

10 July 2011

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Rural Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

I am appalled that the Australian Government continues to allow our animals to be exported to countries where it has no control over how those animals will then be treated. Australia has set standards and protocols that must be adhered to on animal welfare but will relinquish these as soon as our animals leave our shores.

I do not understand how Australia can ever ensure 'tracking systems' for our animals to ensure they are being treated inhumanely when there are only 4 abattoirs in Indonesia that have Australian acceptable stunning facilities and humane slaughter practices.

Australia is now weakening its bargaining point with Indonesia and saying that as long as Indonesia conforms to the OIE standards then we will continue to send animals. The OIE standards do not enforce stunning and humane slaughter practices and Australia does not accept these standards here, so why is it acceptable to allow these standards to come into play for our animals overseas! How does the Australian Government justify this!

There is no evidence that stopping live exports will be a financial detriment to cattle producers and workers in the long term. It is known that Australian abattoirs have closed down due to live export, why can't these be re-opened and jobs reinstated?

In my view it is totally unacceptable for Australia to continue the live animal export trade in the knowledge that we can never ensure the wellbeing of our animals from the moment they leave our shores. The industry has clearly been shown to be incapable of raising animal welfare standards in their export markets to an acceptable level and that Australia can no longer put its faith in them to do so.

To substantiate my views I've included the following independent reports.

Three separate independent economic reports over the past two years have found that live exports are undermining Australia's meat processing industry.

ACIL Tasman's reviews [1] into the live sheep trade found that phasing out live sheep exports would have a minimal impact on farmers and would in fact reap long-term benefits for farmers and the economy through increased processing in Australia.

In 2010, a report [2] commissioned by Australia's leading meat processors - Teys Bros, Swift Australia and Nippon Meat Packers Australia – reached damning conclusions as to the impact of live cattle exports on Queensland's beef industry.

The report found:

- 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.
- Far from being complementary, live exports compete with and undermine Australia's beef exports.

- Live cattle exports equals Australian job losses and a threat to Australia's capacity to supply the growing world demand for beef.
- Queensland cattle are increasingly being exported live to Indonesia taking with them lost processing opportunities in Queensland.
- 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.
- Live cattle exports means premium disease-free cattle are being processed in importing countries and sold in competition with genuine imported Australian beef.
- Australia's major meat processors have confirmed that Australia has the capacity to process all cattle and sheep currently going to live export.
- Contrary to industry claims, live export does not underpin 10,000 jobs in the rural sector. The majority of those jobs would remain if animals were processed in Australia. In fact thousands of jobs would be created by increased domestic processing.

A majority of Australians are outraged by cruelty and torture that has been revealed recently and over the years and the Australian Government need to take notice of its constituents and look at other options. NZ has banned live export due to cruelty concerns why can't Australia?

No amount of profit or excuses can justify continued support of the cruelty inherent to the live export trade

Thank you for considering my submission.

Karen Hansen
(WA)