

## **Legislate the end date for live sheep export NOW.**

A recent government report is a damning indictment of the Department of Agriculture's ability to protect sheep and cattle exported by Australian producers and confirms the abject failures in live export regulation.

The report examined truly horrific footage of animal suffering. Shockingly though, the Department recommended no further sanctions for this horrific cruelty despite finding non-compliance at every single abattoir investigated.

The report confirms, yet again, that live export cannot be made safe for animals. It is a business model built on cruelty and is simply incompatible with animal welfare.

The Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System ESCAS is responsible for ensuring that the time spent travelling on ships to other countries stops being the horrific experience for sheep and other animals that many of us know about but in addition to this ESCAS requires exporters to have arrangements with supply chain partners (i.e. importers, feedlots, abattoirs) in importing countries to provide humane treatment and handling of feeder and slaughter livestock from arrival through to point of slaughter. ESCAS is underpinned by the following key principles – control, traceability and animal welfare – whereby the exporter must demonstrate, through a system of reporting and independent auditing of their supply chains:

- the exporter has control of all supply chain arrangements (including having agreements in place with supply chain partners) for the transport, management and slaughter of livestock, and that all livestock remain in the supply chain (control)
- the exporter can account for all livestock through the supply chain (traceability)
- animal handling and slaughter meets World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) animal welfare standards (animal welfare. If issues arise, ESCAS requires exporters to address any non-compliance matters within their supply chains. This may be managed by undertaking additional steps or corrective actions at facilities (for example delivering training or upgrading infrastructure), removing non-compliant facilities from a supply chain, or not exporting any further livestock to a supply chain.

It is absolutely clear that it is impossible for ESCAS to enforce the standards or force the exporters to comply with the standards and their requests (even if they wanted to) and the brutality and unbelievable cruelty continues and will continue forever.

At the heart of the failures lies an insurmountable conflict of interest; the welfare of animals will never be the priority for a department or body that also exists to promote and protect the industry.

Live animal export, should be stopped NOW. This has been on the government's agenda for so long and it is high time for the government to act on this and not hide or dress up the tortuous export and end-of-live experience of other species for the sake of Australia's money-making industries and the economy. Australians need the government to stop the unbelievable treatment of other species for food and money and to urgently support alternative industries. START the process NOW.

Read the government report for yourselves here:

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/escas-regulatory-performance-report-jan-mar-2023.pdf>