

SUBMISSION

We make this submission in support of the Australian live export industry for consideration in the 'Animal welfare standards in Australia's live export markets' Senate Inquiry being conducted by the Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee.

I refer directly to the Terms of Reference that the Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee will inquire and report on and my opinion in relation to each Term of Reference is as follows:-

1. Investigate and report into the role and effectiveness of Government, Meat and Livestock Australia, Livecorp and relevant industry bodies in improving animal welfare standards in Australia's live export markets, including:

- a) The level, nature and effectiveness of expenditure and efforts to promote or improve animal welfare standards with respect to all Australian live export market countries;
- i) expenditure and efforts on marketing and promoting live export to Australian producers;
- ii) ongoing monitoring of the subscription to, and practise of, animal welfare standards in all live export market countries;
- iii) actions to improve animal welfare outcomes in all other live export market countries and the evidence base for these actions.

Rather than shutting down why not instigate to improve outcomes for animal welfare.

- b) The extent of knowledge of animal welfare practices in Australia's live export markets including:
 - i) formal and informal monitoring and reporting structures;
 - ii) formal and informal processes for reporting and addressing poor animal welfare practices.

We would be better spending funds on inspecting and reporting by Australian inspectors and then making the relevant changes for addressing poor animal welfare practices.

2. Investigate and report on the domestic economic impact of the live export trade within Australia including:

- a) Impact on regional and remote employment especially in northern Australia;
This trade provides our property for an outlet for steers within the Indonesian weight range. We are able to grow beasts to acceptable level for live trade whereas for abattoir processing our numbers in turnover are substantially reduced which in turn decreases viability. Because of the costs of local council land rates it is now unviable to breed cattle in this area. Hence we are reliant upon the weaner and store market to provide beasts to grow out.
- b) Impact and role of the industry on local livestock production and prices; Because the Indonesian Live export industry provides competition in the meat market this results in a fairer price from Australian Meatworks.
- c) Impact on the processing of live stock within Australia. There is no choice of abattoir and

with no live export the local processing of livestock in Australia provides little scope for fair prices. Processing livestock within Australia has limited capacity for properties to be sustainable.

Local processing requires holding the beast several months or years longer which reduces production numbers and increases costs to the grazier. The prospect of selling slaughtered cattle to a country like Indonesia where most people don't have electricity is at best delusional.

Since 1972 5 abattoirs in North Queensland have closed down. Obviously not viable. They are not going to be viable in 2011 because wages and costs for businesses have gone through the roof since 1972.

3. Other related matters.

While we are extremely concerned with the revelations of 4 corners television show it is not possible to educate a third world country on our perceived animal welfare standards overnight.

The MLA may be criticised for underperforming but they have dealt well in the short term with Indonesia including cultural and religious issues which in the past have not allowed stunning cattle procedure.

Our cattle property requires that we have the live trade so that our income is from more than one source, so that we can try to project a cash flow, and so that we can be sustained in the longer term. The live cattle trade has potential but not if it can be hijacked by a media report. Whilst we are also horrified by the TV programmes revelation, the public and especially the political leaders fell into the trap set by the live trade objectionists. However surely now it is evident to the Australian population that halting an industry to a dead stop causes untold damage to human beings reliant on this trade let alone the animals. This political stunt just emphasised to an even greater degree how very little the general population knows about its own country and the people who work in it. Australia's economy does not exist in the centre of capital cities. Rather it is the regional population that actually feeds the people and commences the economic money trail. Cars kill people but we don't one day suddenly call a stop to all car travel. Imagine the uproar !!!

Signed:	Rosaria Hughes
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