

National Livestock Genetics Consortium (NLGC) Taskforce

Terms of Reference – December 2024

Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) operates the National Livestock Genetics Consortium (NLGC), including a committee to coordinate researchers, investment partners 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 committee established by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA).

The Taskforce acts in an advisory capacity in accordance with these terms of reference (TOR). The goals 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-ordinate delivery of R+D outcomes to industry
- j) Reduce timelines and delivery costs for RD+E services
- k) Have seamless transfer of information through industry
- l) Have easy to use, accessible products and services
- m) Foster 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 when 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 role of the Taskforce will focus on;

- a) Prioritising the areas of investment to ensure the goals of the NLGC are achieved and are aligned with Red Meat 2030
- b) Analysing and providing recommendations on the genetics RD&A landscape including gaps, priorities and opportunities

- c) Identify opportunities to facilitate collaboration across organisations to address industry priorities
- d) Undertaking investment calls for and/or assessment of concept notes and proposal
- e) Undertaking evaluation and monitoring of projects or programs; and
- f) Where appropriate, link into MLA consultation processes, including the expert panel and red meat panel process for final project selection

3. Taskforce structure

The Taskforce will be chaired by an appointment chair and its remaining membership will reflect (but not be limited to) representation of the following:

- Northern beef producer
- Southern beef producer
- Breed Societies (x2)
- Researchers (x2)
- Merino producer
- Prime lamb producer
- Integrated supply chain
- Processor
- Composite breeder
- Adoption and extension
- Industry genetic evaluation
- External Chair

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. MLA will manage the application process. All applicants will be reviewed by MLA and the Taskforce Chair for recommendation and selection.

- Successful applicants will be appointed to the taskforce for a minimum of three (3) years, with the ability to extend to 6 years. Taskforce members are 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 will meet as required. The meeting may be in person or virtual.

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 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 beginning 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. Sitting fees will be paid, if required, as per MLA policy.

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 in person or by telephone. Non-urgent media enquiries can be notified by email.

7. Taskforce longevity

This Taskforce is established by MLA to provide advice to MLA 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 dispatched at least seven days prior to meetings and minutes will be circulated within two weeks of a meeting.

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.