

30 May 2023

To Whom it May Concern

Members of the public like myself – the quiet, compassionate animal lovers - are not opposed to agriculture, primary production or farmers, but we are opposed to the long sea voyages animals are made to endure, the lack of control over their handling and slaughter, and the fact that horrific cruelty and abuse continues unabated as borne out by investigations in importing countries. These cruelty issues have been exposed numerous times over the years on board vessels leased by Australian export companies.

I believe that increased local processing and a chilled meat export trade only, offer the most humane option for animals and a more reliable income for the producers, as well as major benefits to the economy by providing more jobs in WA.

The industry has for decades flaunted the law and, despite many significant breaches and loss of life, has been granted incorrectly approved permits and manipulated previous governments in allowing it to continue.

Currently, every single animal who steps foot on a ship is facing a worse welfare outcome (of varying degrees), than those slaughtered domestically.

The bottom line is that there's no humane way to export live animals for slaughter and this inherently cruel trade needs to be-phased out sooner rather than later, which is what the vast majority of the Australian public want.

Indeed, the Australian public really galvanized in opposition to the live trade after Four Corners aired an exposé on the brutal treatment of Australian cattle in Indonesia following an investigation by Animal Australia in 2011, and perhaps even more strongly after 60 Minutes aired footage in 2018, taken by a Pakistani trainee officer over five voyages between August 2017 and February 2018 that he got to Animals Australia.

Added to the horrors exposed in the shipping process, there have been more than 160 complaints or reports of ESCAS breaches submitted to the Department of Agriculture since ESCAS' implementation in 2011. They pertain to either supply chain "leaks" which have resulted in tens of thousands of animals being slaughtered outside approved facilities, or handling and slaughter of animals not in accordance with the required (but legally unenforceable) World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) recommendations.

Breaches have occurred in Indonesia, Thailand, Kuwait, Oman, UAE, Jordan, Malaysia, Vietnam, Egypt, Israel, Gaza, Mauritius, Lebanon, Pakistan and Turkey, involving multiple live export companies, most multiple times. The majority of complaints have been submitted by Animals Australia or self-reported by exporters because Animals Australia was present. Serial breachers are permitted to continue exporting, and there is no disincentive for not complying with ESCAS regulations, therefore ESCAS is failing at protecting the welfare of animals exported live.

And heartbreakingly for the majority who care within the Australian public, every month that passes thousands more animals suffer terribly.

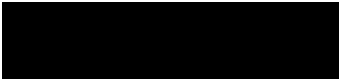
So, to summarise, I would like to express my strong support for phasing out live sheep exports. This needs to occur as soon as possible. There is no reason, scientifically, economically or ethically for the trade to remain.

Surveys have shown that the vast majority of Australians, both metropolitan and regionally based, support an end to the trade. It is inherently cruel and does not provide local producers with certainty. And it doesn't allow for Australian law to protect Australian animals.

With other progressive countries announcing bans, most recently Brazil, plus our New Zealand neighbours, Germany, UK and Luxemborg (plus it's being considered in Romania), it's now well past the time for Australia to end the trade.

I absolutely thank the government for fulfilling its election promise. I believe it was a strong reason for many to change their voting habits, myself included.

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.