



**Kon Vatskalis**

MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES

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## **TERRITORY BACKS NATIONAL CATTLE TAGGING PLAN**

The Northern Territory Government has committed \$790,000 over three years to implement the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS).

Under the system Territory cattle will be fitted with a Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID), ensuring Australia continues to be a world leader in livestock tracing systems.

Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries Kon Vatskalis said the program had the full backing of the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association (NTCA).

"This is a milestone for the Territory cattle producers and will help safeguard the Territory's beef industry as a world leader.

"Cattle movements will be recorded on a national database. This will ensure that domestic and export consumers will continue to have confidence in Australian beef products. It will also reduce the social and economic impact of a disease epidemic if such an event did occur," Mr Vatskalis said.

Minister Vatskalis said the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in the UK in 2001 and the impact of BSE in North America in 2004 highlights a critical need for fast and accurate traceability systems for livestock.

"Thankfully, we have not seen an outbreak of these diseases here in the Territory. This scheme will ensure that if an outbreak was to occur it can be quickly traced and confined.

"Our contribution to the scheme will be matched dollar for dollar by the Commonwealth Government, which will be used to support the development of industry infrastructure by Territory cattle producers.

"This means a total of \$1,580,000 will be spent on NLIS implementation in the Territory over the next three years," he said.

The Northern Territory Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines (DPIFM) will develop an ongoing communications program to explain and deliver the scheme.

This will include:

- Program management, system support and infrastructure at NT Government facilities;
- Staff for extension activities and the development of fact sheets and media releases;
- Websites, a phone hotline, public consultation on any new legislation, publications and newsletters;
- IT development to support database interaction;
- Training programs to develop and install systems appropriate for NLIS.

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More information about NLIS is available here: [www.primaryindustry.nt.gov.au](http://www.primaryindustry.nt.gov.au)

