



# Reading NLIS Tags Using a Handheld Reader

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*Owning a handheld NLIS scanner provides producers with the ability to read the NLIS tags of cattle on their property. Using an NLIS reader can offer producers the potential to improve existing herd management strategies through faster, more accurate identification of cattle. In addition, an on-farm handheld NLIS reader will also allow producers to quickly, accurately and easily complete internal property to property cattle transfers or private sales.*

## How does a handheld reader NLIS reader work?

There are several different types of handheld readers available to producers. A range of these are shown below.



*Figure 1. A range of handheld readers available*

Currently there are also newer handheld readers available that can display the scanned EID number without the need for additional hardware. Some of these readers can also be connected to scale indicators, computers and palm's using bluetooth wireless technology. An example of one of these readers is shown in figure two.



*Figure 2. Aleis 9030 series NLIS reader*

## Read Range

Handheld readers have a read range of between 20 and 40cm which extends 360° from the tip of the wand. When combined with the length of the wand (up to 60cm), as well as the users reach, it is possible to scan cattle in yards without getting too close.

It is very important to note that handheld NLIS readers are sophisticated electronic devices. Using the readers to hit animals, even gently, can damage the reader, greatly reducing read range and may cause the reader not to work at all.

## Using an NLIS handheld reader

When using a handheld reader to read NLIS tags, producers firstly must make sure that the tag they want to read is within range of the reader. For most readers, it is then simply a matter of pressing the read button which will be located on the reader in an easy reach location.

Most readers come equipped with an audible beeper and/or light which will be activated when a successful read occurs.

When the NLIS tag is within range press the read button, a beep will sound and the light will flash indicating the tag has been successfully scanned.



*Figure 3: Using a handheld NLIS reader*

### Downloading from handheld NLIS readers

Once a scanning session has been completed it can be downloaded to a computer, scale indicator or palm using companion programs (programs that come with the device) or in some cases, simply through Microsoft Excel.

Figure four shows tag numbers scanned using an Allflex handheld wand reader being downloaded using Allflex companion software. These numbers can then be transferred to Excel if required

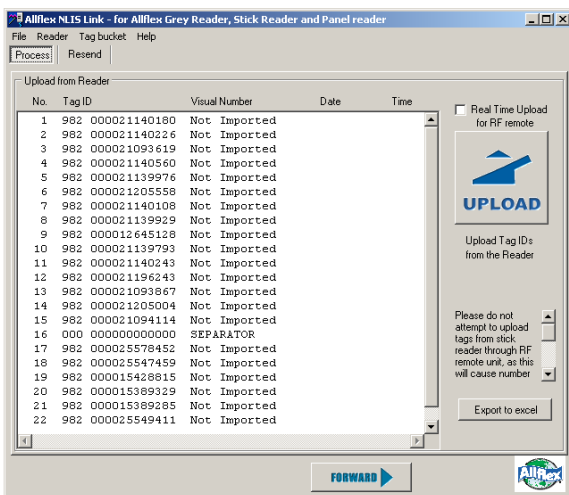
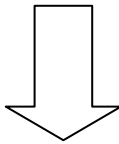
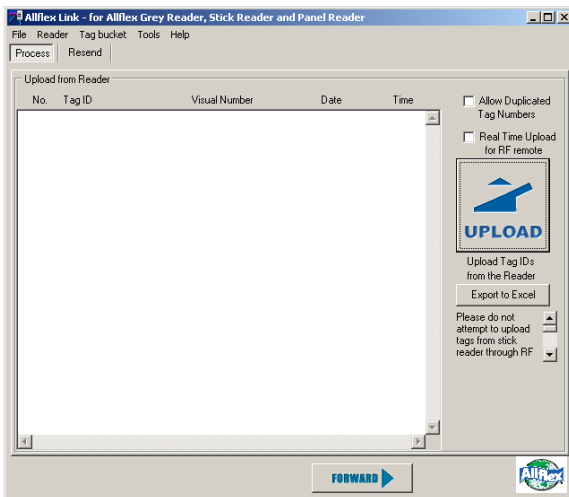


Figure 4: Downloading NLIS numbers using companion software

Once the NLIS numbers have been successfully downloaded, they can then be used as the animal’s primary identification or may be cross referenced against existing herd management numbers. This allows the producer to easily identify each animal when they are scanned in the future.

It is also possible to integrate handheld NLIS scanners with weighing systems to further improve herd management. For more information on this topic please

see the ‘Setting up an integrated NLIS scanning and weighing system’ Agricultural Note.

### Where can I find more information?

Sources of information about integrated NLIS scanning and weighing systems

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#### NLIS scanning system manufacturers

For more information on suppliers of scanning equipment, refer to Agricultural Note ‘Who supplies NLIS equipment and software’.

### General Information

The following are useful contacts for further information:

#### Specific NLIS Database Queries for the MLA

NLIS Hotline: 1800 NLIS ID (1800 654 743)  
[www.nlis.mla.com.au](http://www.nlis.mla.com.au)

#### NLIS Queries in Victoria

For the NLIS in Victoria call DPI’s NLIS Helpline on 1800 678 779 during business hours.

#### DPI Website

[www.dpi.vic.gov.au/nlis](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/nlis)

#### NLIS Workshops

To attend a workshop on NLIS contact one of the NLIS extension team.

#### Ordering NLIS Devices Online

You can now order NLIS devices on-line using a credit card by going to the DPI web site [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/nlis](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/nlis) and following the prompts to *Livestock Tags Online*.

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