Expression of Interest

National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) Database Uplift Project

Chair of the Technical Reference Committee; Industry Reference Group; and States and Territories Reference Group

September 2023

Purpose

Integrity Systems Company (ISC) is seeking expressions of interest for an Independent Chair to Chair three newly established Reference Groups that will provide an important consultation framework for stakeholder input into the design, build and implementation of the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) Database Uplift Project.

NLIS Database Uplift Project

The National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) is Australia's system for the identification and traceability of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) susceptible livestock species including cattle, sheep and goats. It is a critical component of Australia's national livestock traceability infrastructure.

NLIS was introduced in 1999 to underpin the market access requirements for red meat products being supplied into the European Union and was expanded in 2002 to enhance Australia's ability to trace cattle during disease and food safety incidents. The NLIS database was extended to accommodate sheep and goat traceability in 2006, and also supports traceability requirements for pigs and South American camelids. NLIS reflects Australia's commitment to biosecurity and food safety and provides a competitive advantage in global markets.

Under NLIS, livestock are identified with animal identification devices. Movements of livestock from property of birth through to the point of processing are required to be recorded on the NLIS database thereby ensuring lifetime traceability for the purposes of biosecurity, food safety and market access. The central NLIS database is managed by Integrity Systems Company Limited (ISC) on behalf of the red meat and livestock industry and the state and federal governments of Australia.

ISC is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) and is responsible for the administration of the NLIS, including the delivery of the central NLIS platform and the NLIS device approval program. ISC is also responsible for the administration and delivery of the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program and National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) – including the electronic (eNVD) platform.

The NLIS database is a vital asset for the red meat industry and the state and federal governments of Australia. As a key enabler of red meat traceability, biosecurity and market access, investment in the NLIS database is crucial for our industry to respond to biosecurity risks and market access demands, of both today and into the future.

The NLIS database has been in operation for more than 23 years, and while it continues to perform its intended role, it is nearing the end of its maintainable life. In the October 2022-23 Budget, the Australian Government announced funding to support traceability database upgrades as a part of the biosecurity package 'Bolstering Australia's biosecurity system'. ISC has been recently awarded an Australian Government grant to build a new national livestock traceability platform to replace the current NLIS database and a project has now been initiated to undertake the strategic discovery for the design and build of the new platform. The strategic discovery phase is the first of six planned project stages over an expected three-year period.

The build of a new national livestock traceability platform will ensure that there is a fit-for-purpose data capture, storage and distribution system for tracking livestock and their movements. The new platform will provide improved interoperability in being able to accommodate additional data inputs from other systems, to assist in being able to demonstrate Australia's agricultural credentials and compliance with international market access requirements, now and into the future.

NLIS Uplift – Consultation and Co-Design Groups
Integrity Systems Company is establishing three Reference Groups as an important part of the consultation framework that will underpin the NLIS Database Uplift Project, and will support the iterative, user centred design approach and agile delivery that will underpin the project. The three groups are:

a) **Technical Reference Committee**
   The NLIS Uplift Technical Reference Committee will provide a mechanism for seeking technical input from key NLIS stakeholders on the new NLIS platform solution design and the development of the plans that will underpin its deployment and transition. The Committee will be comprised of members with skills and capabilities that can help to guide the technical considerations for the solution design, the technology change management plans and the release and deployment plans.

b) **Industry Reference Group**
   The NLIS Uplift Industry Reference Group will provide a consultation mechanism to test and validate ideas, clarify the industry position, use cases and requirements of the agreed platform elements, as these elements are co-designed and developed. The Reference Group will be comprised of nominated representatives from key sectors of the red meat industry to ensure the needs of industry stakeholders are met through the delivery of the project.

c) **States and Territories Reference Group**
   The NLIS Uplift States and Territories Reference Group will provide a consultation mechanism to test and validate ideas, clarify the jurisdictional position, use cases and requirements of the agreed platform elements, as these elements are co-designed and developed. The Reference Group will be comprised of nominated representatives from each state and territory government to ensure that the needs of government stakeholders are met through the delivery of the project.

Competencies required of the Chair

The following skills and knowledge are required of the Chair:
- understanding of the meat and livestock supply chain, key supply chain stakeholders, and the challenges and interdependencies associated with farm to customer supply chains;
- understanding of the traceability landscape within Australia including the relationship between state and territory regulation and industry policy;
- high level understanding of the technology components that underpin the livestock traceability system and how the technology is implemented through the supply chain;
- relevant professional experience with previous experience facilitating or chairing meetings;
- ability to lead and inspire Members and experts towards consensus;
- understanding of the nature of ISC's work and the Project and its resulting benefits;
- ability to develop solutions through innovative, strategic and creative thinking in a consensus environment;
- excellent communication, negotiation and facilitation skills including the ability to engage stakeholders and manage relationships; and
- ability to act proactively and communicate diplomatically.

Time commitment

The three Reference Groups will each convene monthly during the first 12 months of the project, and more frequently as required. Meeting cadence will be reassessed at the end of the first 12 months.

Meetings will be convened through hybrid means (allowing attendance either face-to-face or via videoconference).

Submissions

Applicants should submit both a cover letter and CV to Tamika O'Connell via email toconnell@integritysystems.com.au by **5pm (AEDT) Friday, 6 October 2023**.

Further information

Jo Quigley, Acting CEO – Integrity Systems Company
Email: jquigley@integritysystems.com.au