

The terms of reference for the independent review into Australia's livestock export trade are to examine:

- a. the facilities, treatment, handling and slaughter of livestock, exported from Australia, in the importing country for consistency with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) recommendations and standards set out in *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (2010)* published by the World Organisation for Animal Health and other relevant standards
- b. the adequacy of the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL) as they apply to the preparation and export of all livestock with consideration of responsibilities for compliance and enforcement of the ASEL
- c. the adequacy and effectiveness of current Australian regulatory arrangements for the live export trade
- d. the types of livestock suitable (weight, age, body condition, breeds) for export as feeder or slaughter animals
- e. the extent of monitoring required for each export consignment of feeder or slaughter livestock, in a manner that ensures accurate and transparent reporting to the Australian Government of the condition of the livestock from departure from Australia up to and including the point of slaughter in the country of destination
- f. the risk management strategies necessary to address the welfare of animals from departure from Australia, up to and including the point of slaughter in the country of destination
- g. other matters relevant to these terms of reference that the reviewer considers appropriate.

To Bill Farmer O.A.,

a) Having read the OIE standards and the "edited" transcript of the Four Corners interview with Prof. Ivan Caple, it would seem that there *are* facilities that adhere to these standards.

It is not acceptable that cattle are treated inhumanely, and steps should be taken to ensure that cattle from Australia are excluded from sub standard facilities.

I would not want my cattle to suffer this fate.

I understand from reading, that Australia has been very active and is the only country attempting to change animal welfare outcomes in other countries. The MLA should be applauded and encouraged, but also held to account.

Viewing the Four Corners footage, in my opinion it looked like the slaughtermen involved were largely unskilled and poor operators. Prof. Caple's comments gave me the impression you do need to have skilled operators using the box and knife method. This may not be ideal in our culture but it does satisfy the OIE standard. Personally, I would rather see my cattle stunned prior to cutting.

It would be ideal if we could convince our trading partners to allow stunning prior to slaughter; however, we must be mindful of our stand against discrimination on racial or religious grounds which is a basic human right.

b) In my opinion, our ASEL standards are very rigorous and adequately protect our livestock.

I have had cattle rejected on the basis of health concerns and this required me to go and retrieve cattle from an export depot. I was happy to comply as I did not want to jeopardise a significant market vital to my fellow countrymen and the nation.

The ships that take the cattle are, from what I know, run exceptionally well and cattle are very well cared for.

It is my understanding “the companies” make money from the weight gained on the trip over, so it is in their interest to have contented, healthy, low stressed animals. Of course a lot of this is common sense to cattle producers.

I read in the OIE standards recommendations concerning the use of flight zones and the need to reduce stress on animals being handled. There are significant moves in the industry towards this approach; I and many of my associates have been trained in “Low Stress Stockhandling” <http://www.lss.net.au/> techniques.

I am confident when I consign cattle to live export that they will be treated humanely and be well catered for on board the boat. The supply chain is motivated by profit; there is an imperative to present the beast alive in the best possible condition.

c) In relation to the “adequacy and effectiveness of current Australian regulatory arrangements for the live export trade” for reasons stated above I feel that by and large the regulations are good.

There is however a need for traceability of livestock from paddock to slaughterhouse to allow for auditing of the whole chain, this will allow detection of unsatisfactory processes.

We have the ability to do this, as we are obliged by existing laws to identify individual cattle moved from our properties with electronic identification devices “NLIS”. These numbers are recorded on a central database.

d)The cattle from my area required for live export are generally for South East Asia and Egypt and are Bos Indicus type (Brahmans) . These cattle are suited to those hot and hot wet climates and will not be adversely affected by the climates of those destination countries.

The live export specifications and the market as a whole is essential to all areas broadly speaking from the Tropic of Capricorn north.

The main markets available to producers in this area are live export, the store market (cattle are bought to grow into bullocks on grass), the feedlot market (cattle fattened on grain) and the meatworks.

The irregular and sometimes very low rainfall wet seasons require Bos Indicus cattle, that while tough enough to handle our conditions, aren't well sort after by the feedlot market.

In much of northern Australian we have difficulty in “making a bullock” (slaughter weight) on our pastures - profitably.

In practicality if I can produce a beast that will command a premium at an Australian meat works I will do it; if it is profitable. Live export creates a market for cattle and producers that cannot consistently produce fat bullocks profitably.

I do not think selling female cattle to a foreign country, to start their own industry is necessarily good, but they have to be sourced from somewhere, and with this comes the risk of introducing them from a country where Foot-and-mouth disease is endemic. A Foot-and-mouth outbreak would devastate our industry and be an animal welfare nightmare.

It is worth noting that large parts of The Gulf country and The Northern Territory cannot profitably produce slaughter cattle consistently. This is one reason meatworks closed up there.

The live export trade is another competitor in the market place, this provides a more efficient market mechanism and adds value to beef cattle enterprises in the north.

e) & f) There is a need for traceability of livestock from paddock to slaughterhouse to allow for auditing of the whole chain. This will allow detection of unsatisfactory processes.

We have the ability to do this as we are obliged by existing laws to identify individual cattle moved from our properties with electronic identification devices "NLIS". These numbers are recorded on a central database. They can be electronically scanned very easily as cattle walk past.

g) I would like to see some investigation into the Four Corners programme "A Bloody Business". Whilst I am pleased they exposed the worst of these practices so we can do something about it,

I found it distressing to watch and in many people's opinion very biased towards the worst cases. Very little footage was shown of well run abattoirs. I am lead to believe the ABC has a duty to give a balanced view on issues. That program in my opinion was designed to get an emotional response and cause a furore.

In conclusion I would like to say the live export has an overwhelmingly positive effect on the people of Northern Australia. Not only cattle producers but also; truckies, ringers, the workers in the holding yards, hay farmers, and the communities that support all these people.

I believe the industry is capable and willing to do the very best they can to see our cattle are treated humanely.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my views.

David Griffiths