

N.T. BUFFALO INDUSTRY COUNCIL INCORPORATED

ABN 34 355 734 719



Code of Practice for the Northern Territory Buffalo Industry

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

Introduction

The *Code of Practice for the Northern Territory Buffalo Industry* (the Code) has been prepared by the NT Buffalo Industry Council Inc. (NTBIC), an organisation representing the interests of its members who are involved in all aspects of the buffalo livestock industry.

This Code is presented as a practical handbook to inform buffalo livestock industry stakeholders along the supply chain of their obligations under Commonwealth and Territory law and associated standards. It references industry standards set by leaders in Australian livestock industries. The Code assures buffalo buyers at each point in the supply chain that suppliers, handlers and transporters are aware of their obligations to ensure optimum outcomes in terms of animal welfare, biosecurity and fire and weed management.

Additionally, the Code forms part of the NT buffalo industry's self-regulation process. In this context it is intended to promote public safety, industry productivity and efficiency, and encourage innovative, safe and collaborative business practices. Although the Code is not intended for audit and compliance the knowledge provided will be of assistance for these purposes.

The Code is divided into Parts A and B.

Part A covering Legislation and Standards places the Code in the context of those Commonwealth (Section 1) and NT (Section 2) laws that have most relevance to the NT buffalo livestock industry. Included in Part A (Section 3) is also reference to the Standards established by the National Livestock Production Assurance Program.

Part B covering Responsibilities and Protocols, is divided into three sections.

The first section describes how stakeholders must mitigate risks with regards to spreading weeds. This issue of weeds is of great importance to all land managers and landowners with whom musterers and transporters must work in partnership. The objective is to build and maintain good collaborative relationships between those in the buffalo industry and the landholders and owners of the buffalo. The mechanism to maintain these good relationships is through mutually agreed weed management plans and protocols.

The second section deals with bushfire management and describes how communication and collaboration can work to the mutual benefit of musterers and landowners and managers. Fire management is a vital component of how musterers work and how landowners manage their land and earn very significant income through carbon abatement programs.

The third section forms the main part of this Code and is devoted to issues of animal welfare and biosecurity. Biosecurity management has established formalities and procedures that industry participants must familiarise themselves with. These formalities and procedures are referred to and summarised in this Code.

Animal welfare on the other hand is a more subjective issue. Everyone who works with buffalo has their own idea of what constitutes animal welfare and what animal handling practices are acceptable. The Code sets out what the various laws say about what is acceptable and what is legal. It also draws on sources who have intimate and extensive knowledge of NT buffalo to inform all along the buffalo supply chain of what is best practice with regards to buffalo welfare. It is imperative that all people who work with buffalo ensure optimum outcomes in terms of buffalo welfare

Implementation Processes

Adoption of the Code requires the commitment of all leading stakeholders in the Northern Territory Buffalo Industry. As such, benefits to third parties must be clearly articulated.

Implementation will be supported primarily through education and information sharing with members of the NT Buffalo Industry Council and third-party stakeholders such as ranger groups, land councils, exporters, buyers, livestock holding facilities, transporters and other industry associations.

Education

A copy of the Code is available electronically on the website (<https://ntbuffalo.com>) for all interested parties to download. A hard copy of the Code will be mailed with each new membership approval.

Links to relevant fact sheets and educational materials prepared by the Department of Primary Industries and Resources on subjects such as animal welfare, biosecurity, weeds and transport are available on the NT Buffalo Industry Council's website.

Compliance

All members of the NT Buffalo Industry Council are actively encouraged to comply with the Code. Proof of membership will be evidence of the member's agreement to comply with the Code for the duration of membership. The NT Buffalo Industry Council maintains a register of members.

Monitoring

The Code, as an industry document, was officially launched in February 2019. It is intended that the Code will be overseen and monitored by the Executive Committee the NT Buffalo Industry Council and reviewed annually.

Further Information

Electronic copies of the *Code of Practice for the Northern Territory Buffalo Industry* can be downloaded from the NT Buffalo Industry Council website (<https://ntbuffalo.com>)

For hard copies and all other enquiries about the Code please contact:

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