



## **SUBMISSION ON THE SENATE INQUIRY INTO IMPROVEMENTS IN ANIMAL WELFARE FOR AUSTRALIAN LIVE EXPORTS**

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## **ABOUT VOICELESS**

As an innovator, capacity builder and ideas-generator, Voiceless plays a leading role in the development of a cutting edge social justice movement, animal protection.

With a highly professional and well-educated team, Voiceless brings together like-minded compassionate Australians from the legal, academic, non-profit and education sectors to form strong and effective networks.

Voiceless believes in the provision of quality information, analysis and resources to inspire debate and discussion and to empower individuals and organisations to generate positive social change.

Voiceless is a non-profit Australian organisation established in May 2004 by father and daughter team Brian and Ondine Sherman.

To build and fortify the animal protection movement, Voiceless:

- Creates and fosters networks of leading lawyers, politicians and academics to influence law and public policy;
- Conducts high quality research and analysis of animal industries, exposing legalised cruelty and promoting informed debate;
- Creates a groundswell for social change by building and fortifying the Australian animal protection movement with select grants and prizes; and
- Informs consumers and empowers them to make animal-friendly choices.

### **PATRONS**

**J.M. COETZEE**, Nobel Prize for Literature Winner 2003, author of 'Lives of Animals' and 'Elizabeth Costello'

**BRIAN SHERMAN AM**, businessman and philanthropist

**DR JANE GOODALL**, world-renowned primatologist and animal advocate

**THE HON MICHAEL KIRBY AC CMG**, former judge of the High Court of Australia

### **AMBASSADORS**

**HUGO WEAVING**, Actor

Last Ride, Little Fish, Lord of the Rings Trilogy, Matrix Trilogy, The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert

**EMILY BARCLAY**, Actor

Prime Mover, Piece of my Heart, Suburban Mayhem, In My Father's Den

**ABBIE CORNISH**, Actor

Bright Star, Stop Loss, Elizabeth: The Golden Age, Somersault, Candy, A Good Year

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This submission addresses the Senate Inquiry into Improvements in Animal Welfare for Australian Live Export, with the following terms of reference:
- (a) 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:
    - (i) 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;
      - (A) expenditure and efforts on marketing and promoting live export to Australian producers;
      - (B) ongoing monitoring of the subscription to, and practise of, animal welfare standards in all live export market countries;
      - (C) actions to improve animal welfare outcomes in all other live export market countries and the evidence base for these actions.
    - (ii) The extent of knowledge of animal welfare practices in Australia's live export markets including:
      - (A) formal and informal monitoring and reporting structures;
      - (B) formal and informal processes for reporting and addressing poor animal welfare practices.
  - (b) The domestic economic impact of the live export trade within Australia including:
    - (i) Impact on regional and remote employment especially in northern Australia;
    - (ii) Impact and role of the industry on local livestock production and prices;
    - (iii) Impact on the processing of livestock within Australia.
  - (c) Other related matters.
- 1.2 The Inquiry has arisen due to the overwhelming public response to the horrific cruelty of the live export trade in Indonesia, as shown on ABC1's Four Corners on 30 May 2011.
- 1.3 Voiceless's position on the live export trade is that the level of cruelty is so endemic that the trade must be banned, in line with the *Live Animal Export (Slaughter) Prohibition Bill 2011* introduced by Greens MP Adam Bandt on 20 June 2011.

## 2 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

- 2.1 The standard of animal welfare in the live export trade is unacceptable. From an animal welfare perspective, there are various problems inherent in the trade, such as:
- (a) The failure by Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) to adequately inspect the loading of livestock and ensure that the *Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock* (ASEL) are complied with. Reports have shown that animals are loaded despite being ill or unfit and that loading and transport conditions are often below the standard required by the ASEL.<sup>1</sup>
  - (b) The vast majority of live animals exported by Australia travel by sea on long journeys lasting up to 3 weeks. These journeys cause stress, injury, illness, disease and death.
  - (c) There have been various investigations into live animal transport where high numbers of mortalities have been recorded. In 2002 alone, 7 shipments of cattle and sheep were investigated - the *Norvantes*, the *Becrux*, the *Al Shuwaikh* (two occasions), the *Cormo Express*, the *Corriedale Express* and the *Al Messilah*.<sup>2</sup> There have been numerous other incidents where high numbers of animals have died or suffered immeasurably at sea, with a record number of 15 incidents in 2007<sup>3</sup>. Notable incidents include:
    - (i) the drowning of 1592 cattle in 1996 when the *Guernsey Express* sank en route to Osaka;
    - (ii) the deaths of over 67,488 sheep aboard the *Uniceb* in 1996 after the ship caught fire and sank in the Indian Ocean;
    - (iii) the deaths of 570 cattle (half of those on board) on the *Charolais Express* in 1998;
    - (iv) in 1999, 829 cattle died by suffocation when ventilation failed aboard the *Temburongon* on its way to Indonesia;
    - (v) the deaths of over 300 cattle from injuries sustained during a cyclone encountered by the *Kalymnian Express* in 1998 on its voyage to Indonesia;
    - (vi) the deaths in 2002 of 880 cattle (half of those on board) and 1,400 sheep on the maiden voyage of the *Becrux* as a result of overheating (despite the *Becrux* being a purpose-built live animal carrier);
    - (vii) the deaths of 5,500 sheep aboard the *Cormo Express* in 2003 when the Saudi Arabian importer rejected the shipload of 57,000 sheep on the grounds they were infected with scabby mouth. This episode continued

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<sup>1</sup> Animals Angels, 'Animal Welfare in Australia' March 2010, available at <http://animals-angels.org.au/Animal%20Welfare%20in%20Australia.pdf>, accessed 2 July 2011

<sup>2</sup> Live Export Shame, 'Australian Government Investigates High Mortalities aboard 7 Ships of Shame in 2002', available at [http://www.liveexportshame.com/7\\_floating\\_coffins.htm](http://www.liveexportshame.com/7_floating_coffins.htm), accessed 2 July 2011

<sup>3</sup> Australian Government: Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, 'AQIS Mortality Investigation Reports', available at <http://www.daff.gov.au/aqis/export/live-animals/livestock/aqis-mortality-investigations>, accessed 2 July 2011

for 3 months until the Australian Government persuaded *Eritrea* to take the sheep free of charge.<sup>4</sup>

- (d) The standard of ships used in live export is predominantly unacceptable, with a vast majority being decades old, including the 43 year old *Al Kuwait* and the 32 year old *Al Messilah*<sup>5</sup>.
  - (e) Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) and Livecorp are predominantly self-regulated and lack transparency. They are given responsibility for animal welfare yet their primary motive is a profitable industry. This is a clear conflict of interest. The involvement of industry self-regulation in the live export process was criticised in the Keniry report<sup>6</sup>. The report found the industry's approach to self-regulation as *'in the main reactive and based on incremental improvements to the current arrangements rather than rigorously analysing the underlying cause of the problems and seeking to address them'*.
  - (f) MLA spends more money on marketing than on animal welfare:
    - (i) In a 2009 report, an indicative budget for live exports markets proposed to keep funding for *'improving welfare standards'* at \$186,000 pa, keep *'community support'* at \$725,000 pa, but boost market development activities from over \$900,000 to over \$1m pa.<sup>7</sup>
    - (ii) Concerns about animal welfare in the live export trade are regarded by the industry as a simple marketing problem — *'animal rights activist rhetoric'* that needed to be countered by advertising, soft-soap media stories and Royal Shows.<sup>8</sup>
  - (g) Importing countries lack adequate animal protection laws.
- 2.2 The Australian live export industry revolves around a trade that is controlled by the Australian Government and various industry bodies, including MLA and Livecorp. The Government and industry are said to be *'working cooperatively with their trading partners to address post-arrival welfare concerns and to improve the transportation, handling and slaughter practices of livestock in overseas markets'*.<sup>9</sup>
- 2.3 The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry jointly funds a number of projects with the live export industry in an attempt to improve infrastructure and training to promote better animal handling and slaughter practices.<sup>10</sup> The parameters

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<sup>4</sup> Caulfield, M, Handbook of Australian Animal Cruelty Law (2008) p74

<sup>5</sup> RSPCA Tasmania *Live Exports* available at <http://host.oxygenkiosk.org/~rspcatas/what-we-do/campaigns/live-exports>, accessed 7 July 2011

<sup>6</sup> Keniry Livestock Export Review, 23 December 2003, available at [http://www.daff.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/146708/keniry\\_review\\_jan\\_04.pdf](http://www.daff.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/146708/keniry_review_jan_04.pdf), accessed 2 July 2011

<sup>7</sup> *Beef Levy Review 2009: Final Report of the Beef Marketing Funding Committee*, available at <http://www.mla.com.au/files/3b86130f-778f-48f1-ba35-9d5600f2ea6f/BeefLevyReview2009.pdf>, accessed 2 July 2011

<sup>8</sup> Warwick Yates & Associates Pty Ltd & Econsearch, *'Independent Review of the Effectiveness of the Additional \$1.50 Beef Marketing Levy (2009)*, available at <http://www.mla.com.au/files/840d10c1-0389-4eeb-8d60-9d5600f32d49/Independentrevieweffectivenessoftheaditionalonedollarfiftybeefmarketinglevy.pdf>, accessed 2 July 2011

<sup>9</sup> Australian Government: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Live Animal Export Trade*, available at <http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/export-trade>, accessed 28 June 2011

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

of the funding by the Department are set out in statutory funding agreements between the Department and relevant industry bodies such as MLA and Livecorp.<sup>11</sup>

- 2.4 In the 2009-2010 budget, the Government announced the Live Trade Animal Welfare Partnership. The Partnership aims to further improve animal welfare in and support trade with overseas markets.<sup>12</sup> One of the projects funded under the Partnership in 2009-2010 was Indonesian point of slaughter improvements. An amount of \$300 000 was funded for the project which *'sought to improve animal welfare at the point of slaughter by funding the construction and maintenance of cattle restraining boxes, providing animal handlers with training in standard operating procedures, and conducting an independent assessment of the effectiveness of past projects delivered in South East Asia'*. In the 2010-2011 budget, another \$250,000 was funded for a project with aims to improve post-arrival animal welfare for cattle by upgrading and maintaining abattoir infrastructure in Indonesia. Training programs for local staff on best-practice handling and slaughter techniques for cattle were also to be provided.<sup>13</sup>
- 2.5 The footage shown on Four Corners on 30 May 2011, of barbaric slaughter conditions experienced by cattle in Indonesia, clearly shows that any efforts made by MLA to improve animal welfare conditions in Indonesia have failed. The cattle restraining boxes, designed to trip an animal down, do not aid animal welfare. As Temple Grandin said when interviewed by Four Corners reporter Sarah Ferguson, *'it's... absolutely wrong to have a box where you trip an animal down'*. Ms Grandin was *'shocked to see that Meat & Livestock Australia's name was all over the side'* of the boxes.<sup>14</sup> As for the training that was supposed to form part of the project funded by the Partnership, there were clear instances of failure. This was evidenced by the blunt knives used and the cruel manner in which the men handled the cattle. There were instances of whipping, kicking, tethering, eye gouging, cutting of tendons and breaking of tails that were nothing other than barbaric. Clearly these people did not know how to handle these animals which points directly to a lack of training. That or either an innate failure to understand or even care for the sentience of animals and the pain inflicted by their actions.
- 2.6 MLA has known as early as 2000 that cattle exported to Indonesia were being inhumanely slaughtered. This is evidenced by reports available on the MLA website which detail a history of abuses over the past decade. These include:
- (a) a cow being stabbed 18 times at one abattoir in March 2010;
  - (b) cattle regaining their feet after being felled for slaughter and *'significant animal welfare issues identified'*;
  - (c) reports of cattle smashing their heads on concrete plinths;
  - (d) repeated examples of installed restraint boxes failing to provide a humane death;
  - (e) a culture of *'unnecessary painful action'* by inexperienced local staff trying to incapacitate cattle, to avoid personal injury, revealed in a 2005 report;

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<sup>11</sup> Australian Government: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Red Meat Livestock Industry Structure*, available at <http://www.daff.gov.au/agriculture-food/meat-wool-dairy/red-meat-livestock/facts>, accessed 28 June 2011

<sup>12</sup> Australian Government: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Live Trade Animal Welfare Partnership*, available at <http://www.daff.gov.au/market-access-trade/iac/live-animal-trade>, accessed 28 June 2011

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*

<sup>14</sup> Four Corners Interview – Dr Temple Grandin 30 May 2011, available at <http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/content/2011/s3230885.htm> accessed 2 July 2011

- (f) identification in 2000 of the need to improve *'the traditional pre-slaughter and slaughter handling of imported Australian cattle in Asia and the Middle East as a priority'*.
- 2.7 Further damning findings were reported on in a report provided to MLA and Livecorp early last year<sup>15</sup>. The report makes repeated references to the shortcomings of the restraint boxes, warns about the non-compliance with World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) standards and says only four abattoirs in Indonesia had stun guns. The report also includes references to accounts of slaughtering fully conscious animals, which suffered protracted, agonising deaths. This report has been strongly criticised by the RSPCA<sup>16</sup>. RSPCA found that *'the majority of the animals observed were subjected to significant levels of pain, fear and distress during handling and an inhumane slaughter. The welfare condition of the majority of animals can only be described as poor'*.
- 2.8 Indonesia is not the only importing country where animal cruelty has been identified. Since 2003, there have been numerous instances reported of horrific handling and slaughter of Australian animals in the Middle East<sup>17</sup>, the second biggest importer of Australian animals. In some instances, the Australian Government has entered into Memorandums of Understanding with the governments of importing countries in the Middle East (UAE, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Eritrea and Egypt)<sup>18</sup>. The majority of these relate to transport only, with the Egypt Memorandum of Understanding being the only one that relates to the slaughter (as well as handling and transport) of animals. In 2008, the Australian Government replaced the Memorandum of Understanding with Egypt with an Export Order<sup>19</sup>, which restricts the export of live animals from Australia to Egypt to cattle only.
- 2.9 On the face of it, these Memorandums and Order might seem to be improvements in the live export trade. This is not the case. The Memorandums are not enforceable and the importing countries are still engaging in cruel methods of handling and slaughter, as regularly demonstrated by Animals Australia.
- 2.10 In addition to the matters raised above, the manner in which MLA spends its revenue is questionable. In 2010, MLA reported revenue of \$171 million. \$82 million was spent on research and development but questions of accountability have been raised in respect of the recipients of this money and grants paid to companies associated with several MLA directors. For example, director Ian Mars is the Australian CEO of JB Swift, the world's biggest meat-processing company. MLA paid Swift Australia \$2.4 million for research. Former director Bernard Bindon was an adjunct professor at the University of New England. It received \$2.5 million from MLA. Director Lucinda Corrigan is the deputy chair of the Future Farm Industries Research Centre. It was paid almost \$800,000. Approximately 25% of the \$82 million went to companies associated with the directors of MLA and John Carter, a beef producer, is concerned that it is not possible to determine how the money was spent.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Schuster Consulting, *Final Report: Independent study into animal welfare conditions for cattle in Indonesia from point of arrival from Australia to slaughter*, May 2010

<sup>16</sup> RSPCA Australia Science, *RSPCA Australia response to Independent study into animal welfare conditions for cattle in Indonesia from point of arrival from Australia to slaughter, 2010 – Final Report*, 21 December 2010

<sup>17</sup> Animals Australia, *Live Animal Export: Indefensible, Animals Australia's Investigations*, available at <http://www.liveexport-indefensible.com/investigations/>, accessed 2 July 2011

<sup>18</sup> Caulfield, M, *Handbook of Australian Animal Cruelty Law* (2008) p75

<sup>19</sup> *Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry (Export of Live-stock to Egypt) Order 2008*

<sup>20</sup> 7:30 Live Export Crisis 5 July 2011, transcript available at

<http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2011/s3261900.htm>, accessed 6 July 2011



- 2.11 The industry has primary responsibility for its affairs<sup>21</sup>. The Government:
- (a) partially funds the industry's affairs;
  - (b) has ultimate control and the ability to ban the live export trade;
  - (c) has given industry sufficient opportunity to address animal welfare concerns<sup>22</sup>;
  - (d) believes that it leads the world in animal welfare practices<sup>23</sup>;
  - (e) says that it does not tolerate cruelty towards animals and will not compromise on animal welfare standards<sup>24</sup>.
- 2.12 The industry, under the Government's control, has failed in its responsibility to improve animal welfare practices. There have been numerous inquiries into the live export industry. One of the most well known reports to come out of these inquiries is the report known as the '*Keniry Report*'<sup>25</sup>. It was noted in this report that the majority (76%) of submissions expressed views opposed to the livestock export trade. Nevertheless, the trade continued and animal cruelty continues to occur on a massive scale.
- 2.13 With the level of cruelty still inherent in a trade that has existed in Australia for over 100 years, despite numerous Government inquiries and various alleged attempts to improve conditions, there can be no other option than to end the live export trade.

### **3 The domestic economic impact of the live export trade within Australia**

- 3.1 The true economic impact of the live export trade within Australia has seldom been independently reviewed. What some reports have shown however is that the true economic impact is not as troublesome as the industry has publicised.
- 3.2 In late 2008, RSPCA Australia commissioned a study to look at the likely scale and scope of the adjustments that would be required to the Western Australian sheep industry if the exportation of live sheep were to cease.
- 3.3 The key findings include<sup>26</sup>:
- (a) the value of live sheep exports to farmers and the economy is very small compared to other rural commodities;
  - (b) now is the time to signal a phase out of live sheep exports because the industry is already undergoing major structural reform;

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<sup>21</sup> Australian Government: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Red Meat Livestock Industry Structure*, available at <http://www.daff.gov.au/agriculture-food/meat-wool-dairy/red-meat-livestock/facts>, accessed 2 July 2011

<sup>22</sup> Such as the request by Minister Joe Ludwig to the live export industry in January 2011 to work with his department in respect of animal welfare not being "up to appropriate standards"; the response from the industry in March 2011 was inadequate.

<sup>23</sup> Australian Government: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, *Live Animal Export Trade*, available at <http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/export-trade>, accessed 28 June 2011

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*

<sup>25</sup> Keniry Livestock Export Review, 23 December 2003, available at [http://www.daff.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/146708/keniry\\_review\\_jan\\_04.pdf](http://www.daff.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/146708/keniry_review_jan_04.pdf), accessed 2 July 2011

<sup>26</sup> ACIL Tasman Pty Ltd *The value of live sheep exports from Western Australia: A review of adjustments that would be required if live exports ceased from WA* (2009)



- (c) farmers are already moving away from live sheep exports and into more profitable areas such as prime lamb and cropping;
  - (d) on mixed farming businesses there are many uses for sheep and the transition for farmers from live sheep to sheep meat is relatively simple;
  - (e) phasing out live sheep exports won't affect the price of lamb or mutton in the long-term;
  - (f) the farm-level adjustments required to phase out live sheep exports would not be extensive compared to changes already underway in the industry.
- 3.4 The World Society for the Protection of Animals recently sought a report from ACIL Tasman to analyse the economics and policy settings of the live sheep export trade from Western Australia and sheep meat trade, from both national and regional perspectives. The report indicated that a sheep processed in Australia is worth 20% more to the Australian economy than one processed overseas. It found that a cessation of the live sheep trade could benefit the Australian economy – through an increase in the level of substitution between Australian live sheep and Australian processed sheep meat in the major importing countries.<sup>27</sup>
- 3.5 The meat processing industry backed the report's findings. Grant Courtney of the The Meatworkers Union stated:
- 'Our members are experiencing the negative impact of the live sheep export trade firsthand. Over the last 30 years the meat processing industry has suffered the loss of 40,000 jobs and 150 processing plants. We know that many plants are currently working at only 50% capacity and that many workers are only able to work three days a week. We urge the Australian Government to take the findings of this report on board.'*<sup>28</sup>
- 3.6 Of importance to the trade to Indonesia, the Indonesian Government recently announced it is to become self-sufficient by 2014<sup>29</sup> only relying on a 10% import of beef. This in effect concludes that the suspension of the live cattle industry will only be a short-term loss.
- 3.7 It has been suggested that live export to Indonesia has been declining over recent years. In 2010 live exports to Indonesia were down 32.6% on the previous year. In 2011, a further drop was expected with the Indonesian Government imposing a 500,000 head limit on cattle imports from Australia. It is also important to note that Indonesia is the main destination for live cattle exports at 50.6% and therefore banning the export would have little impact if the Indonesian Government's plan for self sufficiency were to be implemented.<sup>30</sup>
- 3.8 In 2000, an independent report concluded that the *'live export trade could be costing Australia around \$1.5 billion in lost GDP, around \$270 million in household income and around 10,500 lost jobs'*.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> ACIL Tasman Pty Ltd *Australian Live Sheep Exports* (2009)

<sup>28</sup> WSPA *Report reveals negative impact of live export* 12 October 2009, available at

[http://www.wspa.org.au/latestnews/2009/report\\_reveals\\_negative\\_impact\\_of\\_live\\_export.aspx](http://www.wspa.org.au/latestnews/2009/report_reveals_negative_impact_of_live_export.aspx), accessed 4 July 2011

<sup>29</sup> The Cattle Site *Indonesia to Cut Meat Imports* 13 May 2010, available at

<http://www.thecattlesite.com/news/30755/indonesia-to-cut-meat-imports>, accessed 7 July 2011

<sup>30</sup> IBISWorld *The Bigger Picture: Export Woes are Expected to Have Limited Impact on the Beef Cattle Industry* June 2011

<sup>31</sup> SG Heilbron Pty Ltd *Impact of the Live Export Sector on the Australian Meat Processing Industry* (2000).

- 3.9 In 2010, Australia's leading meat processors - Teys Bros, Swift Australia and Nippon Meat Packers Australia – commissioned a report which reached damning conclusions as to the impact of live cattle exports on Queensland's beef industry. The report found that:
- (a) live cattle exports are cannibalising Queensland's beef-processing industry and threaten to destroy \$3.5 billion worth of assets, \$5 billion in turnover and 36,000 jobs;
  - (b) far from being complementary, live exports compete with and undermine Australia's beef exports;
  - (c) live cattle exports equal Australian job losses and are a threat to Australia's capacity to supply the growing world demand for beef;
  - (d) Queensland cattle are increasingly being exported live to Indonesia taking with them lost processing opportunities in Queensland;
  - (e) Indonesia actively protects its own beef industry and live cattle imports by banning key beef cuts and imposing high tariffs on imported beef product – there is not a level playing field;
  - (f) live cattle exports means premium disease-free cattle are being processed in importing countries and sold in competition with genuine imported Australian beef.<sup>32</sup>
- 3.10 In recent moves, the Queensland Government has decided to investigate reviving beef processing in the State's far north in order to lessen producers' reliance on live exports.<sup>33</sup> Other Governments ought do the same in preparation for a ban. They just might find that the future does not look as grim as portrayed by industry.

#### **4 The recent resumption of the trade**

- 4.1 On 6 July 2011, Minister Joe Ludwig announced that the ban on live cattle export to Indonesia had been lifted. Voiceless condemns this action by the Australian Government.
- 4.2 Up until 5 July 2011, Minister Ludwig had been arguing that a supply chain assurance is needed before the trade is resumed to ensure animal welfare. He is now saying that live cattle can be exported through supply chains that meet international standards.
- 4.3 We strongly doubt the viability of those supply chains. They place large responsibilities on exporters to ensure adherence to the standards and they require regular independent audits. How regular will these audits be? Who will conduct them? How extensive will they be? How long will it take for the audits to be made public? The international standards are not enforceable and are not adequate to ensure animal welfare. The Government has rushed this decision to appease the industry; a decision that does not appear to provide any legal safeguards for animal welfare. The Government cannot guarantee that the brutalities seen on Four Corners will not happen again.

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<sup>32</sup> SG Helibron Economic & Policy Consulting *The Future of the Queensland Beef Industry and the Impact of Live Cattle Exports* (2010)

<sup>33</sup> Walker, Jamie *Far North Abattoir Strategy on Table* The Australian 1 July 2011

## **5 Conclusion**

- 5.1 In light of the above circumstances, Voiceless does not believe that adequate animal welfare improvements can be achieved in the live export trade. The Australian public has cried out against the brutalities recently exposed on Four Corners. What must be remembered is that the cruelty shown on Four Corners is not the first instance of animal cruelty experienced as part of the trade. Animals Australia has been investigating the trade for years and has produced regular reports of sheer brutality. Australia cannot adequately control the manner in which importing countries treat Australian animals. The only manner in which Australia can ensure that Australian animals are treated with any semblance of humanity in the live export trade, is to stop exporting them.

Respectfully submitted by Ruth Hatten, Legal Counsel, Voiceless