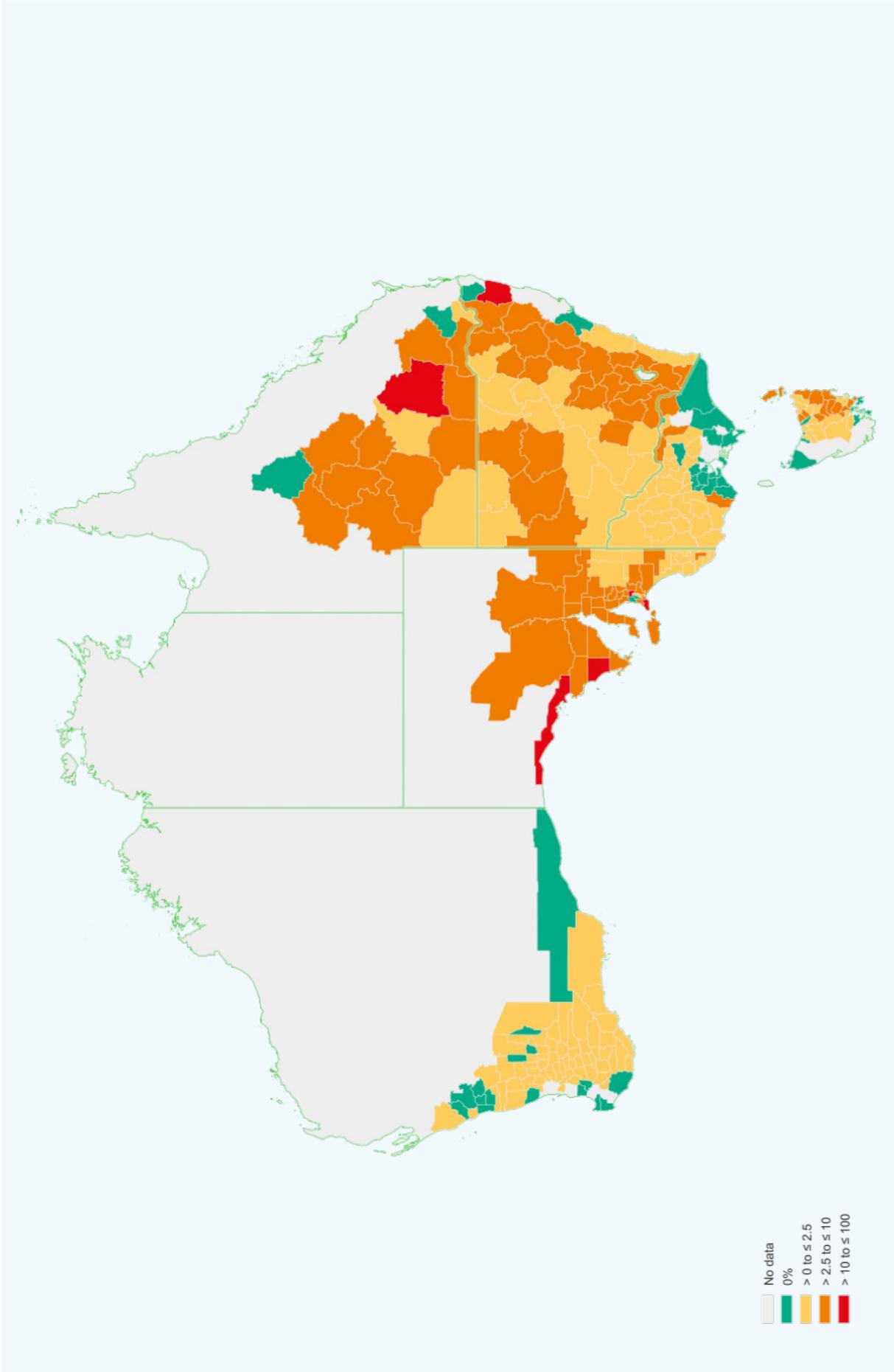


Figure 7: Percentage of sheep affected by bladder worm in each LGA in 2024-25

BRUISING

Muscle bruising in sheep is caused by physical trauma, such as knocks and bumps from other sheep, during handling or transportation. Significant levels of bruising may indicate poor handling techniques and impaired sheep welfare. Bruising can be avoided by practicing calm and safe handling, having well designed sheep yards and not overcrowding sheep during transport.

Bruising is caused by damage to blood vessels in the muscle, discolouring the meat. Affected muscles are trimmed from the carcass, reducing yield and downgrading the carcass.

The percentage of total sheep affected by bruising has reduced by 0.1% compared to the previous two FYs (Table 7). Bruising is generally seen in a relatively low number of animals and this year this was spread over many properties (Figure 8). The state that showed the highest percentage of PICs with at least one case of bruising was Western Australia at 42%. South Australia also saw the largest percentage of inspected sheep affected, with approximately 1.1% of sheep from this state having the condition, closely followed by Victoria with 0.9% (Figure 9).

Table 7: The number of sheep inspected and affected by bruising during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	38,060 = 0.4%	52,657 = 0.4%	32,452 = 0.3%
Total <2yr animals affected	17,824 = 0.3%	20,743 = 0.3%	8,729 = 0.2%

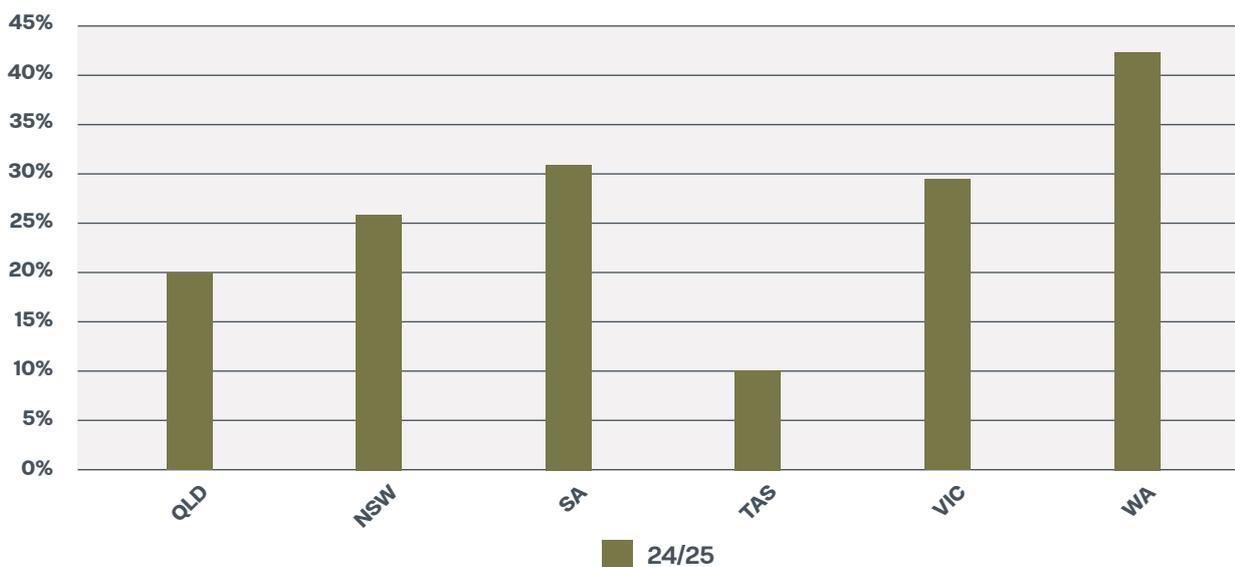


Figure 8: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by bruising in 2024–25

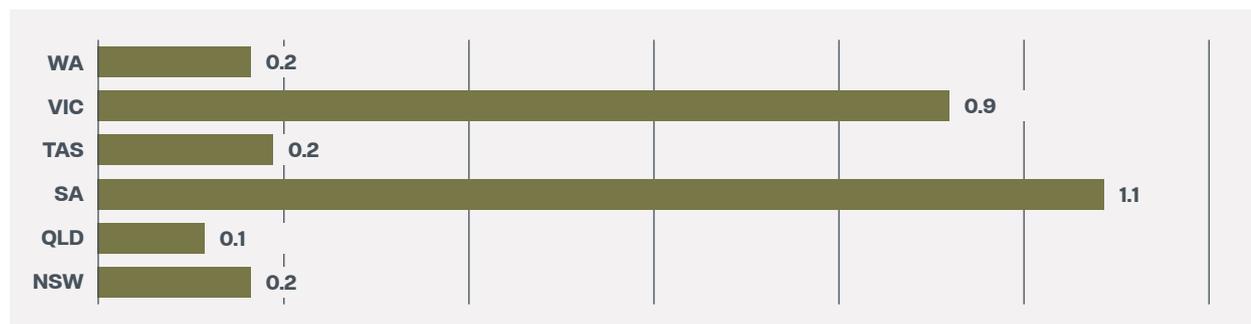


Figure 9: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by bruising in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

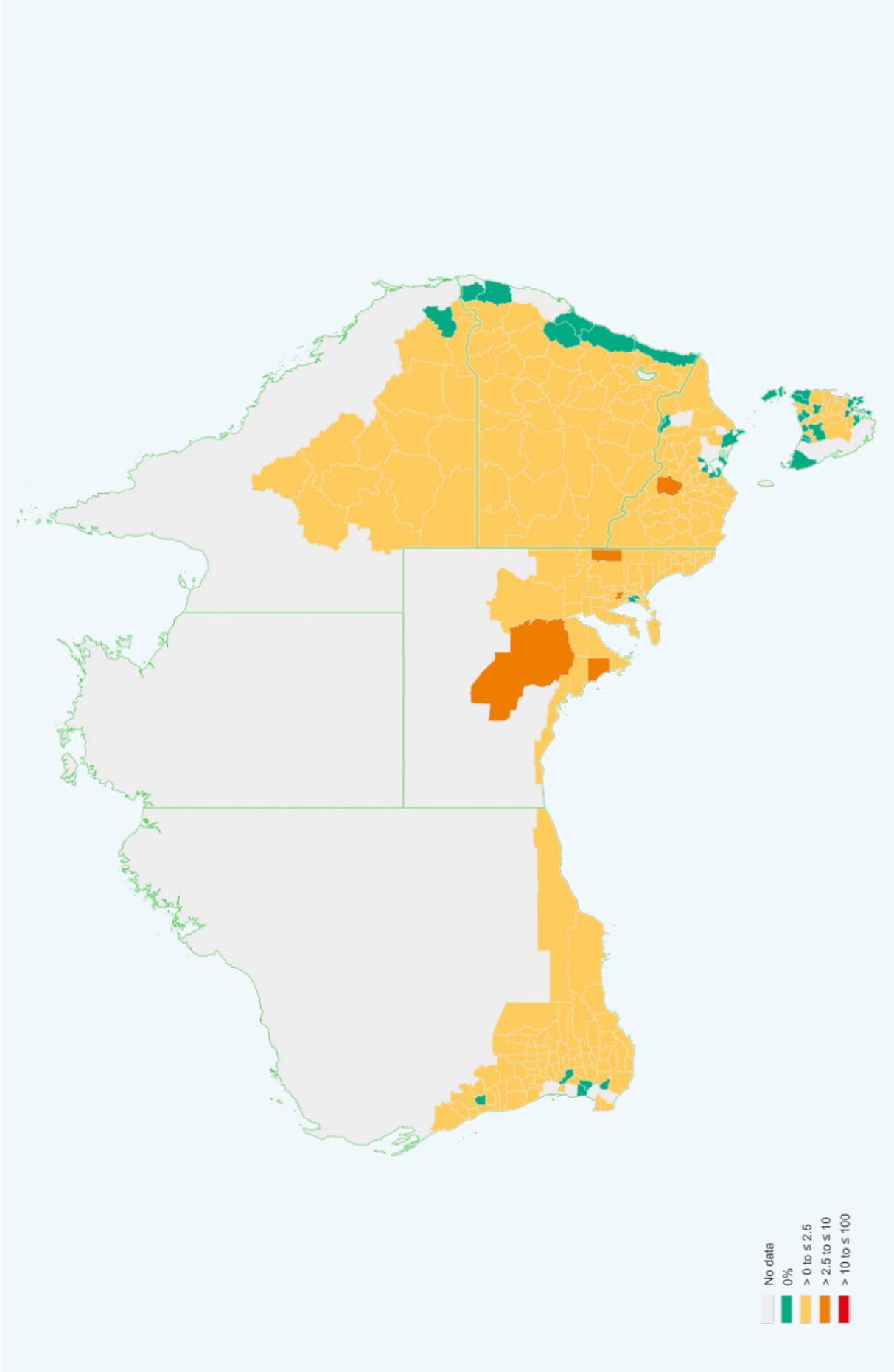


Figure 10: Percentage of sheep affected by bruising in each LGA in 2024-25

CHEESY GLAND

Cheesy gland (or caseous lymphadenitis – CLA) is a bacterial disease that results in the formation of lymph node abscesses throughout the body. Most commonly these abscesses are superficial, but they can also be found in the lungs, liver, spleen and kidneys. The abscesses are initially puss filled, which dries over time and becomes “cheesy” progressing to multi-layered capsules resembling “onion rings”.

Cheesy gland causes decreased wool production, increased wool contamination, chronic infection which causes ill thrift, emaciation, and can affect reproductive performance.

Cheesy gland can result in a decrease in carcase weight and increased carcase trimming at the abattoir.

The proportions of total inspected sheep and lambs affected by cheesy gland are both unchanged from the previous FY year (Table 8). The percentage of PICs with at least one reported case of cheesy gland was highest in Victoria (Figure 11). Victoria also saw the largest proportion of inspected sheep with cheesy gland at 2.5%, followed by South Australia at 1.6% (Figure 12).

Table 8: The number of sheep inspected and affected by cheesy gland during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	100,630 = 1%	96,560 = 0.8%	77,382 = 0.8%
Total <2yr animals affected	7,947 = 0.1%	8,669 = 0.1%	3,744 = 0.1%

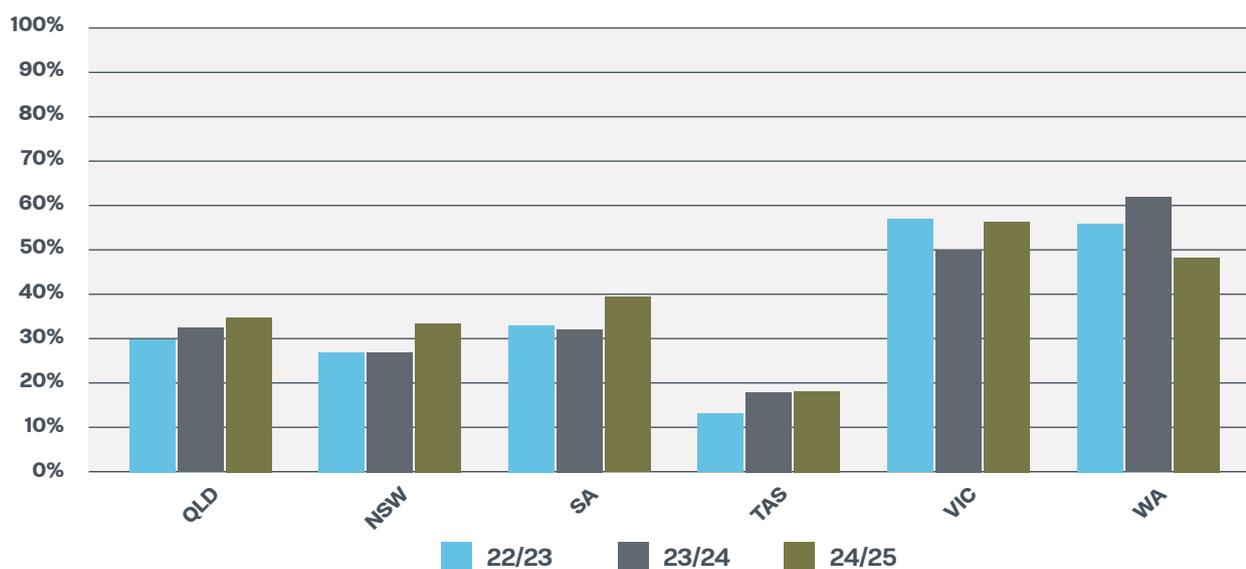


Figure 11: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by cheesy gland in 2022–25

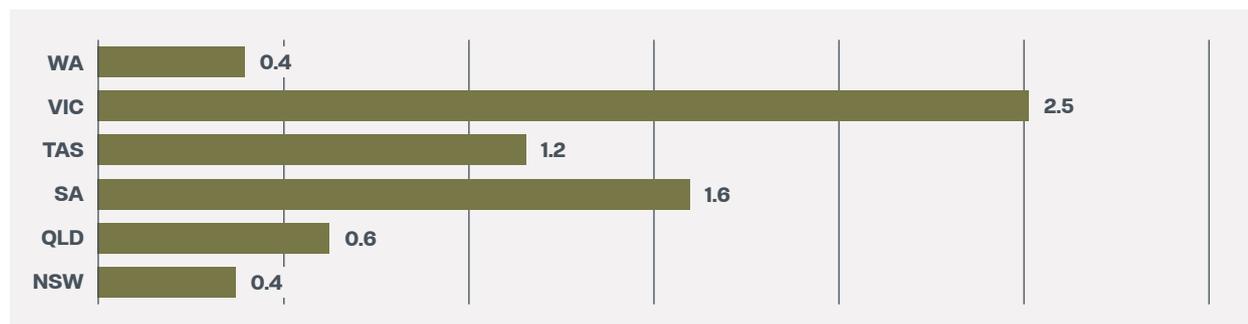


Figure 12: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by cheesy gland in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

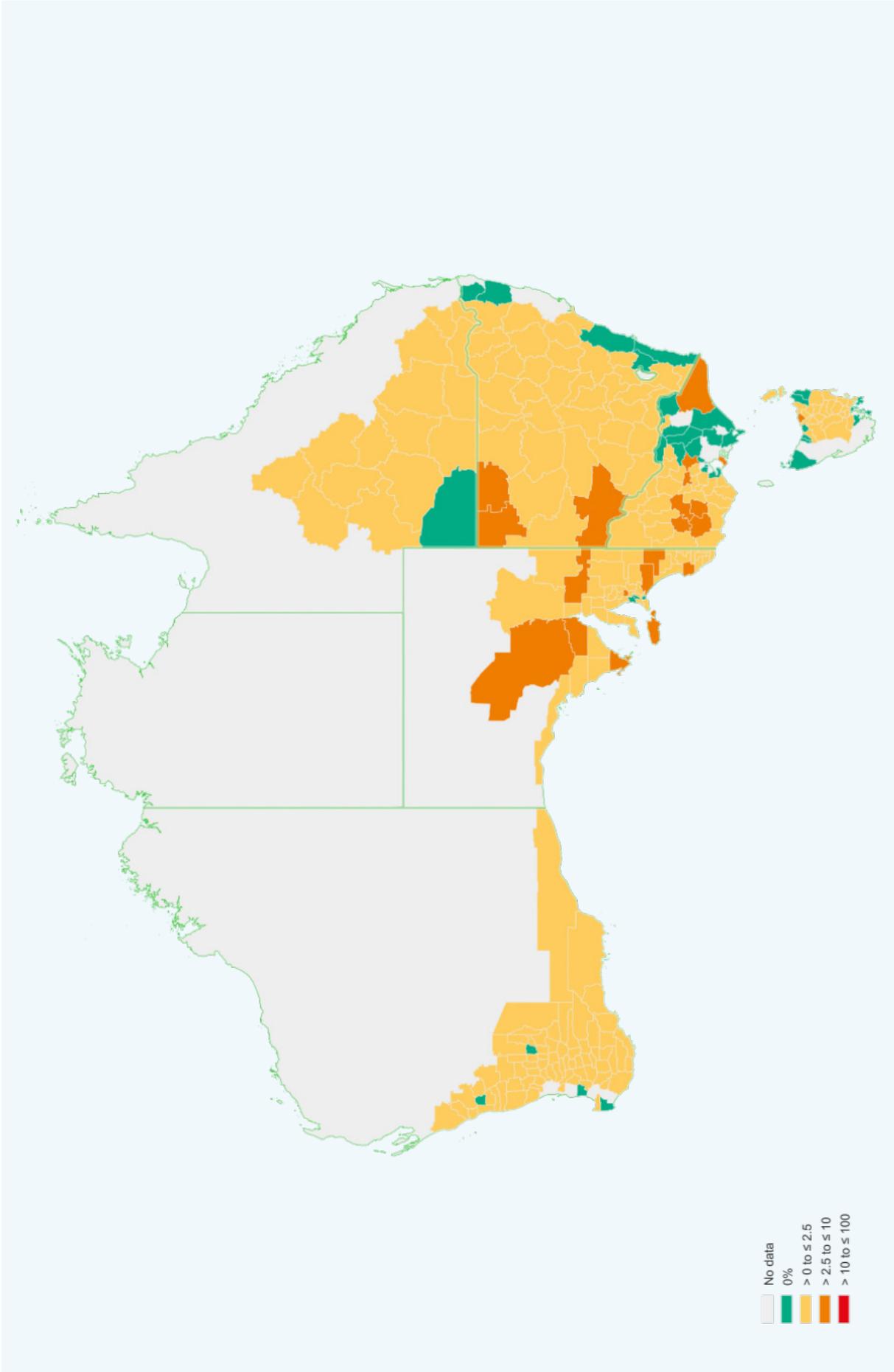


Figure 13: Percentage of sheep affected by cheesy gland in each LGA in 2024-25

GRASS SEEDS

Grass seeds embedded in the carcase due to spear, brome, barley, silver and Chilean needle grasses cause weaner ill thrift, infections and/or death, reduction in wool production and wool value.

Grass seeds also cause trimming of the carcase and a decrease in meat and skin value.

The total number of sheep carcasses affected by grass seeds decreased by 0.4% in the 2024–25 FY compared to the previous year (Table 9). The total number of affected lambs also reduced from 1.3% in the 2023–24 FY to 0.5% in the 2024–25 FY.

Figure 14 shows a decrease in the percentage of PICs affected by grass seeds in most states, except for Victoria and Queensland. The percentage of affected PICs in Western Australia showed the largest decrease compared to the previous FY, dropping by 5%. The state with the highest proportion of sheep affected by grass seeds was South Australia, with 3.3% of inspected sheep having the condition (Figure 15). This is four times more than Victoria, the state that follows.

Table 9: The number of sheep inspected and affected by grass seeds during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	103,455 = 1.1%	119,777 = 1.0%	56,652 = 0.6%
Total <2yr animals affected	79,743 = 1.4%	86,274 = 1.3%	26,339 = 0.5%

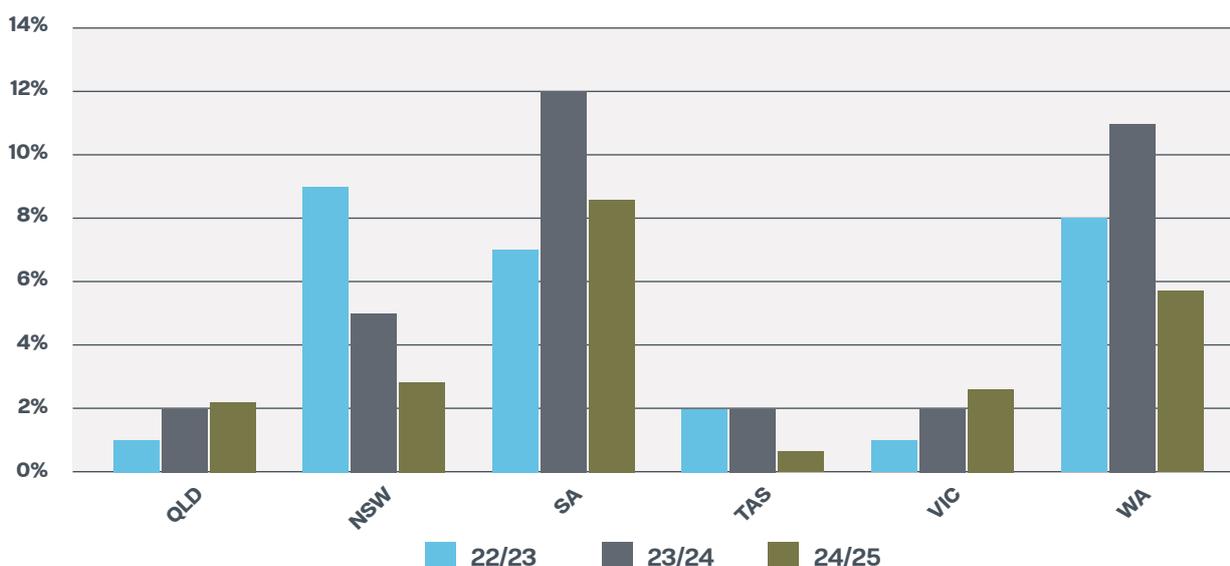


Figure 14: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by grass seeds in 2022–25

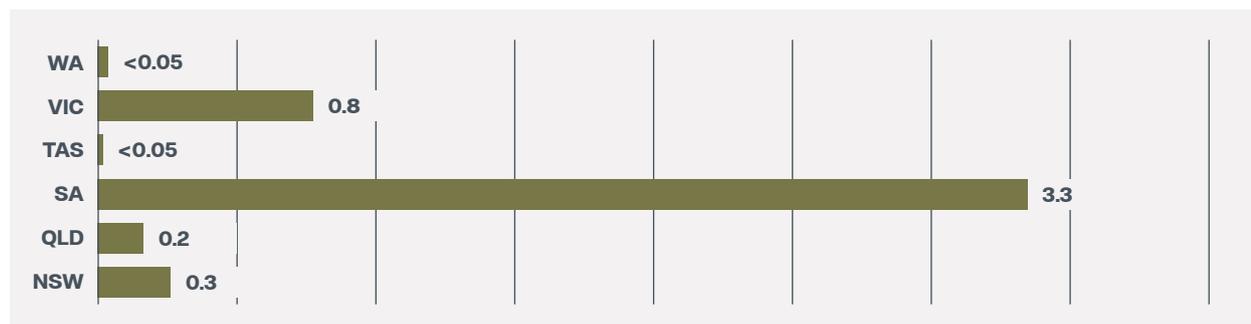


Figure 15: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by grass seeds in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

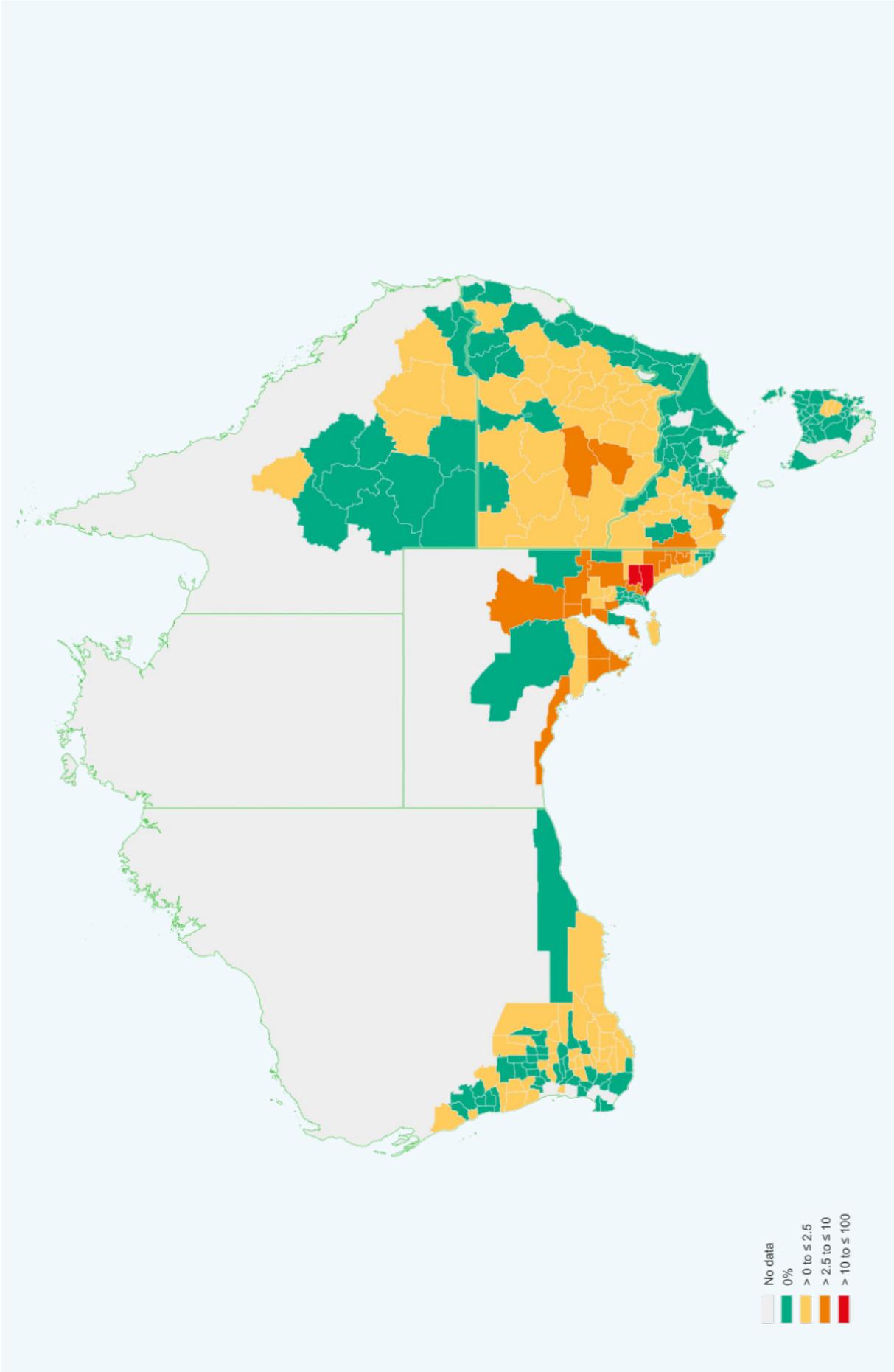


Figure 16: Percentage of sheep affected by grass seeds in each LGA in 2024-25

KNOTTY GUT

Knotty gut (also called pimply gut) is a condition of the intestines caused by the larval stage of the nodule worm (*Oesphagostomum columbianum*). These lesions can range from small gritty lesions 2-3mm in diameter, to pea sized cysts. Nodule worm eggs and larvae are particularly sensitive to cold weather and drying out, so tend to only exist in areas with predominately summer rainfall.

Affected intestines are unsuitable for sausage casings.

Knotty gut has decreased by 0.1% in sheep and 0.2% in lambs during the 2024–25 period (Table 10). Knotty gut was only seen in a small number of PICs, the most being found in Queensland with 13% of PICs having at least one case of the condition during 2024–25, followed by South Australia with 7% (Figure 17). The condition was observed in less than 0.01% of inspected sheep in Western Australia, Victoria and Tasmania (Figure 18). Queensland has the highest percentage of affected sheep with approximately 1.5% of animals recorded with the condition.

Table 10: The number of sheep inspected and affected by knotty gut during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	34,171 = 0.3%	46,068 = 0.4%	24,959 = 0.3%
Total <2yr animals affected	15,621 = 0.3%	23,201 = 0.3%	5,232 = 0.1%

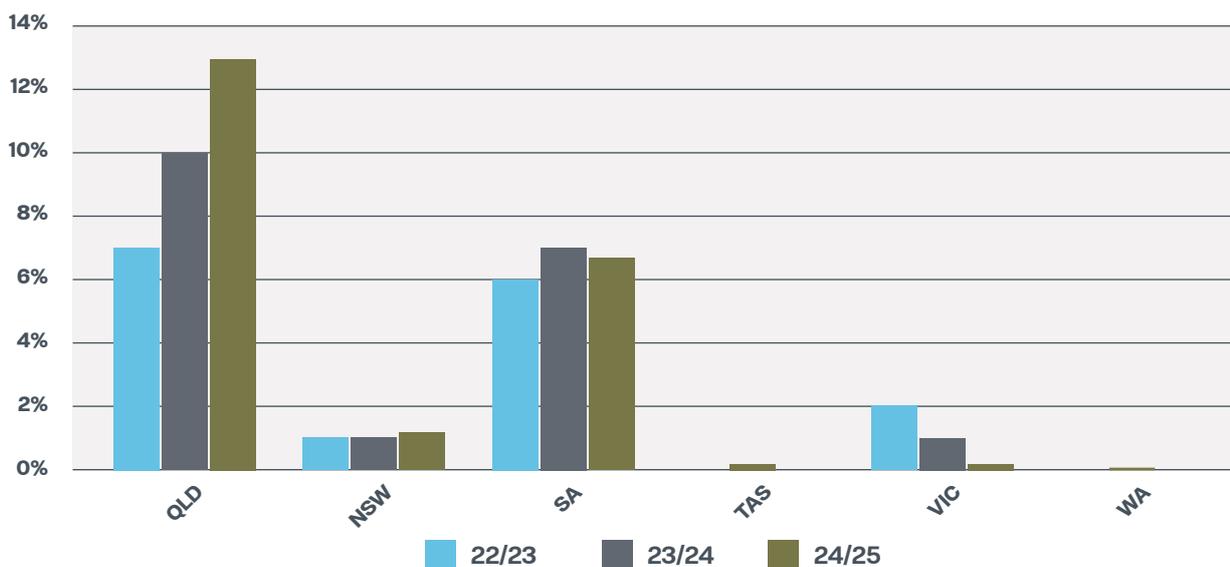


Figure 17: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by knotty gut in 2022–25



Figure 18: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by knotty gut in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

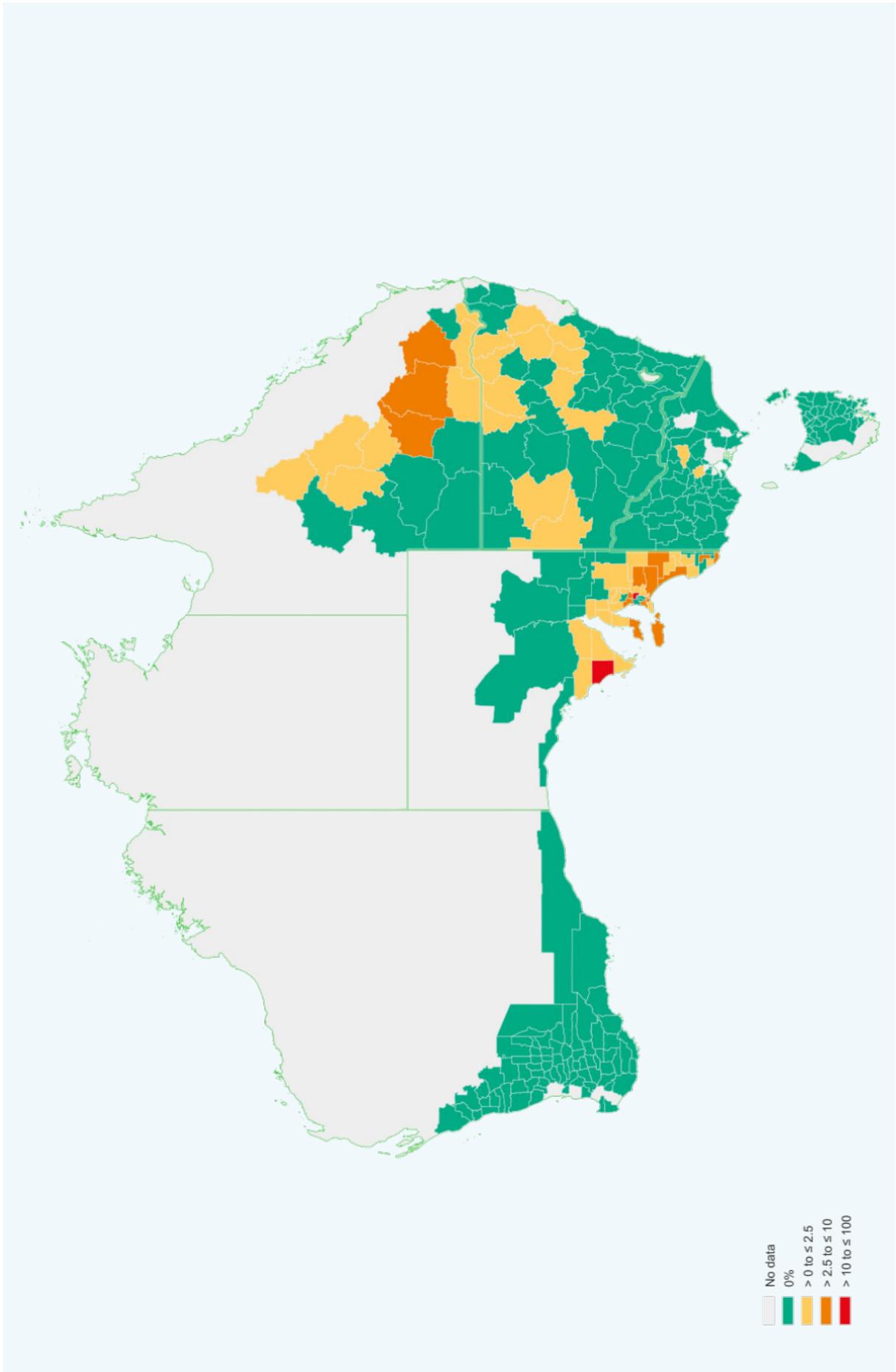


Figure 19: Percentage of sheep affected by knotty gut in each LGA in 2024-25

LIVER FLUKE

Liver fluke are large, flatworm parasites that infect sheep and cattle in high rainfall areas and irrigated areas of eastern Australia. A permanent water source and specific snails are required for the liver fluke life cycle to occur.

Affected livers are condemned at abattoirs and in some rare cases, whole carcasses can be condemned.

The percentage of total inspected sheep with liver fluke has slightly decreased by 0.1% over the last financial year, and by 0.2% for sheep <2 years

(Table 11). Liver fluke was not identified in Western Australia and only a small percentage of PICs in South Australia and Victoria reported the condition (Figure 20). For the last three FYs, New South Wales has had the highest percentage of PICs with at least one case of the condition. This year, New South Wales was closely followed by Tasmania at 15% and 14% of PICs, respectively.

Tasmania had the largest percentage of total inspected sheep affected by liver fluke, with 1.8% of all sheep from direct lines in Tasmania having the condition (Figure 21).

Table 11: The number of sheep inspected and affected by liver fluke during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	89,784 = 0.9%	115,529 = 1.0%	86,859 = 0.9%
Total <2yr animals affected	63,895 = 1.1%	85,217 = 1.2%	43,168 = 1%

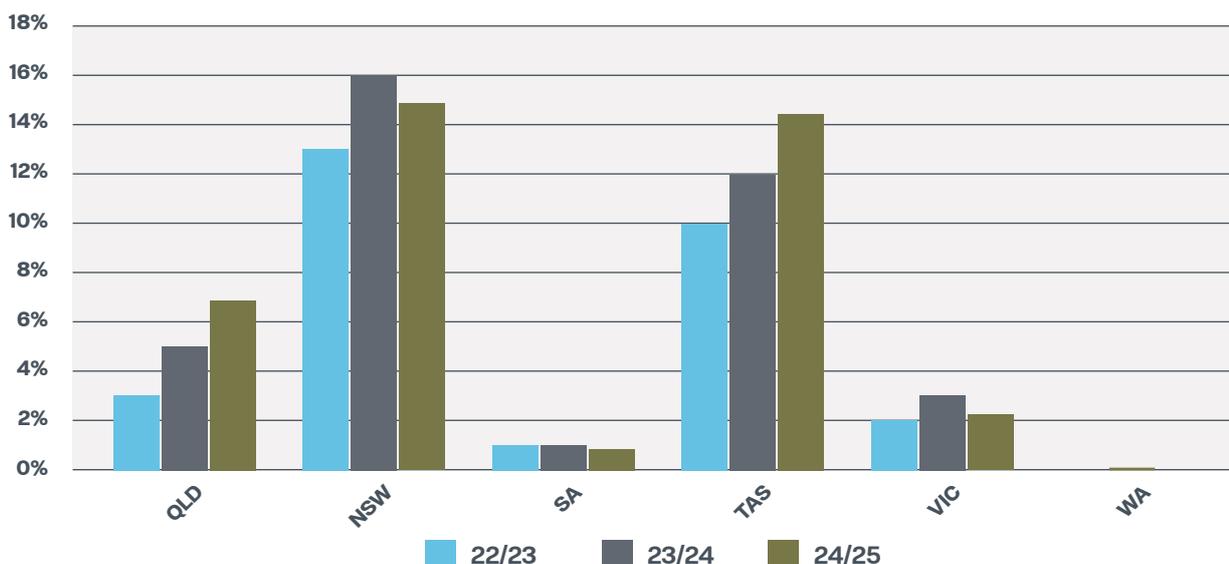


Figure 20: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by liver fluke in 2022–25

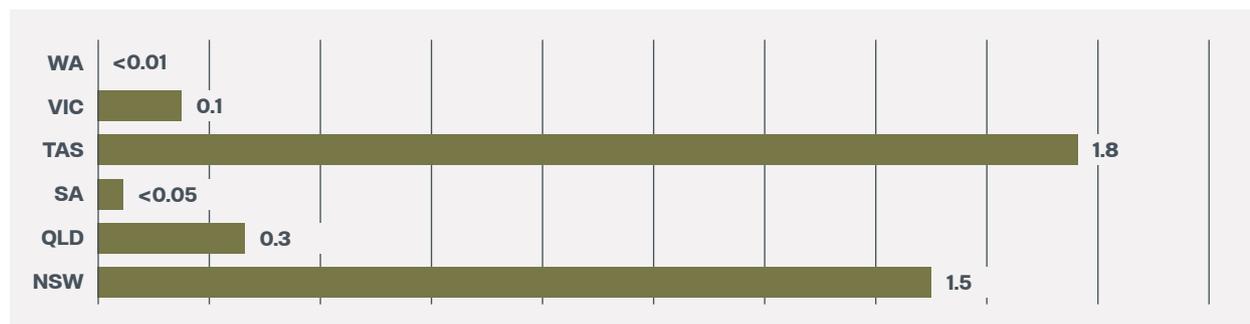


Figure 21: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by liver fluke in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

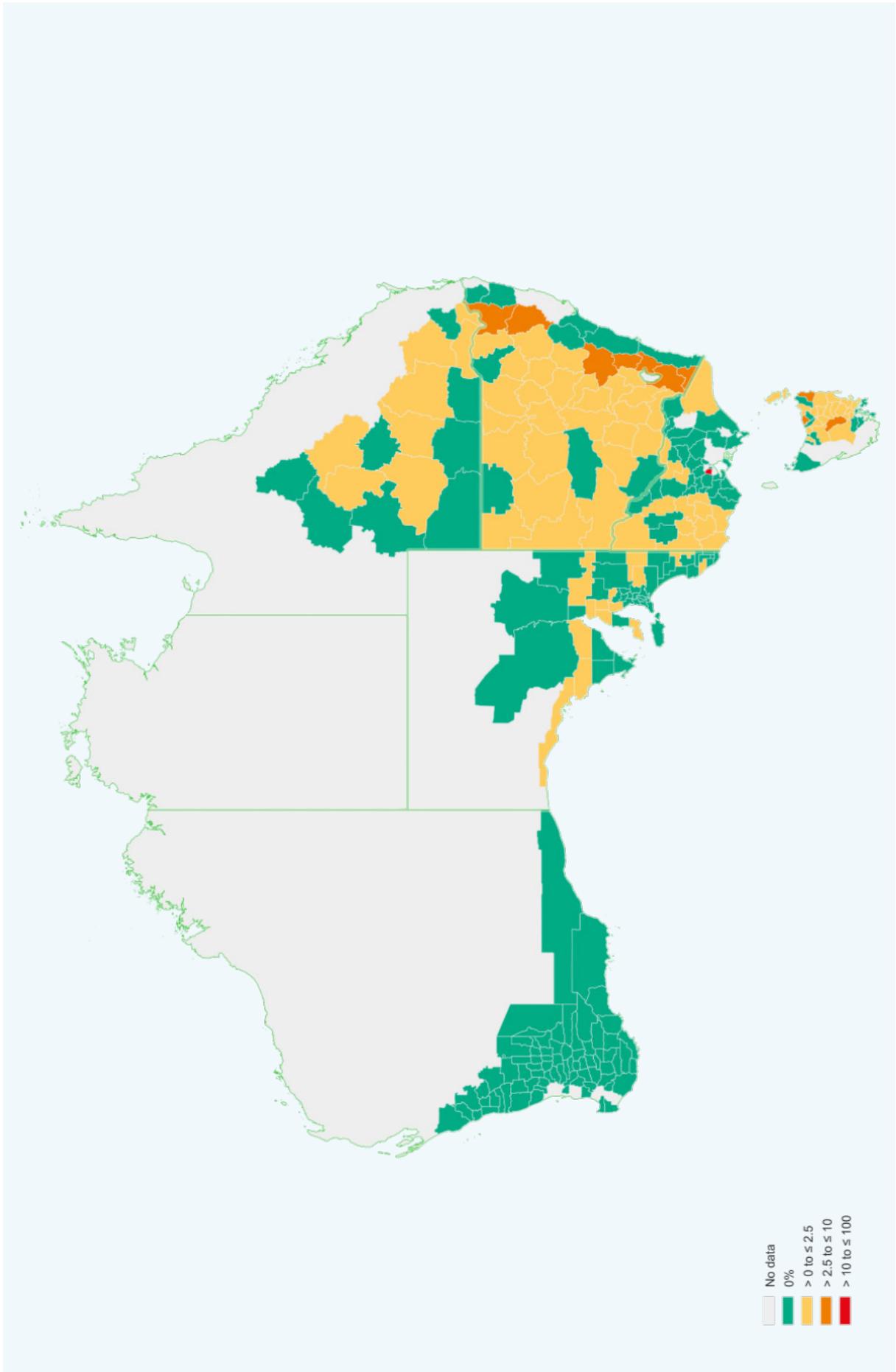


Figure 22: Percentage of sheep affected by liver fluke in each LGA in 2024-25

LUNGWORM

Lungworm is a condition caused by the ingestion of the lungworm, *mulleurius capillaris*, that develop in the tissue of the lungs. This species of lungworm has a lifecycle that includes snails and is different from the one that inhabits the bronchi. Lungworm has no impact on sheep health or productivity.

At the abattoir, lungs of infected sheep are condemned.

The total number of sheep affected by lungworm decreased by 0.7% in the 2024–25 FY compared to the previous year. There was also a decrease

of 0.6% in lambs affected by lungworm (Table 12). This year 22% of participating PICs in South Australia had at least one case of lungworm (Figure 23). All other states had a relatively low proportion of PICs that identified the condition.

South Australia had the largest percentage of sheep affected by lungworm, with 4.3% of inspected sheep found to have the condition (Figure 24). This is at least 14 times more than Victoria, the state that followed.

Table 12: The number of sheep inspected and affected by lungworm during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	86,002 = 0.9%	145,094 = 1.2%	53,382 = 0.5%
Total <2yr animals affected	35,630 = 0.6%	59,364 = 0.9%	15,515 = 0.3%

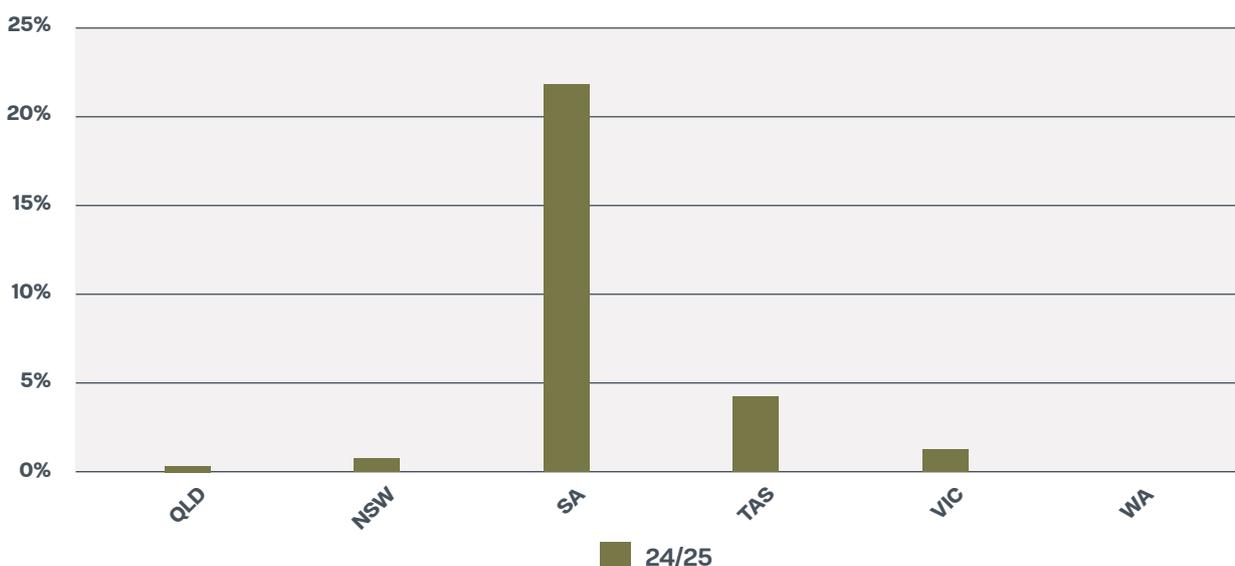


Figure 23: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by lungworm in 2024–25

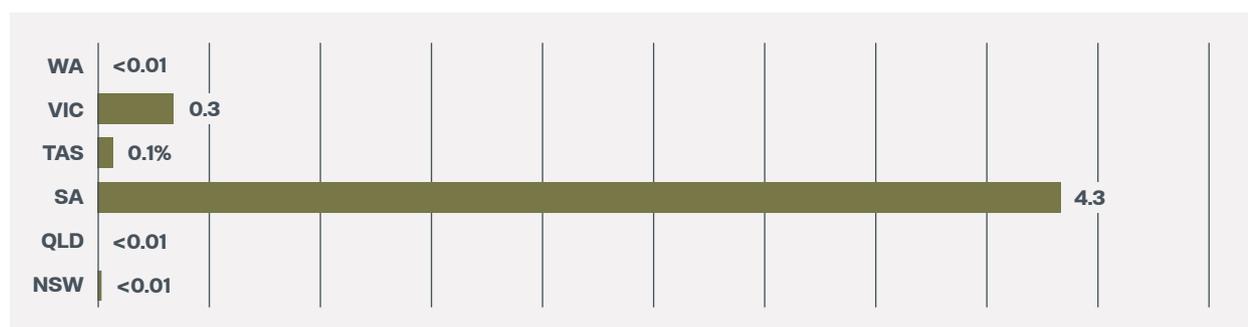


Figure 24: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by lungworm in 2024–25 (direct lines only).

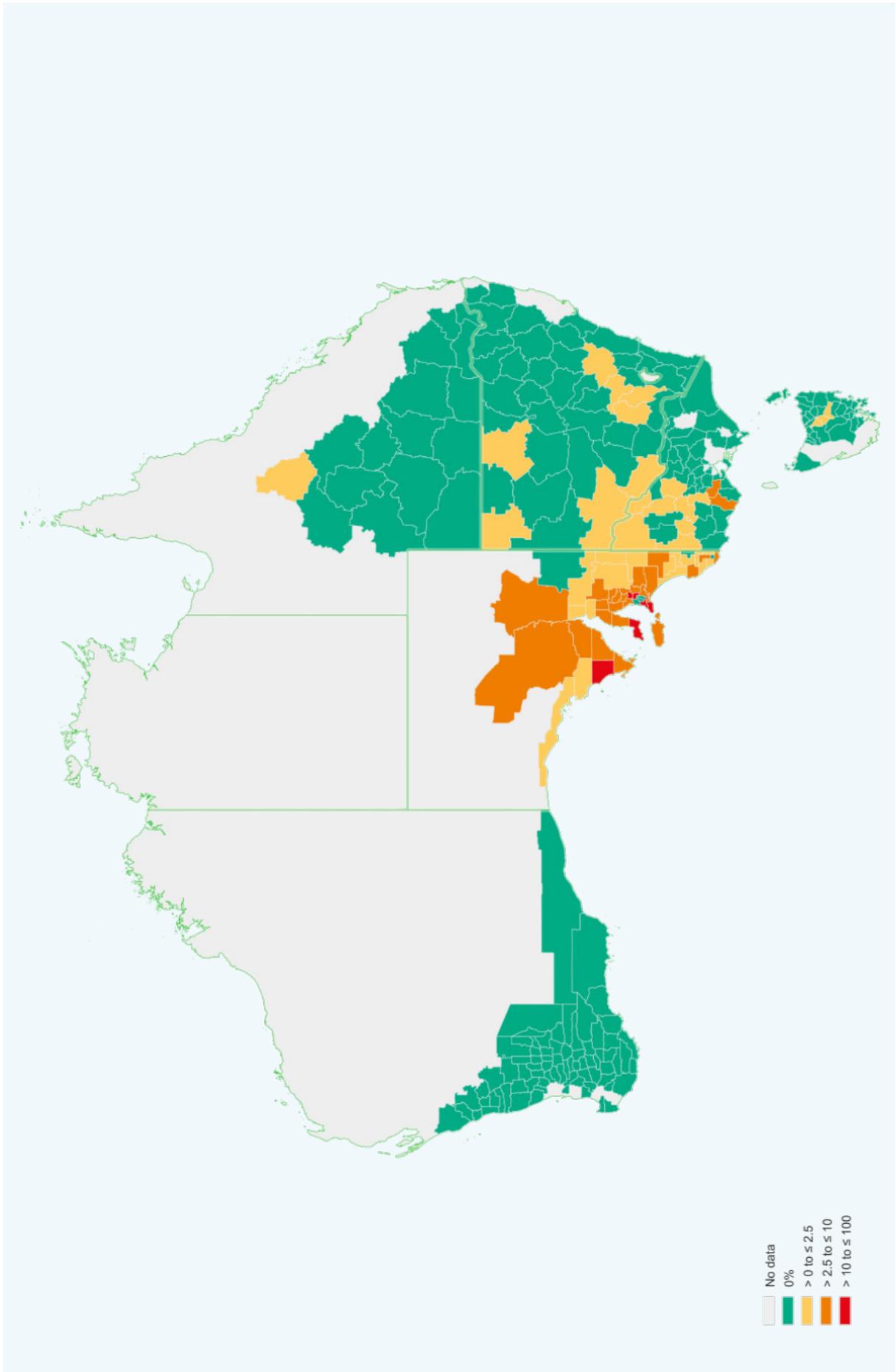


Figure 25: Percentage of sheep affected by lungworm in each LGA in 2024–25

NEPHRITIS

Nephritis is the inflammation of the kidneys, which can be caused by different factors such as infections (viral or bacterial), plant compounds or toxins. It is more commonly reported in lambs and is not normally associated with any clinical signs, although it can reduce the growth and performance of lambs. Kidneys showing any abnormalities may be recorded in this condition.

Affected kidneys are condemned, and in rare severe cases where kidney failure has occurred, whole carcass condemnation may occur.

Nephritis was the second most reported condition in the 2024–25 FY. The occurrence of total inspected sheep with nephritis for this reporting period has increased to 2.3% from 1.4% the previous year (Table 13). The percentage of PICs with at least one affected animal also increased in New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania (Figure 26).

Figure 27 shows that the state with the highest percentage of total sheep with nephritis was Queensland (6.8%), followed by New South Wales (3.7%).

Table 13: The number of sheep inspected and affected by nephritis during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	125,860 = 1.3%	169,361 = 1.4%	225,004 = 2.3%
Total <2yr animals affected	106,779 = 1.9%	148,969 = 2.2%	210,453 = 4.4%

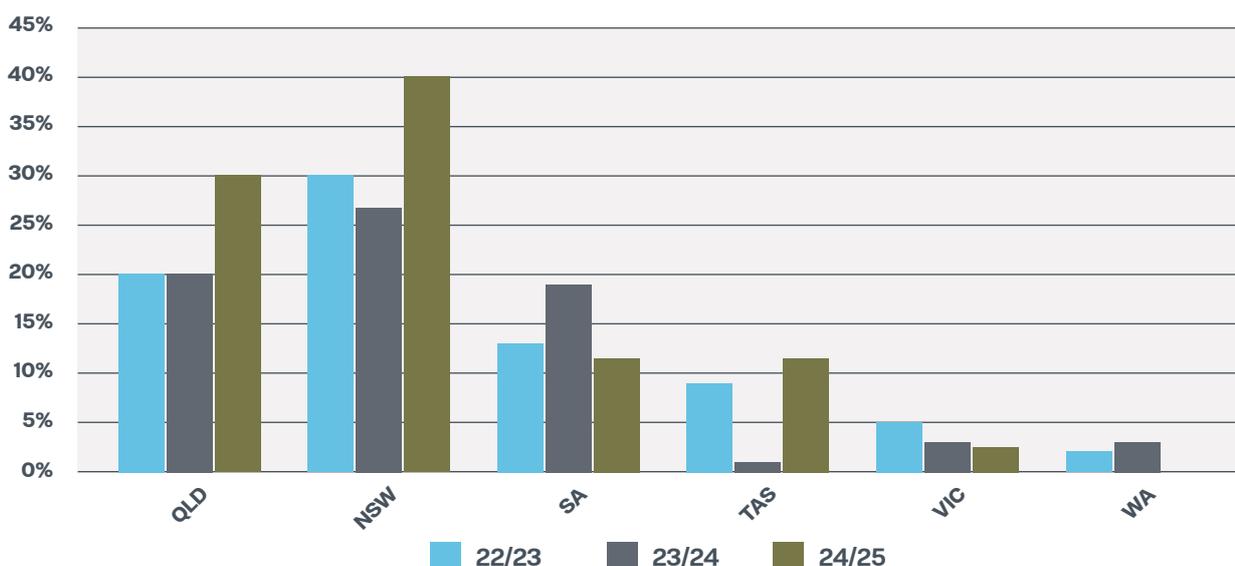


Figure 26: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by nephritis in 2022–25

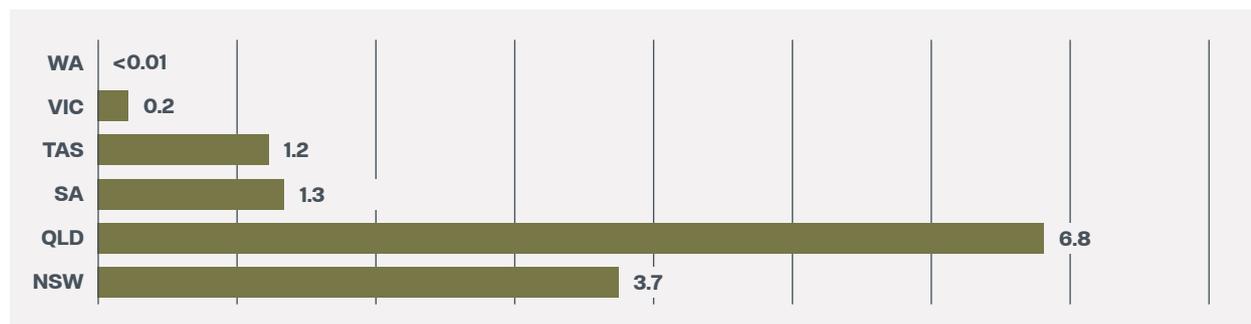


Figure 27: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by nephritis in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

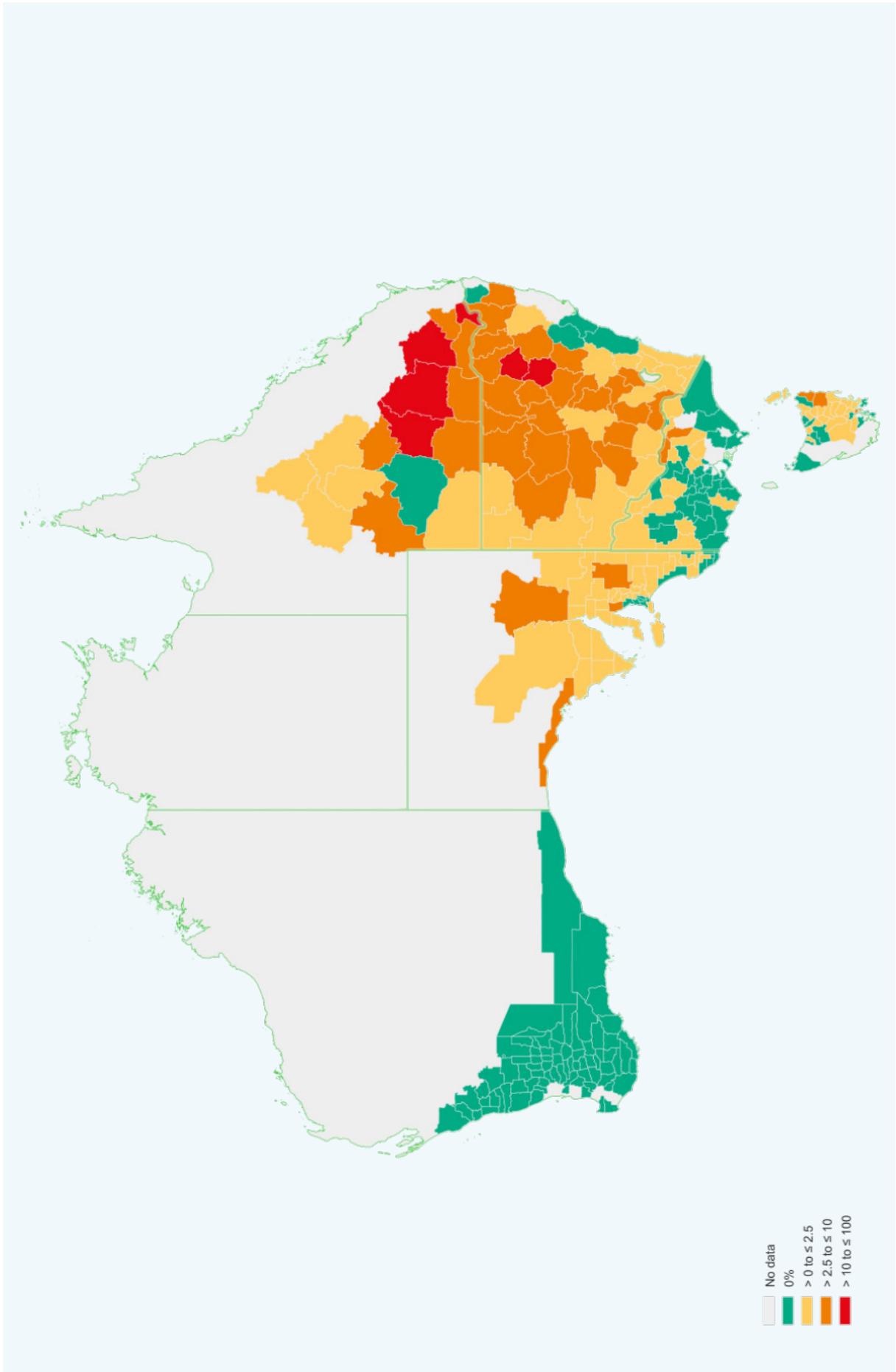


Figure 28: Percentage of sheep affected by nephritis in each LGA in 2024-25

PLEURISY

In severe cases of pneumonia, infection can extend to the outer layer of the lung, the pleura, causing a disease called pleurisy. This can cause adhesion of the lungs to the chest wall as the infection spreads in the sheep.

Affected carcasses will require additional trimming which can include damage to the valuable rib rack, significantly de-valuing the carcass.

In the 2024–25 FY, the percentage of total sheep affected by pleurisy decreased by 0.2% compared

to the previous two FYs (Table 14). There was also a slight decrease of 0.1% in the percentage of sheep <2 years that had the condition. Victoria and Western Australia continue to have the highest percentage of PICs with at least one case of the condition, at 84% and 80%, respectively (Figure 29). Tasmania has closely followed in the previous two years but this number decreased by 27% in the 2024–25 FY. Victoria saw the highest percentage of affected animals, with 5.7% of inspected animals displaying the condition (Figure 30).

Table 14: The number of sheep inspected and affected by pleurisy during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	181,697 = 1.8%	211,103 = 1.8%	158,075 = 1.6%
Total <2yr animals affected	59,054 = 1.0%	68,753 = 1.0%	41,457 = 0.9%

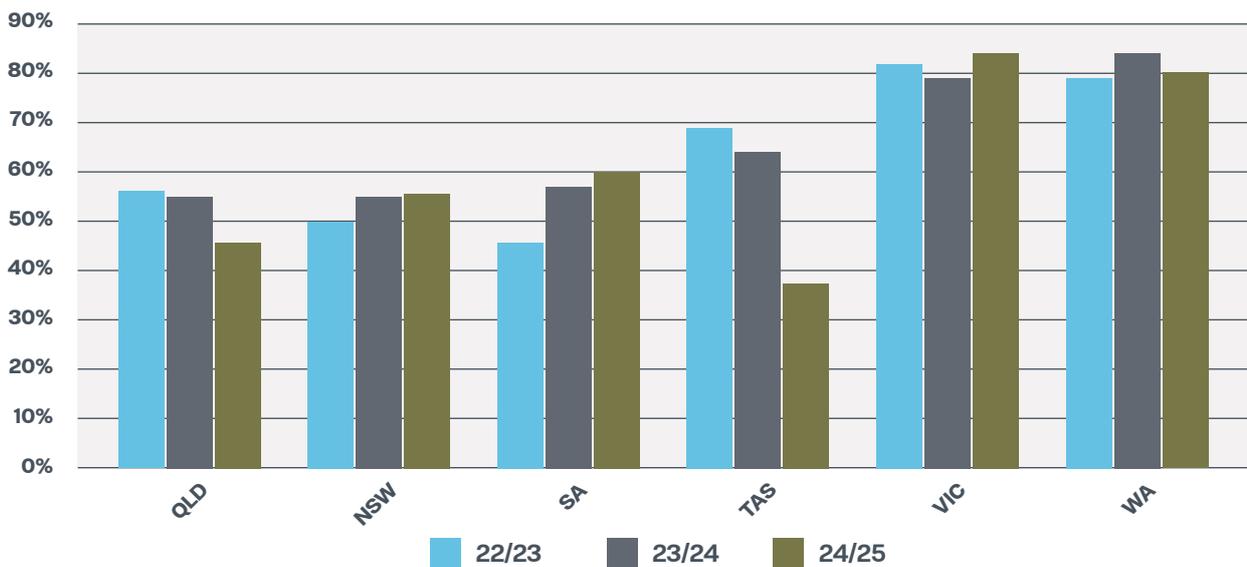


Figure 29: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by pleurisy in 2022–25

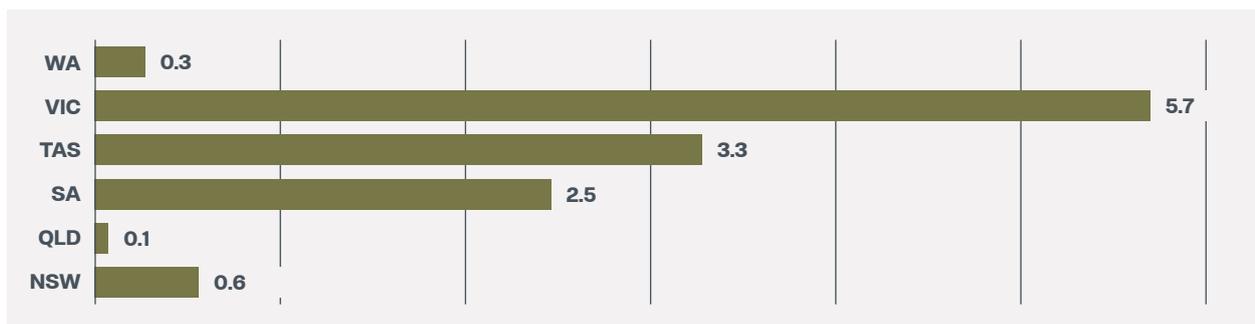


Figure 30: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by pleurisy in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

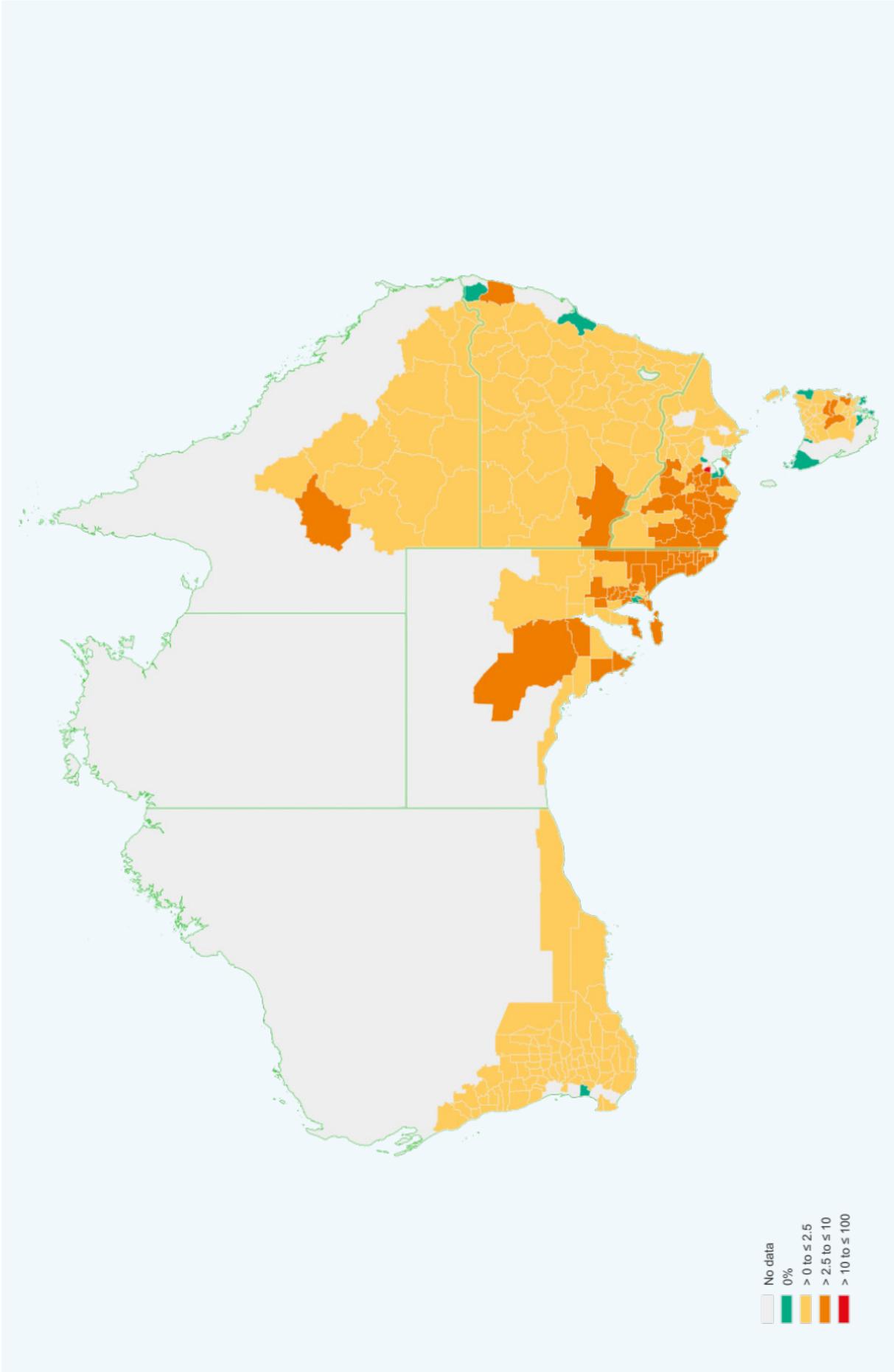


Figure 31: Percentage of sheep affected by pleurisy in each LGA in 2024-25

PNEUMONIA

Pneumonia in sheep is inflammation of the lungs, initially caused by an infection with a bacterium (especially *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae*) or virus. Lungworm can also lead to pneumonia when followed by a secondary bacterial infection. The disease can be limited to isolated cases but may also present as outbreaks, particularly in weaners over the summer season. Production losses can be seen on farm with affected lambs being on average 3 kg lighter.

Lungs will be condemned, and any surrounding affected tissue will be trimmed (see pleurisy).

The percentage of total inspected sheep with pneumonia has decreased by 0.3% from the previous year (Table 15), while the percentage of affected lambs decreased by 0.4%. The condition is most widespread in Western Australia, with 35% of PICs reporting at least one case of the condition, decreasing from 46% in the previous year (Figure 32). Only a relatively small proportion of inspected sheep in Western Australia had pneumonia (0.2%), indicating that the affected animals are occurring in small quantities across many PICs (Figure 33). South Australia had the highest percentage of sheep affected by pneumonia (0.8%), which was closely followed by Victoria (0.6%).

Table 15: The number of sheep inspected and affected by pneumonia during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	51,585 = 0.5%	74,191 = 0.6%	28,193 = 0.3%
Total <2yr animals affected	41,563 = 0.7%	62,469 = 0.9%	22,233 = 0.5%

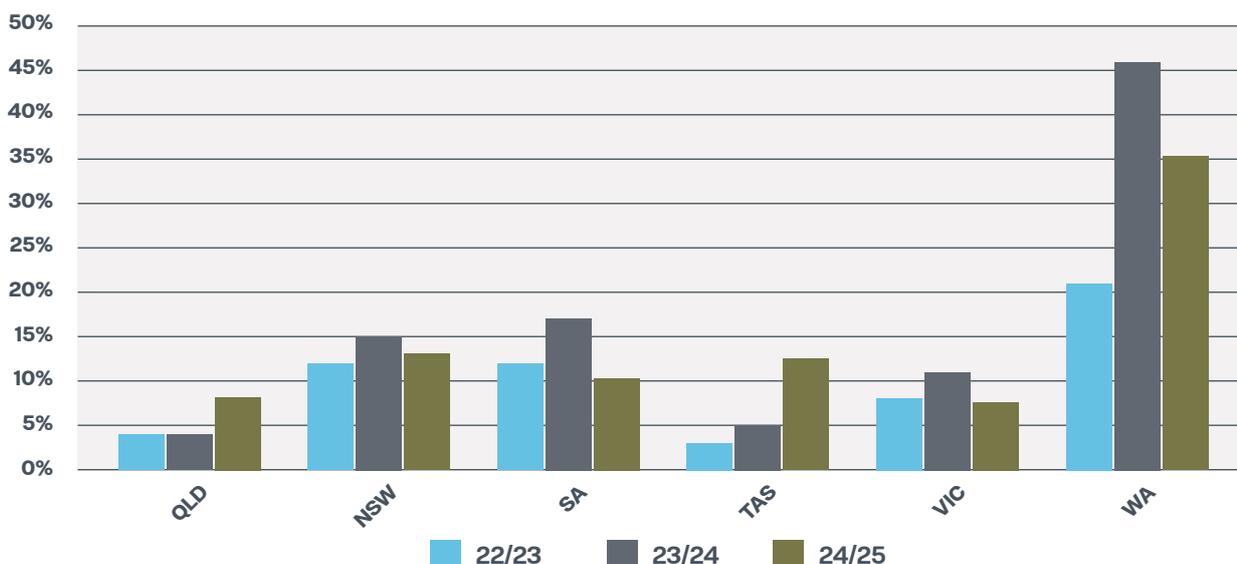


Figure 32: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by pneumonia in 2022–25

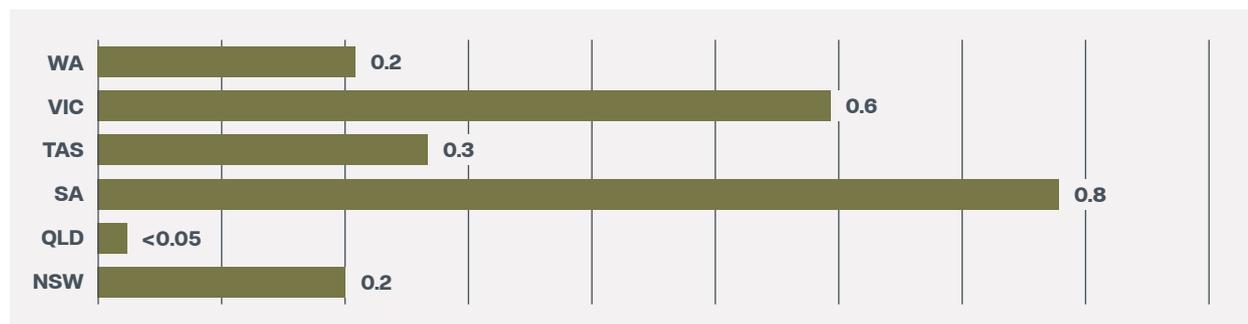


Figure 33: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by pneumonia in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

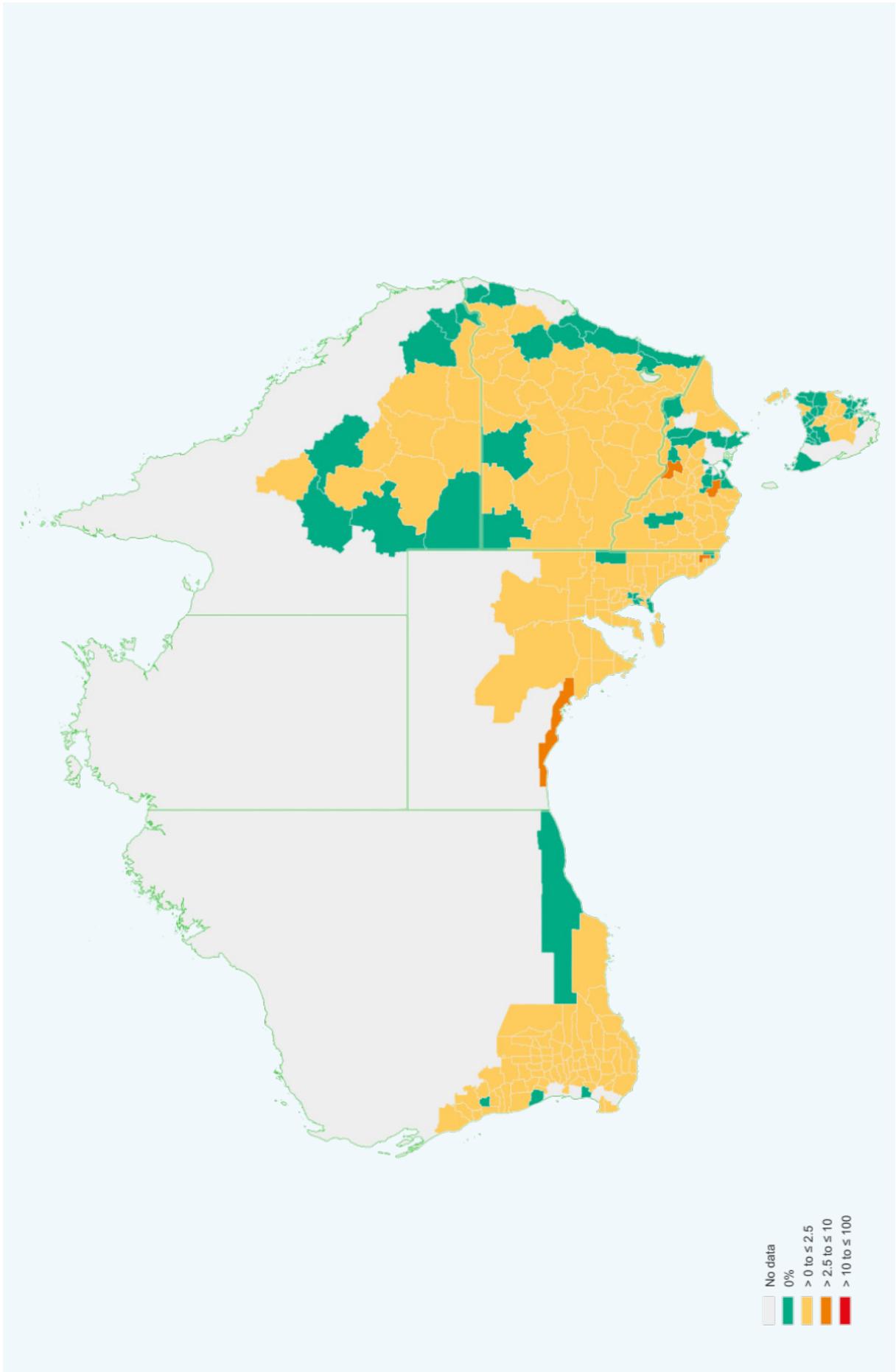


Figure 34: Percentage of sheep affected by pneumonia in each LGA in 2024-25

SARCOCYSTOSIS

Sarcocystosis is a disease caused by *Sarcocystis*, a single cell parasite with a sheep-cat life cycle. Cats become infected when they eat infected sheep meat, often through scavenging carcasses. The parasite develops in the intestines of the cat and they produce large quantities of microscopic spores in their faeces. The life cycle continues when sheep ingest these spores on pasture or feed, eventually localising and developing into cysts in the muscle. Sarcocystosis has no impact on sheep health or productivity.

At the abattoirs, affected carcasses will undergo trimming.

The percentage of total inspected sheep with sarcocystosis remains low, sitting at 0.1% in the 2024–25 FY, and the percentage of affected lambs has decreased to 0.01% from 0.3% (Table 16). The percentage of PICs reporting at least one affected animal has been steadily reducing in Tasmania, reaching 9% in 2024–25 (Figure 35). Overall, most states have maintained a low percentage of PICs reporting the condition. South Australia has the highest percentage of affected sheep, with 0.7% of inspected sheep in this state affected by sarcocystosis (Figure 36).

Table 16: The number of sheep inspected and affected by sarcocystosis during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	23,837 = 0.2%	29,839 = 0.2%	10,415 = 0.1%
Total <2yr animals affected	5,739 = 0.1%	1,797 = 0.3%	567 = 0.01%

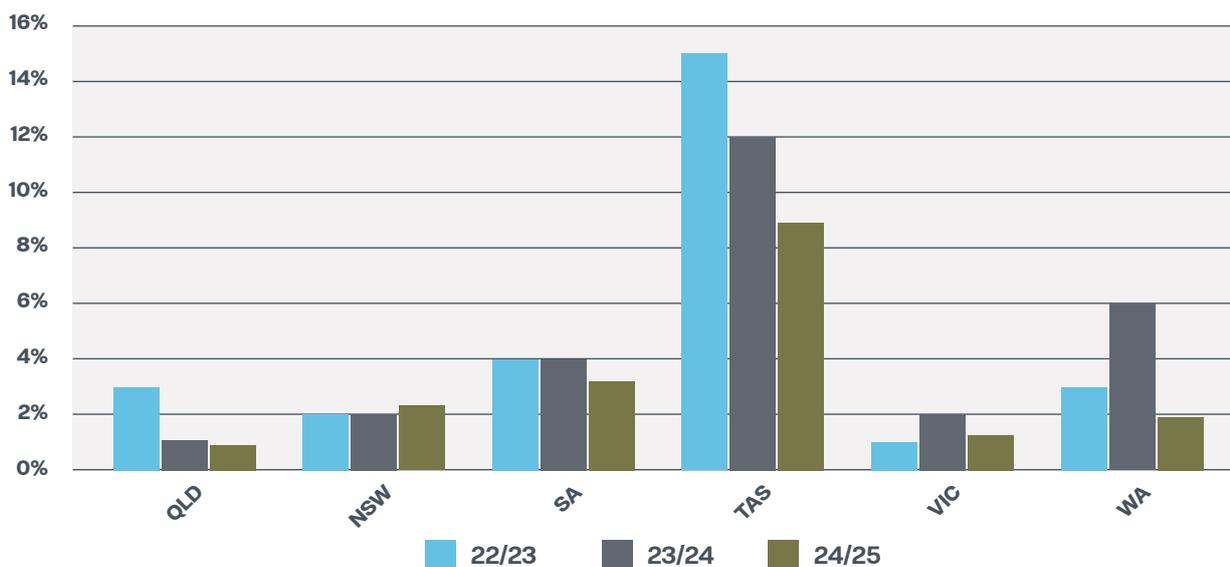


Figure 35: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by sarcocystosis in 2022–25

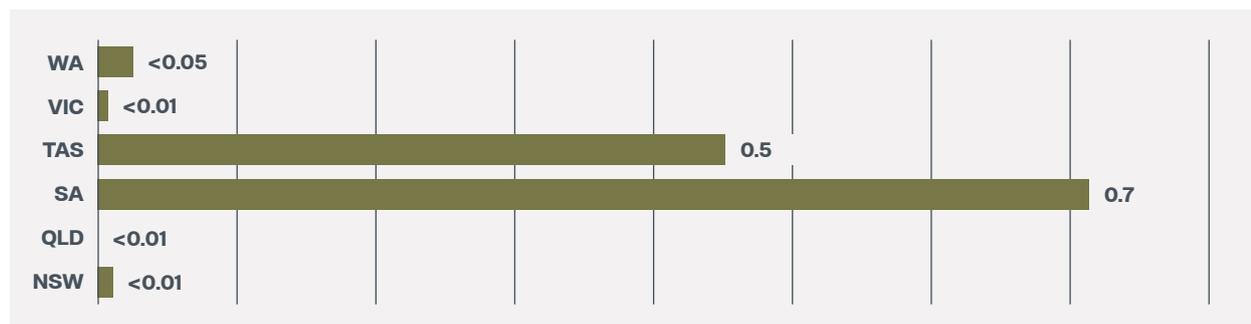


Figure 36: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by sarcocystosis in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

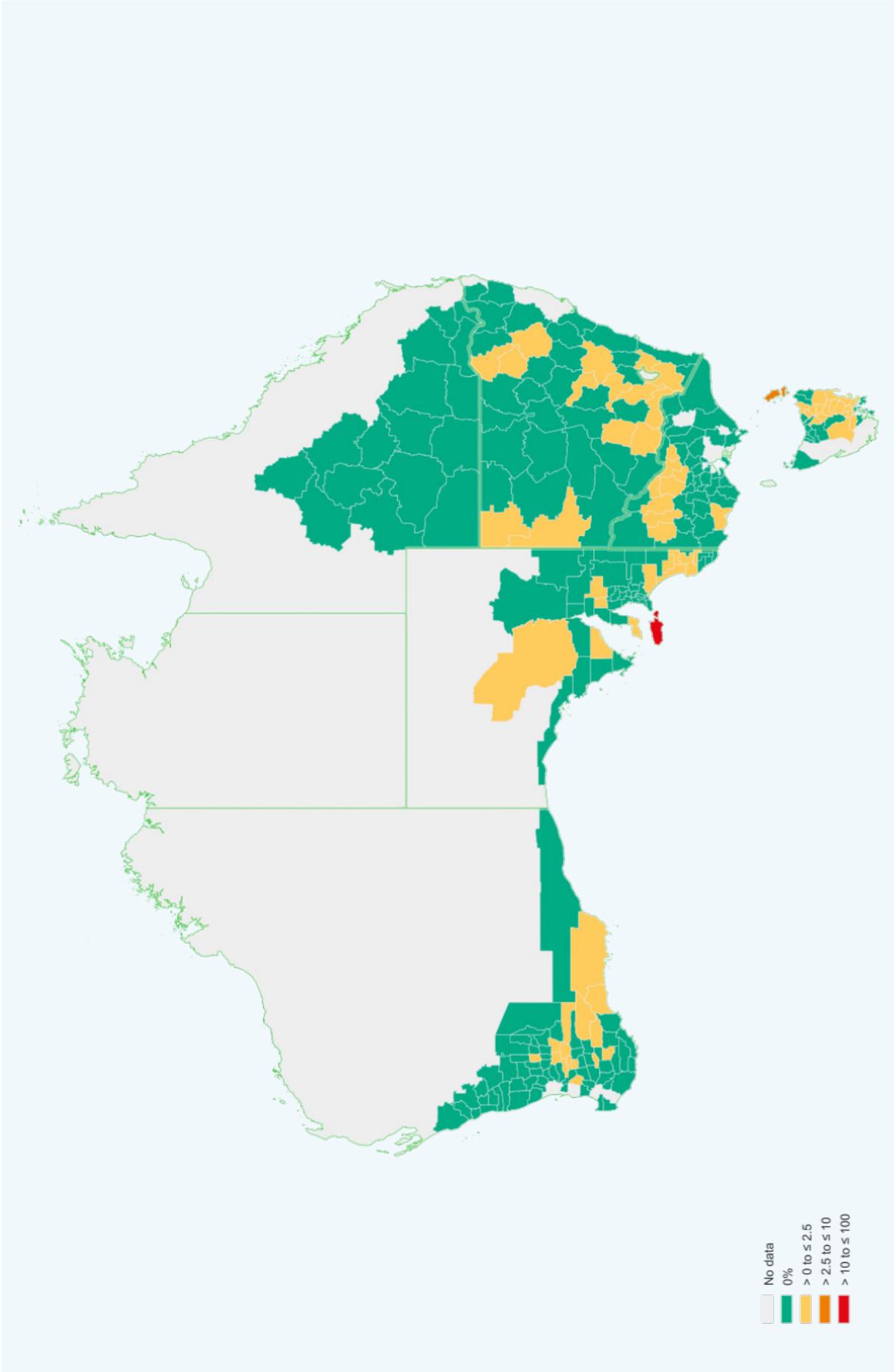


Figure 37: Percentage of sheep affected by sarcocystosis in each LGA in 2024-25

SHEEP MEASLES

Sheep measles (*Cysticercus ovis*) are infective cysts from the dog tapeworm *Taenia ovis*, found in the muscles of sheep and goats.

At the abattoirs, infected carcasses will undergo trimming while carcasses with more than five cysts will be condemned.

The total proportion of inspected sheep with sheep measles in 2024–25 reduced slightly by 0.1% compared to the previous year (Table 17). However, the percentage of affected lambs is unchanged at 1.0%. Sheep measles is a fairly widespread

condition and is seen on a relatively large number of properties (Figure 38). Western Australia has the highest proportion of affected PICs, with 78% of properties having at least one case of sheep measles. This was closely followed by Victoria, with 73% of PICs affected.

South Australia has the highest percentage of affected animals, with 2.4% of inspected animals in this state having sheep measles (Figure 39). This was followed by Victoria and Tasmania, which both showed 2.2% of inspected sheep affected by the condition.

Table 17: The number of sheep inspected and affected by sheep measles during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	138,619 = 1.4%	163,862 = 1.4%	129,415 = 1.3%
Total <2yr animals affected	54,347 = 0.9%	66,814 = 1.0%	51,105 = 1.0%

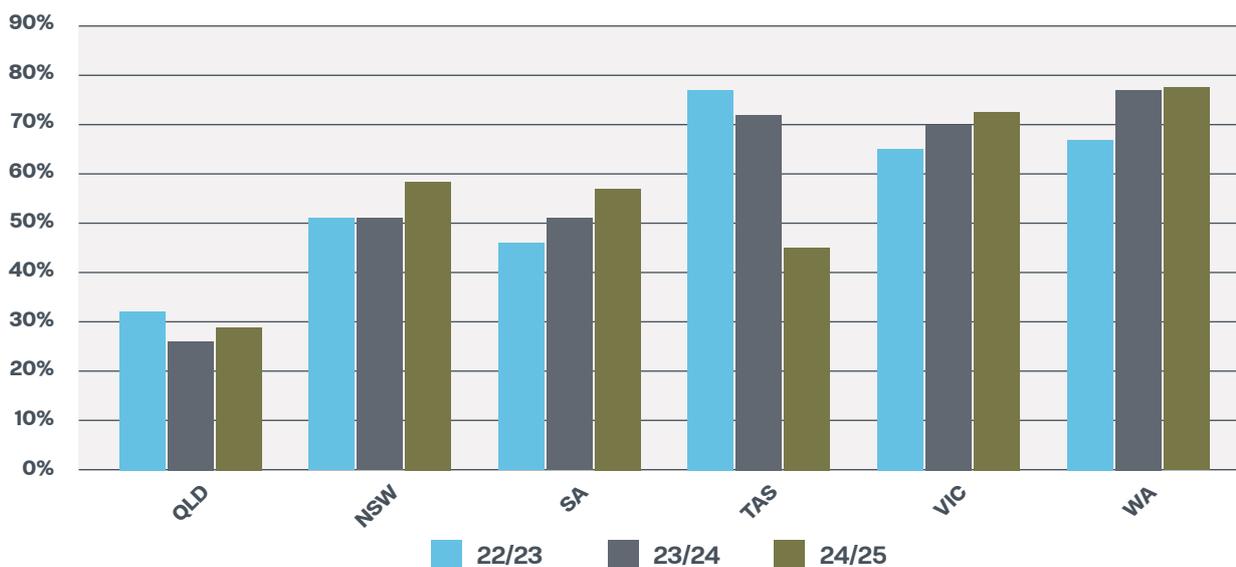


Figure 38: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by sheep measles in 2022–25

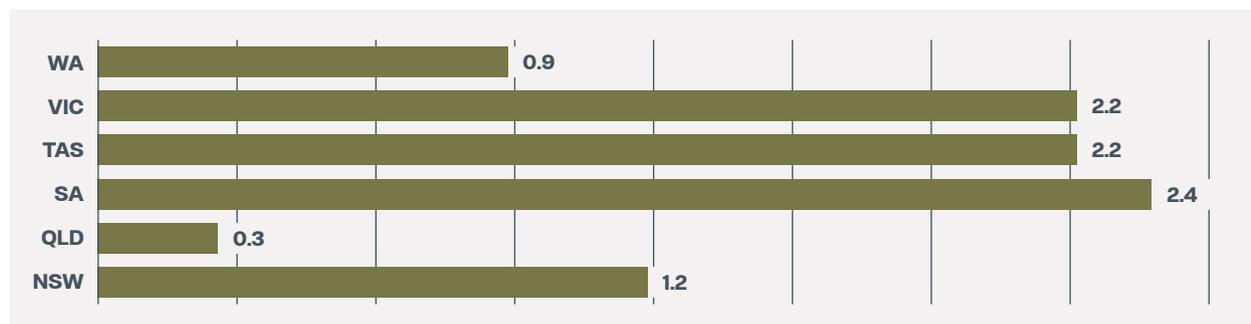


Figure 39: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by sheep measles in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

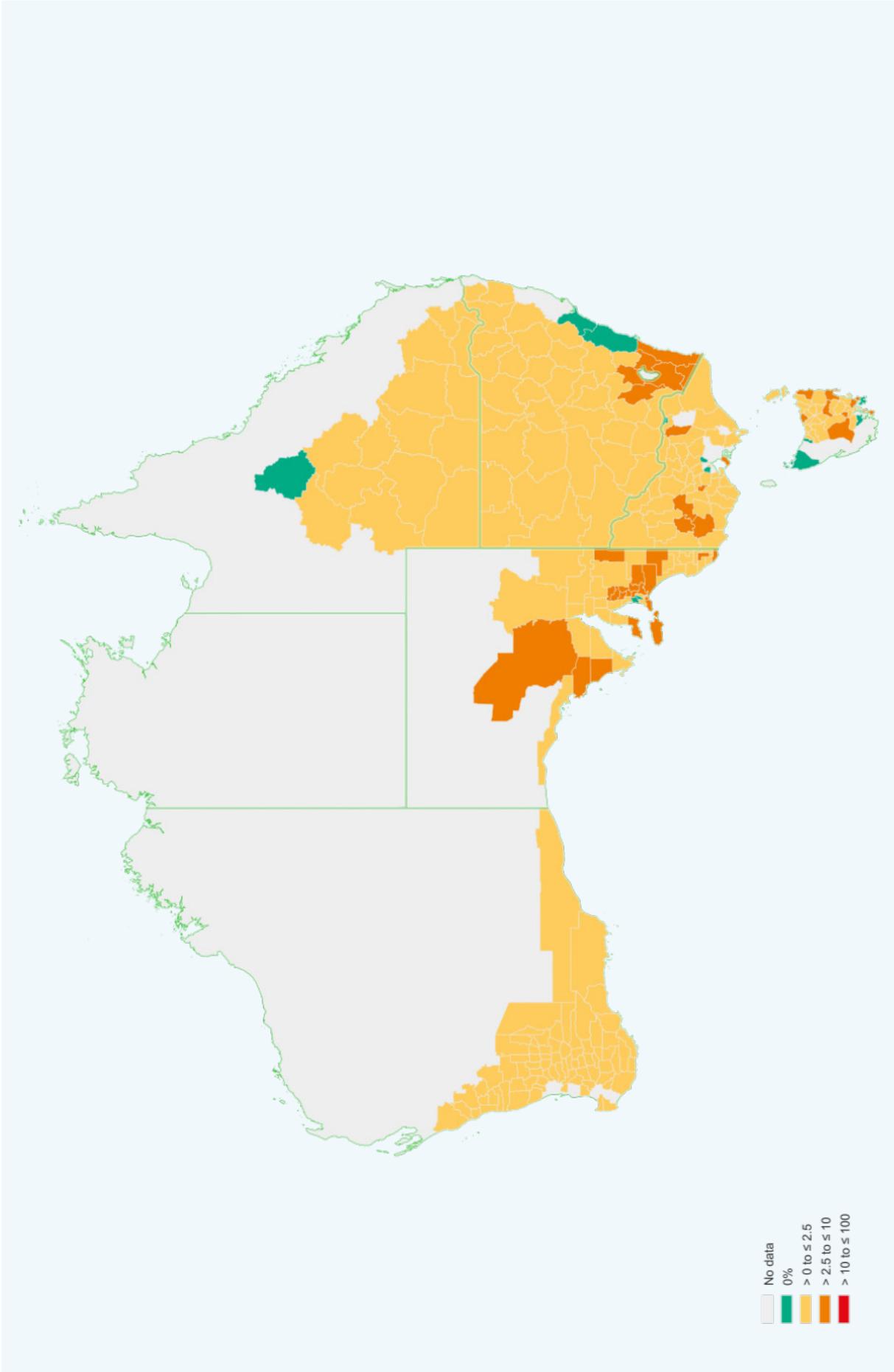


Figure 40: Percentage of sheep affected by sheep measles in each LGA in 2024-25

VACCINATION LESIONS

Vaccination lesions can be caused by improper technique, poor hygiene or using a contaminated vaccine. The accidental introduction of bacteria or dirt with the vaccine results in infection which can lead to abscess formation. Some vaccines used can also be very reactive in the tissue and need to be injected with the correct technique and in the correct location.

At the abattoir, vaccination lesions are trimmed from the carcase.

The total number of sheep with vaccination lesions has remained unchanged from the previous year,

at 1.1% (Table 18). The proportion of lambs affected by vaccination lesions continued to decrease, dropping to 0.6% for this reporting period. The highest percentage of affected PICs remains in Victoria, with at least one affected animal occurring on 44% of PICs (Figure 41).

Victoria also saw the highest percentage of total affected animals, with 5.7% of inspected sheep in this state having vaccination lesions (Figure 42). This was followed by Tasmania at 3.3% and South Australia at 2.5%

Table 18: The number of sheep inspected and affected by vaccination lesions during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	120,620 = 1.2%	134,465 = 1.1%	112,871 = 1.1%
Total <2yr animals affected	82,537 = 1.4%	66,959 = 1.0%	28,617 = 0.6%

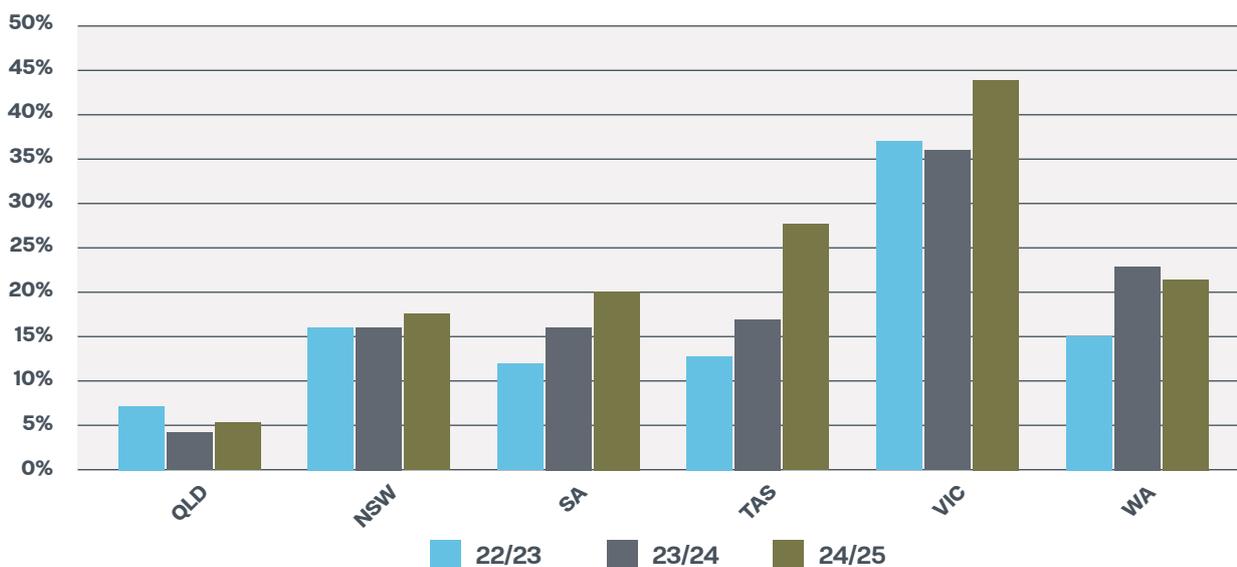


Figure 41: The percentage of PICs inspected in each state that had at least one animal affected by vaccination lesions in 2022–25

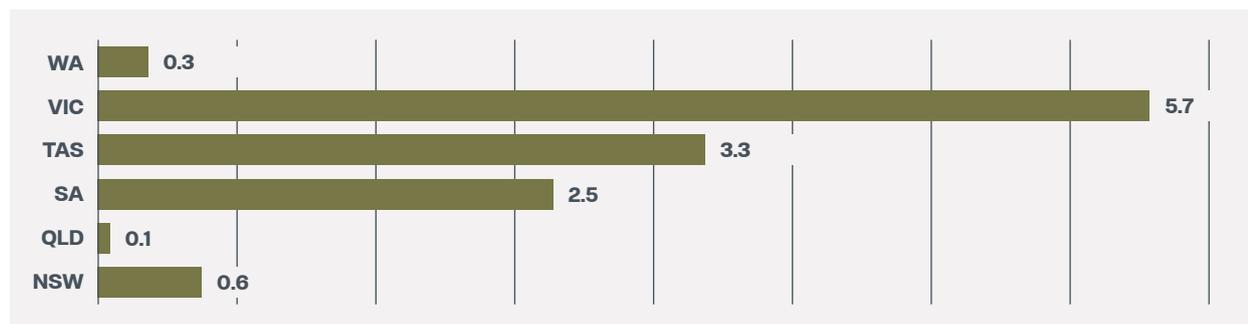


Figure 42: The percentage of animals inspected in each state that were affected by vaccination lesions in 2024–25 (direct lines only)

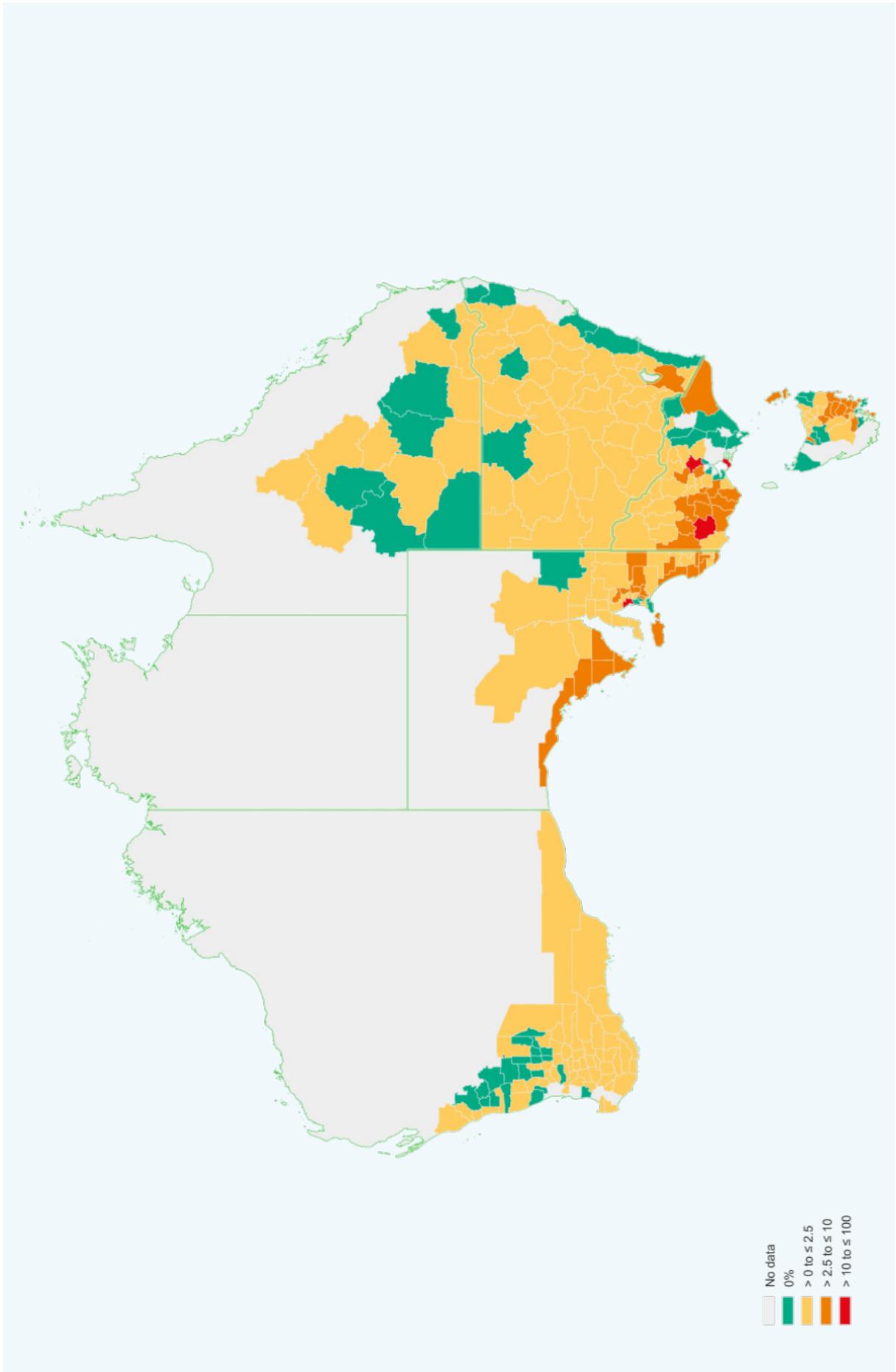


Figure 43: Percentage of sheep affected by vaccination lesions in each LGA in 2024-25

CONDITIONS WITH PREVELANCE ≤ 0.1%

Cirrhosis

Cirrhosis is the chronic damage of liver tissue as a result of other diseases and conditions such as liver fluke. Sheep affected by cirrhosis may also have lost condition or show other signs of illness.

Affected livers are discarded at the abattoir.

Table 19: The number of sheep inspected and affected by cirrhosis during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	7,370 = 0.08%	4,220 = 0.04%	2,528 = 0.03%
Total <2yr animals affected	1,987 = 0.03%	1,864 = 0.03%	486 = 0.01%

Dog bites

Dog bites occur as a result of un-muzzled or incorrectly muzzled dogs with access to sheep, either in the paddock, yards or during transport. Some may have occurred from previous wild dog attacks on farm. Abattoirs require dogs to be muzzled at all times. Dog bites usually occur in the hind quarters, but also can occur on the face or along the back. The Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Sheep states: 'A person in charge of a dog that habitually bites sheep must ensure the dog is muzzled while working sheep'.

Carcases of sheep with dog bites are usually trimmed to the nearest joint which may be the entire hind leg, resulting in a significant reduction in dressed weight. Occasionally whole carcasses are condemned when wounds are infected, and the animal is showing evidence of septicaemia (blood poisoning).

Table 20: The number of sheep inspected and affected by dog bites during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	4,053 = 0.04%	4,359 = 0.04%	2,224 = 0.02%
Total <2yr animals affected	2,555 = 0.04%	2,119 = 0.03%	973 = 0.02%

Fever/septicaemia

Fever or septicaemia are likely to be signs of other illness or infection somewhere in the body.

As septicaemia is an infection of the body, whole carcasses will be condemned.

The percentage of sheep affected with fever and/or septicaemia remained stable at 0.01% in 2024-25.

Table 21: The number of sheep inspected and affected by fever/septicaemia during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	3,856 = 0.04%	1,559 = 0.01%	1,232 = 0.01%
Total <2yr animals affected	1,695 = 0.03%	496 = < 0.01%	387 = <0.01%

Hydatids

Hydatids are the large cysts from the dog hydatid tapeworm (*Echinococcus granulosus*) which develop mainly in the liver and/or lungs of infected sheep.

If infected, sheep organs will be condemned at the abattoir.

Table 22: The number of sheep inspected and affected by hydatids during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	1,402 = 0.01%	959 = < 0.01%	449 = <0.01%
Total <2yr animals affected	457 = 0.01%	516 = < 0.01%	178 = <0.01%

Rib fractures

Rib fractures can be caused by a number of factors and are likely linked to reduced bone density caused by nutritional deficiencies. Most cases occur in South Australia. Rib fractures can also be an indication of wider animal welfare problems. Safe handling practices and good nutrition (including correction of any mineral deficiencies) will help to prevent rib fractures.

Affected ribs and surrounding tissue is discarded, potentially impacting some of the high value meat cuts, reducing the value of the carcass.

Table 23: The number of sheep inspected and affected by rib fractures during 2022–25

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Total animals inspected	9,822,174	11,950,208	9,815,482
Total animals affected	13,333 = 0.1%	11,202 = 0.1%	4,509 = 0.05%
Total <2yr animals affected	8,821 = 0.2%	8,015 = 0.1%	2,224 = 0.05%

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