

Submission

Friday 15th July 2011

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

Dear Committee Members,

Re Animal welfare standards in Australia's live export markets

I am writing to provide my opinion, **as a Veterinarian**, of the atrocious treatment of animals slaughtered in foreign countries that originate from Australia. I believe the trade should be stopped as soon as possible

- *“The handling of cattle in the Mark 1 restraint box is atrocious. A system that is designed to make an animal fall should NEVER be used.”* **Dr Temple Grandin** Professor of Animal Science, Colorado State University (expert on ritual slaughter).
- The pain and distress associated with casting animals onto a sloping concrete slab means that this method of restraint will inherently result in excessive discomfort and physical injury.
- The breadth of this suffering is indicated by the finding by RSPCA Australia that 50% of animals vocalised during restraint using a Mark 1 box.
- The difficulties in moving animals into the restraint box, and the time taken to rope the legs, cast and slaughter each animal means that they are each restrained for several minutes, compared to a few seconds when animals are held in upright restraint systems.
- Any killing as witnessed by the investigation of Animals Australia that result in animals having their throat cut up to 30 plus times whilst conscious should be deplored and avoided at all cost. To cut an animal's throat whilst it is conscious is simply wrong.

- Time and again the Department and Meat and Livestock Australia have turned “a blind eye” to the treatment of Animals at their final destination. The only time action is taken as a “knee jerk” response is when Animal Welfare groups such as Animals Australia and the RSPCA have exposed the cruel treatment. It is NOT good enough for the Department issuing the export licenses and the MLA to only act when Animals Australia and others have exposed what is happening. The trade needs to STOP forever as obviously the regulators cannot regulate.
- Why should we permit animals to be treated in a manner that we deem inappropriate in our country, surely not for the mighty dollar that those in the live trade make for themselves.
- As a taxpayer I resent subsidies being paid to an industry that results in such cruelty pain and suffering.
- If I was to treat an animal in the manner these animals are treated in the country that they are slaughtered in, I would be charged with cruelty in this country, we are hypocrites to let the trade continue.
- Thousands of animals die in transport at sea each year which if nothing else is a waste of an animal.
- Restraining animals on their sides for slaughter has been deemed unacceptable by all State and Territory governments.
- Indonesia intends to be self sufficient by 2014 so this market will be short lived in any case.
- What is the carbon foot print of exporting live cattle to a country compared to chilled boxed meat (where the offal etc. is not shipped). Surely on an environmental aspect it is better to export the final product.
- We cannot enforce our regulations on foreign soil thus any legal requirements are futile.
- GPS microchips in the meantime that can be satellite tracked should be used to monitor final destination until this trade is shut down as tracing of stock is dubious at best.

The only acceptable and humane way to slaughter cattle is in an upright position and where the animal is made insensible to pain through stunning prior to slaughter.

The department do not need to waste money and send a delegation, they have the world expert Dr Temple Grandin on Four corners giving her opinion on the Mark 1 Box (no one in the department will be better qualified than Dr Grandin) .

The live export trade should be stopped. I resent tax payers money being spent to subsidize this industry which causes such pain and suffering. To the Indonesians, I could understand why they would assume we are content with their practices as we keep sending our cattle to be treated in such a manner. We must send a clear message that it is **UNACCEPTABLE to send cattle which are treated in such a manner.**

Yours sincerely,

Dr John Jason Arlaud B.Sc., M.Rep.Sci., B.V.Sc Veterinarian