
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Rural Affairs and Transport
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Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Live Animal Export (Slaughter)

Wednesday 14 July 2011

Members of the Senate Standing Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to make a submission on the issue of the Live Animal Export for slaughter trade.

Having written to various government ministers and departments regarding my objections to this trade, I imagine there is no more to say. The people making the decision on this issue don't have the hands on experience or are influenced almost purely by financial considerations ever since this trade was first suggested and then after it was implemented.

My letter of Friday 3 December 2010 to the now Minister, responsible for ensuring this trade, received a reply but no action. Sadly, I feel there is little hope, and that is an indictment on our society.

The live animal export for slaughter trade is immoral mainly because it denies any animal the right of a reasonable life prior to death. Slaughtering an animal in Australia has a trip to the abattoir, or feedlot, before the last trip to be killed. These are lengthy enough periods of stress before death. This system is not ideal, but has never really been questioned and in the minds of all meat eating humans, can be justified by the money received and employment created.

The amount of stress an animal unaccustomed to transport suffers, is considerable. In my experience all animals suffer from stress from any handling by human beings. So suffer stress before and during a journey from the unnatural activity of:

- ♠ herding, yarding and drafting
- ♠ the motion of the transport, either road, rail or sea travel
- ♠ new scents and sights
- ♠ crowding over long periods
- ♠ bullying by others from whom they are prevented from escape by fences

and possible injury and even death cannot be discounted and happens all along the chain of events they suffer.

What is the real death toll on the boats, and how much extra stress have those animals suffered before dying, before having their bodies thrown unceremoniously into the sea?

All these stresses are suffered before ever getting to another country with possible differences in climate, feedlot management and feed to what they are accustomed. By the time these animals are settled in and gain sufficient weight to be ready for slaughter, they are again yarded, pushed through a race and trucked to the abattoir where they will be subject to greater stress if not cruelty as exposed on television recently.

Making livestock travel so often, and into countries where Australia has no real control of conditions, attitudes and general cultural differences and therefore cannot enforce or monitor whatever legislation is enacted here, makes a mockery of the whole process. It's arrogant of Australia to dictate what should be done in another sovereign country, and because it cannot be policed and should not be attempted, it's the responsibility of the Australian government to stop this trade.

I have been of the opinion that humanely slaughtering the animals in Australia, in the halal tradition, if required, is more desirable in every way. If it will affect the sale of meat overseas at all, will not be a large impost on the industry. There are many ambit claims and hyperbole about the detrimental effect on the industry and the loss of export dollars flowing into Australia by those with vested interests. Even figures quoted by those who have studied an outcome without exporting live animals overseas produce theoretical arguments and studies derived by listening to those who were instrumental in initiating this trade and want the live animal export to continue.

The offset to any loss of income from overseas money to the Australian economy will be more employment and industry within the country. Halal slaughter is happening in Australia, even now, without the stress of excess travel and cruelty to the animals processed in this way. It appears to be acceptable to people who live here and demand this kind of slaughter for their meat products. Sadly this seems to be of little importance to the debate, as is the consideration of increased employment within Australia.

For those who care about the food they eat, the quality and some consideration for animal rights, slaughtering the animals in this country must be an important factor and the only option applied to this issue.

Sincerely,

Charlie Schroeder