



Department of
Primary Industries
Food Authority

General Circular

General Circular 02/2018

Improving equivalence of alternative technique procedures (AS 4696:2007)

An important update from the NSW Department of Primary Industries, Biosecurity & Food Safety (NSW DPI) for all licensed abattoirs (domestic and export) in NSW.

Guideline for Alternative Equivalence to Schedule 2 of Australian Standard 4696:2007

Post mortem inspection of meat in Australia is done in accordance with the requirements of the *Australian Standard for Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption* AS 4696:2007 (Australian Meat Standard).

Currently there is a major reform agenda being driven by the red meat and pork industries to modernise some of the traditional inspection techniques in light of improvements in animal health, developments in inspection procedures overseas and the findings of research being conducted in Australia.

This has resulted in a number of positive changes relating to the provision for recognition of the equivalence of alternative technique procedures. These changes have been compiled into a guideline that will replace the existing Schedule 2 of AS 4696:2007.

What are the changes?

Some procedures will be moving towards an observe (i.e. visual inspection) status unless information is available that would warrant more invasive procedures (e.g. palpation or incision).

Key procedures affected:

- Bovine tuberculosis – minimal inspection
- Spleens in sheep and goats – observe

- Pigs – observe
- Pig kidneys – visual inspection of enucleated kidneys for human consumption
- Sheep and goat kidneys - visual inspection of enucleated kidneys for human consumption
- Caseous lymphadenitis in sheep and goats – palpate 4 lymph nodes only (superficial cervical – pre-scapular, pre-crural, popliteal, ischiatic).

When does this change take effect?

These changes will be given effect on 1 January 2019 by the *AMRG Guideline 2019:1 - Post Mortem Meat Inspection - Alternative Techniques to Schedule 2 of AS 4696:2007* (the Guideline) (link in Resources below) using the equivalence provision at the beginning of AS 4696:2007.

Audits will commence against the revised procedures on 1 July 2019.

This will result in the current Schedule 2 procedures becoming non-compliant with cl 10.5 of AS 4696:2007. Plants will need to adopt the alternative techniques into their operations.

The Guideline will then become the document that NSW DPI as the controlling meat authority in NSW will use to determine compliance with AS 4696:2007.

Resources:

- Australian Standard [AS:4696:2007](#)
- [AMRG Guideline 2019:1 - Post Mortem Meat Inspection - Alternative techniques to Schedule 2 of AS4696:2007](#)

Further information:

For further information, contact Mark Mackie, Manager Regulatory Operations at Mark.Mackie@dpi.nsw.gov.au or on 9741 4710.