

16 February 2024

NSW Sheep and Goats eID Infrastructure Stock and Station Agents Rebate Scheme

Scheme Guidelines

1. Purpose and Objective

- 1.1 To provide funding to eligible stock and station agents for the costs associated with the purchase and installation of eligible items as part of the implementation of mandatory individual electronic identification (eID) tagging for sheep and farmed goats within NSW.

2. Assistance Available

- 2.1 Under the NSW Sheep and Goats eID Infrastructure Stock and Station Agents Rebate Scheme (the Scheme), the rebate provides 50% of the cost of eligible electronic identification (eID) items for sheep and farmed goats listed in Section 6.
- 2.2 The maximum rebate that can be claimed per eligible stock and station agent with 50% co-funding for eID-related purchases from 15 December 2022 is \$2,000.

3. Key Dates

Applications open	3 October 2023
Applications close	31 March 2024 or until the Minister directs the program to be closed or funding is exhausted
Assessment process	non-competitive eligibility-based
Outcomes of applications	within 30 business days
Successful applicants may submit claims for eligible costs until	6 months after the date of <u>approval</u> This period may be extended until the end of the program based on <u>proof of order</u> .

4. Funding Sources

- 4.1 The NSW Government is the sole contributor to this scheme. The NSW Rural Assistance Authority (RAA) is the approved administrator of the scheme.

5. Eligibility Criteria

5.1 To be eligible for this rebate, the following criteria must be met:

- a. you are a sheep or farmed goat Stock and Station Agent
- b. you have a NSW Stock and Station Agents Licence
- c. your business operates as a sole trader, partnership, trust or private company
- d. you have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- e. you are a trading entity with tax returns showing your business is actively involved in the sheep or farmed goat sector.

5.2 Stock and Station Agents eligible under Clause 5.1, may apply on behalf of employees of the business who hold their own separate Stock and Station Agent Licence but do not have an ABN, up to the maximum amount available, for each eligible employee.

6. Eligible and Ineligible Items

6.1 Eligible and ineligible items:

Eligible items	Ineligible items
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• eID readers (i.e. pocket and stick)• purchase, installation, and training for software connected to sheep and goat eID infrastructure (note: Software subscriptions are up to 1 January 2027)• eID hardware (i.e laptops, tablets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• wages for <u>your</u> employees or <u>your</u> self-assessed labour costs• eID devices

Additional Terms and Conditions

7. Exclusions

- 7.1 You will not be eligible for a rebate if you have received financial assistance for costs associated with the eligible items described in [Section 6](#) from another stream of the NSW Government Sheep and Goats eID Infrastructure rebate scheme.
- 7.2 Ineligible items are listed in [Section 6](#).
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8. Checklist for When You Apply

- Latest business tax returns
- Read the Additional Terms and Conditions that go with these guidelines from [Section 7](#).

If you have all documentation ready, the application should take approximately 30 minutes for you to complete.

Please don't self-assess your eligibility for this rebate. If you have any questions regarding your eligibility, please contact the RAA on free call 1800 678 593 or visit www.raa.nsw.gov.au.

9. Application Process

- 9.1 Refer to the [RAA website](#) to complete an online application. You can apply prior to incurring any costs, as it is not mandatory to complete all expenditures before applying for the scheme.
- 9.2 You can submit an application for eID related purchases from 15 December 2022.
- 9.3 You must permit the RAA or another person authorised by the RAA to enter the property to inspect the works.
- 9.4 Valid tax invoices submitted in relation to this application may not be used to secure funding under any other NSW State Government Sheep and Goats eID Infrastructure rebate scheme.
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10. Application Assistance

Refer to the [RAA website](#) to complete an online application. Include quotes, estimates or invoices where available.

You will need to complete an online application and submit any claims by the closing dates shown in [Section 3](#).

If you need assistance with submitting your application, please contact us:

Phone: 1800 678 593

Email: rural.assist@raa.nsw.gov.au

If you need assistance with interpreting or translating, please contact Multicultural NSW on 1300 651 500 or email languageservices@multicultural.nsw.gov.au.

Applications received after the advertised application closing date cannot be accepted.

Please do not self-assess your eligibility for this grant. If you have any questions regarding your eligibility, please contact the RAA on free call 1800 678 593 or visit www.raa.nsw.gov.au.

11. Assessment and Decision Makers

- 11.1 Applications will be assessed against the eligibility criteria by Assessment Officers on the Assessment Team, who are responsible for routine assessment against the criteria in these guidelines and recommend assessment outcomes.
- 11.2 Program Officers on the Assessment Team ensure the scheme is administered in accordance with these guidelines and the policy intent and approve rebates based on recommendations by Assessment Officers.
- 11.3 The Chief Executive of the RAA is responsible for ensuring the scheme is administered in accordance with approved criteria and policy intent.
- 11.4 The RAA reserves the right to request further information from you or from any business or individual you have engaged to assist in assessing your application and to verify any information provided in your application. Failure to provide such information may result in the RAA refusing your application.
- 11.5 The RAA reserves the right to refuse an application where eligibility criteria are not met or where you do not or cannot provide sufficient information for the RAA to determine if eligibility criteria have been met.
- 11.6 The RAA can put an application on hold where the applicant is under investigation or has been charged in relation to the fraudulent receipt of grants or rebates under this or other RAA programs or schemes.
- 11.7 Complete applications will be assessed in order of receipt. Incomplete applications will not enter the assessment queue until all required information is provided.
- 11.8 Applicants should note that past financial assistance under this scheme or any other program or scheme is not a reliable indicator of eligibility for future financial assistance under this scheme.
- 11.9 Applications submitted may be subject to audit by the RAA or its agents in order to determine compliance with scheme guidelines.

12. Approval

- 12.1 Applicants will be notified of the outcome within 30 business days after submitting a completed application.

13. Claiming

- 13.1 Claims under Section 5.1 of these guidelines must be supported by an invoice for an eligible item in the name of the business and proof of payment.
- 13.2 Claims under Section 5.2 of these guidelines must be supported by:
 - a. an invoice for an eligible item in the name of the employee and proof of payment
 - b. the employee's Stock and Station Agent Licence number, and
 - c. documentation that verifies the employment status of the employee, such as a declaration signed by the employer or employment records.
- 13.3 You should refer to the RAA website and complete an online application. You are not required to complete all expenditure before applying for a rebate however valid tax invoices for all eligible items will be required prior to payment up to the maximum rebate available.
- 13.4 Payments will be GST-exclusive and made on receipt of a valid tax invoice and proof of payment.

13.5 Invoice claim close dates are shown on Page 1 of these guidelines and on the RAA website.

13.6 The claiming period may be extended until the end of the program based on proof of order.

14. Fraudulent Claims

14.1 The RAA takes fraud and corruption seriously. Suspected fraud will be assessed and investigated as appropriate, which may require the involvement of external parties such as the NSW Police Force or the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).

14.2 By signing the claim form, you declare that the information provided in the application form and supporting documentation is true and accurate.

14.3 Providing inaccurate, untrue or misleading information may be a breach of the *Rural Assistance Act 1989* (NSW) or criminal law for which serious penalties may apply.

14.4 The RAA responds to fraud by:

- a. audit and site validation of applications and claims that are of concern
- b. referral to the NSW Police Force or ICAC of suspected fraud
- c. recovery of any assistance provided under a fraudulent application.

14.5 An application approval, or payment of a claim against an approved rebate, may be delayed where:

- a. assistance previously provided by this or any other related NSW government grant or rebate program or scheme cannot be validated or
 - b. the outcome of relevant legal or validation actions may impact the decision to grant further assistance.
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15. Important Information

15.1 These guidelines are correct at the time of publishing.

15.2 The RAA reserves the right to amend, alter or change these guidelines at any time. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that they check the relevant website prior to making a claim.

15.3 Without limiting any rights, the RAA (or another NSW agency), in its sole discretion, may recover funds from the claimant and determine that a debt is due if evidence indicates that the claimant:

- a. did not meet the eligibility criteria
 - b. received an overpayment of the rebate.
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16. Evaluation

16.1 The RAA is committed to providing excellent service that responds to your needs through well-targeted programs. For that reason, the RAA evaluates its programs. This includes surveys at various points of your application, approval and completion. The RAA may also contact you to ask about your experience of the assistance you received. The RAA will always treat the responses you provide as confidential and use the information only for the purposes it was collected.

17. Government Information (Public Access) Act

- 17.1 Applicants should be aware information submitted in applications and all related correspondence, attachments and other documents may be made publicly available under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW). Information that is deemed to be commercially sensitive will be withheld.
- 17.2 The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW) makes government information accessible to the public by:
- requiring government agencies to make certain sorts of information freely available
 - encouraging government agencies to release as much other information as possible
 - giving the public an enforceable right to make access applications for government information
 - restricting access to information only when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

18. Complaints

Any concerns about the NSW Sheep and Goats eID Infrastructure Stock and Station Agent Rebate Scheme should be submitted in writing to rural.assist@raa.nsw.gov.au.

If you do not agree with the way the Department has handled the issue, you may wish to contact the NSW Ombudsman via www.ombo.nsw.gov.au.

19. Definitions

Approval: your application will be approved based on your eligibility with the criteria listed in [Section 5](#). Your invoices will be approved based on their eligibility with the criteria listed in [Section 6](#). In the event of an early close, the RAA will pay invoices ranked by the date received up to the allocated funding. An approved application does not imply an approved invoice.

Farmed goat: any breed or type of goat that is not a harvested rangeland goat, which is managed or semi-managed on a property and is subject to animal husbandry procedures and managed breeding programs.

Mandatory individual electronic identification (eID) tagging: means

- sheep or farmed goats must be identified with an approved electronic NLIS device that was assigned for use on that property before they leave their property of birth, or
- sheep or farmed goats must either be carrying an approved electronic NLIS device attached by an earlier owner or an approved electronic NLIS post-breeder device that is assigned for use on the property from which they will be dispatched before leaving a property that is not their property of birth.

Proof of order: a valid tax invoice showing a deposit has been made for an order.

Valid tax invoice: a paid invoice including the name, address and ABN (if applicable) of the entity that issued the invoice and a description of each item to which the invoice relates, which is clearly identifiable as being related to approved expenditure for the applicant. The RAA will ask for proof of payment of the invoice.

You and your: in the context of these guidelines and the related application process refers to the applicant. The RAA takes you as having authority to make application on behalf of the entity applying.

Disclaimer

The Department does not guarantee or warrant and accepts no legal liability whatsoever arising from or connected to the accuracy, reliability, currency or completeness of any material contained in this publication. Information in this publication is provided as general information only and is not intended as a substitute for advice from a qualified professional.

The Department recommends that users exercise care and use their own skill and judgment in using information from this publication and that users carefully evaluate the accuracy, currency, completeness, and relevance of such information. Users should take steps to independently verify the information in this publication and, where appropriate, seek professional advice.

Funding assistance provided through the scheme is subject to funds being available. The Department reserves the right to make changes to the scheme to ensure it meets the objectives outlined in these guidelines and provides equitable funding support to applicants.

In extenuating circumstances, applications submitted after the deadline may be accepted at the sole discretion of the Department.

These guidelines are subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of the Department.

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