

## 1. Summary

I find it totally **unacceptable for Australia to continue Live Animal Export trade** in the full knowledge that we will **NEVER be able to ensure the welfare of our animals when they leave our country, as the export countries have no enforceable animal welfare regulations or penalties.** The Australian Governments jurisdiction over the animals ceases when disembarkation is complete. After disembarkation, the health and welfare of the livestock is the responsibility of the importer, under the authority of the importing country.

I strongly urge you to support the Live Animal Export (Slaughter) Prohibition Bill 2011 [No.2] and the Live Animal Export Restriction and Prohibition Bill 2011 [No. 2] to finally put an end to the misery and torment our export animals endure, because these countries have no concern for the welfare and humane treatment of our animals.

**It is time for the government to do the “right thing” and put animal welfare and public interest ahead of profitability. The Live Export trade: is fundamentally broke, systemically cruel, immoral and indefensible, a National disgrace and not in Australia’s best economic interest as it is cannibalizing our processed meat industry.** Animals Australia’s “many” investigations have exposed routine abuse and torture to Australian animals that would be illegal in our country and deemed criminal acts.

**No amount of profit or excuses can justify Australia’s continued involvement in the Live Animal Export trade, especially after the animal cruelty that was witnessed on the Four Corners’ footage.** As a country that has enforceable animal welfare legislation, we are sending an appalling message to other export countries that we tolerate animal cruelty such as animals being: **tripped to the floor by ropes, eye gouging, whipped, hit and kicked, having their tails broken and having their leg tendons slashed.**

Animals Australia’s investigation in Indonesia reveals the Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) and LiveCorp involvement in Indonesia has actually contributed to and facilitated brutal treatment of Australian cattle.

The industry (MLA and Live Corp) has profited for 20 years from the misery and torture of export animals in Indonesia. MLA has known about animal welfare atrocities for most of these years and has done nothing to improve animal welfare standards in Indonesia. **MLA cannot be trusted to implement change when profit is at stake, and has proved that it has no interest in doing so. MLA has been happy to keep this terrible abuse hidden from the public eye and they now must be held accountable for their unethical actions.**

**The industry has had over 30 years to improve animal welfare standards in their export markets to an acceptable level and the Australian public can no longer put its faith in them to do so.**

We can **NEVER again trust the industry** to assure the Australian public that these criminal acts will not continue behind closed doors in countries where animal welfare standards do not exist. We cannot trust those who stand to make a profit from the Live Export trade, as profitability is more important than animal welfare to the industry.

Although a strong focus has been had on Indonesia and their treatment of our animals, we are very aware that the same torture and cruelty to our animals is endured in the other countries that we send our animals to for slaughter.

## 2. Live Animal Export should be BANNED permanently for the following reasons:

- **Live Export is a national disgrace**, our government and the industry can no longer turn a **blind eye** to this indefensible and barbaric practice that has now occurred for over 30 years. More than 150 million sheep and 13 million cattle have been sent to the Middle East and Asia for slaughter. More than 2.5 million animals have died on a ship en route, which is deemed an “acceptable” loss to the industry. Sourced Animals Australia.
- **The Animals Australia investigation into Indonesian slaughterhouses, shown on Four Corners revealed sadistic cruelty and torture to Australian cattle that will never be forgotten by the public.** To personally witness cattle being tortured and inhumanely slaughtered was disgraceful, distressing and horrific this torture including cows being: **tripped to the floor by ropes, eye gouging, whipped, hit and kicked, having their tails broken and having their leg tendons slashed.** The investigation revealed on **average it took 11 cuts to the throat to kill cattle with blunt knives and often many minutes of pain, thrashing and bellowing before losing consciousness.** Personally I will never be able to forget the Animals Australia footage of a cow they called “Bill”. **Bill did nothing wrong, he slipped and broke his leg, when he couldn't stand his eyes were gouged, tail broken and then tortured for 26 minutes before he was killed.**
- After the Indonesian footage, came equally distressing footage of sheep in the slaughterhouses of Kuwait, again filmed by Animals Australia. It is well know that sheep exported to the Middle East, are routinely mishandled, dragged, and many have their legs bound together and are thrown in the boots of cars, in a region that often has temperatures hovering near 50°C in summer.
- **Export countries do not believe in stunning animals due to religious reasons**, so sheep and cattle have their throats cut whilst fully conscious, suffering prolonged, distressing and painful deaths. **Australian standards require livestock be rendered unconscious and insensible to pain before slaughter. Studies into un-stunned slaughter, including by the federal Department of Agriculture, have found the practice causes pain, distress, terror and panic in animals.**

Australian Meat Industry Council chairman Terry Nolan said it was in the local industry's "best interests to have the most humane treatment of animals". "I personally don't believe in un-stunned slaughter. I kill animals for a living ... I believe that they need to be processed in the most respectful way for the animals'. Source – article by Peter Munro 26 June, 2011 Source: <http://m.theage.com.au/national/outrage-grows-on-ritual-killing-20110625-1gkzl.html>.

- “The Dutch, who appear to be following the European tradition of pragmatic secularism, have recently passed a bill through parliament to ban the religious slaughter of animals. If the bill passes through the Dutch senate, the country will join the ranks of Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland; countries which have deemed religious slaughter to be inhumane. Animals Australia have worked with the Princess of Jordan to introduce stunning for “halal” slaughter”, which proves stunning for “halal” slaughter is acceptable for Muslims. Source - <http://www.animalsaustralia.org/media/opinion.php?op=147>

- **MLA/Live Corp have known about the welfare atrocities for 18 years and turned a blind eye due to profitability being their biggest concern. They can no longer be trusted to self regulate or implement changes when profit is at stake.** It is abhorrent and indefensible that the MLA spends 7 times more money on marketing than animal welfare, and how they have known about cruelty in the trade for years, yet didn't attempt to fix it. **It is time the government held MLA accountable for their despicable and unforgivable actions, all due to profitability at the expense of animal welfare.**

- The Live Export trade knowingly supplied about 1 million cattle to Egypt knowing that it was “routine” for the animals to have their eyes gouged and leg tendons slashed to make it easier to slaughter these animals (sourced from Animals Australia website). Animals Australia has re-released footage of sheep being monstrously tortured and mistreated in the slaughterhouses of Kuwait – this is information the government has had since November 2010 but has chosen not to act on.

**It is naive to think that we can change animal welfare practices in other nations, as they simply don't care in the same way we do. It's cultural, and would require massive Australian resources (independent reviews by RSPCA and Animals Australia) to continually monitor conditions and treatment.** Anything less than continual monitoring of practices is merely window-dressing and a means by which we, as a country, can feel good about ourselves, whilst achieving no real outcome. For the Live Export trade to continue a high level of independent monitoring is required to ensure animal welfare is maintained, **as the government cannot trust MLA to revert to old practices as soon as no is looking.**

- It is atrocious that MLA have designed and funded cruel restraint boxes (primarily the Mark 1 Restraint Box) that have been deemed “inhumane” by leading international slaughter experts such as Dr Temple Grandin – “Oh the conditions are absolutely terrible. I mean you've got a box designed to make a cattle fall down. That violates every humane standard there is all around the world. Just absolutely atrocious conditions as far as the restraining and holding of the animal”. Source - (<http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/content/2011/s3230885.htm>)
- When the government announced resumption of the Live Export trade to Indonesian after only a 1 month suspension (it was meant to be a 6 month suspension), 11 courageous Labor MPs came forward to challenge the government's willingness to accept the slaughter of fully conscious animals. I fail to believe that in 1 month, the MLA and the government have improved welfare standards in Indonesian slaughterhouses when access to slaughterhouses have been denied and when MLA has 18 years to “perfect” animal welfare standards and has chosen to turn a blind eye!
- Since the Australian outrage of the Four Corners' footage, Australian inspectors have been denied access to Indonesian slaughterhouses. How can MLA or the government for that matter, expect to look after animal welfare if they are denied access to the slaughterhouses????
- You will be well aware that National rallies were held to Ban Live Export, where ordinary Australians expressed their anger, disgust and disbelief that such cruelty and torture could be occurring to Australian cattle in Indonesian with the full knowledge of the MLA and the government. **Australian's are taking this issue very seriously and this is an issue that the Government MUST act on appropriately and BAN LIVE EXPORT.**

- **Live exports undermine Australia's more valuable meat processing industry.**  
Three separate independent economic reports over the past two years have found that live exports are undermining Australia's meat processing industry – an industry five times more profitable than Live Exports. Since the introduction of live export, over 100 abattoirs across Australia have been closed down – mainly in Queensland and the NT. As such, live export is “cannibalizing” a legitimate, value-add industry from Australia. Those abattoirs are standing empty and can be re-opened, thereby creating more jobs within Australia.
- Indonesia is going to be self sufficient by 2014 so why is the government, subsidising the Live Export trade? When companies such as Pacific Brands went bust, the government didn't subsidise employees. Nor did the government subsidise the Black Saturday bushfire victims. So why is the government subsidising farmers who have profited from the cruel Live Export trade?
- The journey to Indonesia (the Middle East is even worse) is much longer than shipping livestock to an Australian state or territory. In transit, tens of thousands of animals die in deplorable conditions before even reaching their destination. This usually accounts for between 10% and 20% of all livestock numbers in transit. We can eliminate those deaths by banning live export and processing animals in Australia.

“Available scientific evidence shows that exporting animals live directly compromises their welfare. The best animal welfare outcome is achieved when the animal is slaughtered humanely as close to their point of production within Australian and under Australian law”. Sourced - RSPCA.

- **“Using World Organisation of Animal Health (OIE) standards as a benchmark is not acceptable** – they are well below Australian standards and do not require upright preslaughter stunning (rendering the animal unconscious to pain) and they do not exclude the roping restraint, tripping and casting of animals that occurs in Indonesia and other importing countries and that causes unacceptable suffering”. Source RSPCA.
- “Australia has acquiesced to the bullying tactics of an industry which – to put into context – is economically smaller than our paper bag manufacturing sector, biscuit manufacturing sector or chiropractic services. Live exports to Indonesia are roughly the annual revenue of funeral parlour operator, or pizza retailer Domino's – if any of these companies were fighting to resume activities at sub-industry standards, it is doubtful the government or the public would give them the time of day”. Source Animals Australia.
- New Zealand decided several years ago to do the right thing, and banned all live exports. After some initial “displeasure” from partner countries, it has transitioned to frozen meat exports to Indonesia and that industry now thrives.
- Indonesian slaughterhouse workers are unskilled and temporary, making it difficult for Australia to train. Plus we can never expect to train their workforce in animal compassion. **It simply is not economically viable to educate, train and monitor animal welfare practices in all countries to which we export our live animals.**
- Live Export is a high risk industry as permits are provided on a 3 monthly basis.

### 3. Conclusion

- On the basis of all the reasons outlined in section 2, the public seek a **BAN ON LIVE ANIMAL EXPORTS**, not small changes that will allow the industry to flourish as Joe Ludwig is suggesting.
- By Banning Live Exports and moving towards a frozen meat trade industry this is a perfect way to value-add before livestock leave our shores, provide job security and re open slaughterhouse that closed in Northern Australia when the Live Export trade commenced.
- Other countries such as New Zealand banned Live Export due to no welfare standards in export markets. **It is now time for Australia to do the right thing as a nation and Ban Live Export so Australian Animals will be treated with the upmost respect according to Australian Laws and slaughtered humanely.** This will also allow the Government to better monitor the meat industry.
- The Live Export industry claims live animals are required for "religious reasons" or due to "lack of refrigeration", these arguments are outdated and invalid reasons and are not in step with what the Australia public wants – which is a **BAN ON LIVE ANIMAL EXPORTS** . Indonesia accepts frozen meat from New Zealand, so they can also accept frozen meat from Australia. Instead of spending millions replacing cruel restraint boxes (deemed inhumane by international experts) that NEVER should have been installed in the first place by MLA. Why doesn't the MLA pay for refrigeration in Indonesia? Cattle and sheep are already "halal" slaughter (humanely stunned) in Australia and the frozen meat is exported to Muslim countries.
- Can I please leave you with some of my favourite quotations from the great Gandhi, which are very apt in this case: "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated". "Animals are the most vulnerable, most powerless, of all sentient beings, and to treat well those under one's domination is truly a mark of a civilized society."

Yours sincerely.

Linda Boyd  
Victoria