

Submission on the Inspector-General of Animal Welfare - Live Animal Exports

8 March 2023

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Animal Welfare Branch
GPO Box 858
Canberra
ACT 2601

Via online form and email: IGAWLAE@agriculture.gov.au

RE: Inspector-General of Animal Welfare: Consultation Paper

To whom it may concern,

WoolProducers Australia (WoolProducers) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the Inspector-General of Animal Welfare consultation paper.

WoolProducers is the peak industry body representing Australian wool growers across a vast range of issues, including animal health and welfare, biosecurity, natural resource management, emergency animal disease outbreak preparedness, and industry development - including research and trade.

WoolProducers has a strong commitment to animal welfare, particularly through our role as the wool industry representative to Animal Health Australia, who invest wool grower levies in programmes and initiatives that advance the health and welfare of the Australian sheep flock through surveillance, research and extension services. WoolProducers actively participate in a number of key initiatives supporting animal welfare outcomes, including the development of the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Sheep.

WoolProducers support efforts which enhance the collection and reporting of welfare outcomes in a manner consistent with the approach currently undertaken by the Inspector-General of Live Animal Exports (IGLAE). The Department should ensure that any expansion of the functions of the IGLAE to the Inspector-General of Animal Welfare and Live Animal Exports (IGAWLAE) does not duplicate processes currently undertaken by the IGLAE or elsewhere in the Department. Such duplication would not only be an inefficient allocation of government resources, it would also likely convolute the reporting of welfare outcomes and compliance efforts of supply chain partners.

WoolProducers is supportive of the remit of the proposed Inspector-General of Animal Welfare and Live Animal Exports (IGAWLAE) being targeted to animal welfare issues relating to live animal exports (i.e. aligned with the regulatory responsibilities of the Commonwealth). WoolProducers is concerned with the proposal that the IGAWLAE could *review / report on the Commonwealth's interaction with state and territory animal welfare enforcement agencies*. Such a function is an extension of the IGAWLAE's role that is not aligned with current Commonwealth legislative responsibilities and would not contribute to the enhanced reporting of animal welfare standards outcomes with respect to live animal exports. This proposal is contradictory to the Consultation Paper's own noting of the separate process underway for reviewing national and jurisdictional animal welfare frameworks and strategies, as such it would only seek to dilute the effectiveness of the IGAWLAE as proposed in the consultation paper.

Finally, WoolProducers encourage the Department and the Government to consider the findings of the IGAWLAE (once established) before progressing with the proposed ban to live sheep exports. Continuing with the ban of live sheep exports without the evidence-based reporting of animal welfare outcomes that would be delivered by IGAWLAE calls into question the value that will be delivered through the \$4 million expenditure over 4 years.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the revised policy and would welcome Departmental staff to contact me should there be specific points that require further discussion.

Yours Sincerely,



