



GUIDELINES FOR AN OPERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE MANUAL

Purpose

These guidelines provide general guidance to a livestock export business on the content of their operations and governance manual to meet the requirements of the legislation.

Livestock export businesses should note that this is general guidance only and it is their responsibility to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the legislation and to satisfy themselves that their manual complies with those requirements with respect to their particular business.

Content of an ‘Operations and Governance Manual’

There is no prescribed or standard format for an ‘operations and governance’ manual however each manual must, as a minimum, include the information required in the legislation.

In summary, the manual must clearly set out how the live-stock export business will operate and be governed, including information about the following aspects of the business:

1. how the operations of the business will comply with the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL);
2. the organisational structure of the business;
3. people management and staff training;
4. risk management;
5. records management; and
6. compliance strategy and review.

The manual must be version controlled and cover each species and mode of transport for which the livestock export business wishes to be licensed.

Issues for consideration in the development of a manual

1. General

Although ‘risk management’ is listed as a matter that must be specifically addressed in the manual, the overall purpose of the manual is for the business to document how it will identify and manage the risks associated with the export of livestock in a manner that is integrated with the business’ planning and performance monitoring process, as well as ensure that policies and procedures are understood, implemented and maintained at all levels of the business. This should ensure that:

- significant risks faced in exporting livestock are understood and managed by the livestock export business;
- there is a business-wide approach to managing the risks in exporting livestock;
- there is an awareness of risk in exporting livestock and the risks are considered in decision-making;



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- there is an environment in the livestock export business which encourages all employees to assume responsibility for managing the risks in exporting livestock;
- all material risks in exporting livestock are appropriately monitored through formal documentation and review, and treatment controls are reported to management on a regular basis;
- there is openness and transparency in decision-making and ongoing management processes addressing risks in exporting livestock.

2. Specific Requirements

While it is open to the livestock export business to develop their manual to reflect all the requirements of their particular business, information addressing each of the specific requirements identified in the legislation must be clearly presented.

I. How the operations of the business will comply with the ASEL

In addressing this requirement in the manual, the livestock export business should provide information that clearly describes written procedures that address all relevant ASEL standards for the species and mode of transport for which the business wishes to be licensed, detailing:

- purpose of the procedure, including which ASEL standard is being addressed;
- how, when and where the procedure is to be done;
- who will undertake the procedure;
- what auditable records will be kept to provide evidence the procedure has been completed,
- including name of the person(s) undertaking the procedure, date it was undertaken, and any other documentation collected to complete the procedure.

For example:

How the business sources to meet the requirements of the ASEL and the importing country. The procedure should describe the process, the person responsible and the records to confirm the procedure has been completed in accordance with the ASEL.

Once the 'operations and governance manual' is approved by the Department, the licence of the livestock export business will be varied to require the business to operate in accordance with it.

II. Organisational structure of the business

In addressing this requirement in the manual, the livestock export business should provide information that clearly describes the organisational structure of the business, and the management and supervisory arrangements and responsibilities that apply for each identified position including:

- the name of the person in the business with overall responsibility for ensuring that the policies, planning and operational processes and procedures set out in the manual are implemented and followed;
- the name of each person in the business responsible for the day-to-day control of key activities; and
- other key personnel.



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For example:

A chart identifying the key people in the business and their management and supervisory responsibilities, including for meeting regulatory requirements, managing livestock, managing contracts, etc.

III. People management and staff training

In addressing this requirement in the manual, the livestock export business should provide information that clearly describes:

- how the business trains its personnel to ensure that the policies, planning and operational processes and procedures are implemented and followed on a day to day basis (internal audit process); and
- the records the business maintains to demonstrate that staff have been trained in all relevant procedures and their understanding and application of the procedure has been confirmed.

For example:

This section may include details of:

- *staff and contractor selection policy;*
- *training methods (such as on-the-job training combined with direct monitoring and supervision, formal training session);*
- *procedure for recording staff training;*
- *supervisory management;*
- *training register / record of personnel training.*

IV. Risk management

In addressing this requirement in the manual, the livestock export business should provide information that clearly describes the policies and operational procedures it will implement to identify, assess and address all risks attendant on the export of livestock and ensure that all requirements of legislation, including the Australian and importing country requirements for the livestock, are met for each consignment.

This may require the livestock export business to adopt one of the formal models available which provide a comprehensive, cyclical approach to risk management.

For example:

- *establish the context in which the livestock export business is operating (including identifying all Australian and importing requirements, community expectations, etc)*
- *identify the risks that may pose a threat to the continuation of the livestock export business (eg the risk of adverse events on the general health and/or welfare of the live-stock at various stages during the export process; failure to meet an Australian or importing country requirement etc);*
- *analyse the likelihood of the risk occurring in the course of exporting livestock as well as the consequences of it occurring (eg the risk of not meeting importing country requirements if appropriate procedures are not in place to source/test/treat/quarantine live-stock in accordance with those requirements);*



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- *evaluate the risks in terms of whether the livestock export business can accept them or they must be specifically addressed (eg all relevant ASEL standards and importing requirements must be met in addition to the procedural requirements of the department's [regulatory framework](#));*
- *develop and implement effective options for managing the risks (eg implement specific procedures to reduce the likelihood or consequences of the risk of adverse events on the general health and/or welfare of the livestock during the export journey such as mechanical breakdown during voyage or flight; food or water shortage or spoilage; disease outbreak during export journey; extreme weather during export journey; market rejection);*
- *monitor and review the risk assessment to maintain the accuracy and relevance of the risk management processes (eg implement a program of internal 'audits' of the livestock export business' risk assessment) .*

V. Records management

In addressing this requirement in the manual, the livestock export business should provide information that clearly describes policies and procedures for making, keeping and storing records.

For example:

Procedures for making and keeping business records, including records that demonstrate all Australian and importing country requirements are met in respect of a particular export consignment.

VI. Compliance strategy and review

In addressing this requirement in the manual, the livestock export business should provide information that clearly describes:

- *how the business ensures that its policies, operational processes and procedures are being followed on a day to day basis by its employees, contractors or any party operating on its behalf and/or under its instructions at each stage of the export chain so that the business meets its responsibilities under the legislation; and*
- *how it audits and reviews its policies, operational processes and procedures to ensure that they remain current and take into account changes both inside the business and in the external environment in which the business operates.*

For example:

This section of the manual could contain procedures for:

- *internal audit process of the business's procedures*
- *developing and managing contracts to verify compliance with terms of contract with suppliers live-stock agents, trucking companies, accredited veterinarians, registered premises operators, shipping companies, airlines*
- *review of business procedures, forms and instructions.*

Contacting the Department



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture,
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See the department's [regulatory framework](#) for further information on legislation, ASEL, and other requirements.

Document control

This document is maintained by the Plant and Live Animal Exports Division.

Date of update	Author	Reason for change
16 June 2014	Live Animal Export Branch	First release
27 October 2022	LAE Operations Policy	Remove references to old legislation and department names and update department logo.