

National Livestock Genetics Consortium (NLGC) Taskforce
Terms of Reference - 04th October 2017

After considerable industry consultation and consensus, Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) formed a National Livestock Genetics Consortium (NLGC) in 2016, this included a committee to coordinate researchers, funders and key stakeholders of the Australian livestock genetics industry. This committee is named the “NLGC Taskforce”.

1. Purpose

The National Livestock Genetics Consortium (NLGC) Taskforce (Taskforce) is a panel established by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA).

The Taskforce acts in an advisory capacity in accordance with these terms of reference (TORs).

The objectives of the Taskforce are to:

- a) Develop world leading genetic improvement technologies and resources
- b) Maximise the effectiveness and value of genetic improvement tools
- c) Stimulate demand for genetic improvement across the value chain
- d) Maximise adoption of genetic improvement tools
- e) Foster value chain collaboration and cooperation
- f) Deliver world’s best genetic R+D, evaluation and delivery service
- g) Fast track genetic gain
- h) Address industry priorities in advancing livestock genetics and genomics in Australia
- i) Co-ordinated delivery of R+D outcomes to industry
- j) Reduced timelines and delivery costs for RD+E services
- k) Seamless transfer of information through industry
- l) Easy to use, accessible products and services
- m) Operational transparency and accountability
- n) Deliver disruptive transformation change

2. Taskforce role / terms of reference

MLA operates several Taskforces to oversee and assist direction of MLA’s strategies and programs. These Taskforces are key interfaces between MLA and industry and ensure that MLA’s programs seek outcomes that are relevant to - and valued by - industry. The NLGC will provide advice to MLA on key areas of investment for the advancement of livestock genomics and genetics.

Recommendations from the Taskforce will be considered by the MLA Board and Peak Industry Councils in making decisions on major investments into genetics and genomics RD&A that address the goals of the NLGC.

The role of the NLGC Taskforce is to provide advice to support MLA’s efforts in driving transformational change within the investment areas of genetics and genomics for the benefit of the livestock industry and whole of supply chain. When formulating advice, the Taskforce will seek a consensus position across industry representatives.

The Taskforce will particularly focus on;

- a) Analysing and providing recommendations on the genetics RDE&A landscape including gaps, priorities and opportunities;
- b) Identify opportunities to facilitate collaboration across organisations to address industry priorities;
- c) Undertaking calls for and/or assessment of concept notes and proposal;
- d) Undertaking evaluation and monitoring of projects or programs; and
- e) Where appropriate, link into MLA consultation processes, including the expert panel and red meat panel process for final project selection

The role of the Taskforce will be to:

- a) Ensure the objectives of the NLGC are achieved
- b) Ensure effective management and stakeholder consultation and communication
- c) Ensure governance processes are maintained
- d) Ensure the objectives in line with the MISP 2020 are on track
- e) Lead the process in prioritising the areas of investment
- f) Be structured on a program/sub-program basis, over a 5 and 10 year timeframe;
- g) Outline available funding currently known and seek new investment (cash and in-kind);
- h) Ensure evaluation and reporting arrangements that will provide accountability and transparency to investors but allow for flexibility to capture new opportunities.

3. Taskforce structure

The Taskforce will be chaired by MLA's Managing Director or their nominated representative and its remaining membership will reflect (but not be limited to) representation of the following:

- Northern Beef
- Southern Beef
- Breed Societies (x2)
- Researchers (x2)
- Merino producer
- Prime lamb producer
- Integrated supply chain
- Processor
- Composite breeder
- Adoption & Extension

The NLGC taskforce will be skills based and comprise of members that meet one or more of the following skills:

- a) Experience in Australian livestock production systems and genetic improvement
- b) Genetics research, technology, commercialisation, communication, database and/or adoption expertise
- c) Critical analysis and evaluation
- d) Strategic planning
- e) Change Management

Members of the taskforce will have tenure of three years, with positions becoming vacant on an Annual rotational basis. Position rotation will mitigate the risk of having an inexperienced taskforce and will occur in consultation between MLA and the NLGC, as well as considering configuration of the representation and skills required on the Taskforce. The process for appointment of members to the taskforce will be as follows;

- The NLGC Taskforce identify and define the representation and skills required to fill vacant position
- An Expression of Interest (EOI) will be developed and advertised by MLA from NLGC recommendations.
- MLA will manage the application process. All applicants will be reviewed by MLA and the Taskforce for recommendation and selection
- Successful applicants will be appointed to the taskforce for a maximum of three (3) years, with previous Taskforce members able to re-apply to EOI when applicable.

If the collective skills of the Taskforce members do not reflect adequate industry representation, the Taskforce may agree to invite additional representatives to attend particular meetings or join the Taskforces membership.

4. Meetings

The Taskforce must meet at least 2 times each year and more frequently as required. The meeting may be in person or via teleconference.

A quorum for Taskforce meetings is five.

When formulating advice to MLA, the Taskforce will ensure that the views of all members will be sought and respected on the matters under review; and that where decisions are taken, they will be by consensus.

The Taskforce may meet in person or by telephone or other means of audio or audio-visual communication, or any combination of these.

The Taskforce may make recommendations for MLA to invite any other person to attend and participate in meetings.

The process for reporting and managing 'conflicts of interest' will be emphasised at the beginig of all meetings. Any declarations should be reported in Minutes as well as recorded in the 'Conflicts of Interest Register'.

With MLA inviting participation in this Taskforce, all reasonable travel and accommodation costs will be met by MLA.

5. Access to information and advice

The Taskforce may obtain information from staff of MLA as it considers necessary for the performance of its role and responsibilities.

6. Reporting

The work of the Taskforce is advisory to MLA and all media enquiries received by Taskforce members should be conveyed to the Taskforce Executive Officer and MLA's Media Manager or General Manager - Producer Consultation & Adoption in person or by telephone. Non-urgent media enquiries can be notified by email.

7. Taskforce longevity

This Taskforce is being established by MLA to provide advice to the MLA Board and peak councils on livestock genetics investment. After each 12 month period the Taskforce will undergo a review to assess whether its continuation is justified.

8. Secretariat / Administration

MLA will provide operational support for the Taskforce through the provision of an Executive Officer.

Agenda and briefing papers will be despatched at least seven days prior to meetings and minutes will be circulated within two weeks of a meeting.

A minimum of two meetings will be held per annum. The Committee may meet in person or via teleconference.

With MLA inviting participation in this Taskforce, all reasonable travel and accommodation costs will be met by MLA

9. Review

MLA may review these TORs from time to time to keep them up to date and consistent with the Taskforce's role and advice that may be provided by the Taskforce.