1. Queensland faces imminent, significant, and increasing biosecurity threats, including the detection of foot and mouth disease (FMD) and lumpy skin disease (LSD) in Indonesia. The estimated national economic cost of a large FMD outbreak is $80 billion over 10 years.
2. Goats, sheep, pigs and cattle are carriers of FMD and the disease can be transferred between them. A livestock identification system that meets the national standards for individual livestock traceability for these animals is critical in controlling an outbreak of such emergency animal diseases and in maintaining market access. Queensland has two legislated systems of livestock identification for cattle, pigs, sheep and goats – the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS), mandated under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*, which is crucial to traceability, and a legacy system of brands and earmarks, mandated under the *Brands Act 1915*, which generally no longer serves a biosecurity purpose.
3. NLIS requirements for cattle are based on individual electronic identification (eID), but mob- based identification is still in place for sheep and goats. Only 70 percent of sheep identified with mob-based visual tags can be traced back for 30 days compared to 99 per cent of sheep who have individual tags. Implementing eID for sheep and goats will help improve performance under the national standards for livestock traceability. Mandating eID for Queensland’s sheep and goat production sector will support its growth and also help protect Queensland’s cattle production sector from FMD as sheep and goats could be a vector for introduction of the disease to cattle.
4. A review of the *Brands Act 1915*, which regulates the use of brands and earmarks, is timely because there is an opportunity to implement changes when the information technology solution that supports it is replaced. The main options being explored are: retaining the current legislative requirements for branding with the introduction of a renewal fee to support the cost of maintaining the current registration system (the status quo with renewal fee); or providing choice about branding for cattle and pigs with streamlined registration requirements and a renewal fee. Choice could be provided either by establishing a system which allows livestock owners to opt out of mandatory branding or a system that allows them to opt in to voluntary branding. Taking a voluntary approach to branding will not jeopardise traceability of Queensland’s cattle. Queensland and the Northern Territory are now the only Australian jurisdictions who mandate branding of cattle.
5. Cabinet approved the implementation of individual electronic identification in Queensland for sheep and goats starting in 2022.
6. Cabinet approved the release of the Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement on livestock brands and earmarks, proposing reform options.
7. *Attachments*:
   * [Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement on livestock brands and earmarks](https://dpcqld.sharepoint.com/sites/DPC-CABINETSERVICES/Shared%20Documents/General/Proactive%20Release/ToBeProcessed/2022/Oct/Livestock/Attachments/CRIS.PDF)
   * [Information Supplement](https://dpcqld.sharepoint.com/sites/DPC-CABINETSERVICES/Shared%20Documents/General/Proactive%20Release/ToBeProcessed/2022/Oct/Livestock/Attachments/Info.PDF)