



Ms Sarah Dye

7th July 2011

Dear Sirs,

Re: Submission letter regarding Independent Review into Live export trade.

For the last 30 years or so the Australian livestock export industry and Government have allowed millions of animals to be exported overseas to countries that have no animal welfare laws to protect them.

The terrible journey for these animals starts on board the live export ships. **Tens of thousands of animals die each year on board live export facility ships**, before even reaching their final destinations. Animals have to endure long voyages at times through extremely rough seas, hot humid weather conditions, often without proper access to food and water. Sheep especially have problems even identifying the pelletised feed as food and in fact, around 40,000 sheep alone die on board live export facility ships each year, half from starvation and the rest from physical trauma and disease like salmonellosis exacerbated by stress and overcrowding. **In 2010 cattle deaths rose by 20% on board these live export ships.** The animals have to stand in their own excrement and urine sometimes for weeks on end, causing respiratory problems. All in all the transportation on ships is causing suffering and death so for this reason alone is enough to cease the trade. Animals are rammed on board these ships in great numbers with little room to move around. Live export of these animals for the above reasons is inherently cruel and needs to be immediately assessed and consideration given to it being halted.

The facilities at the animals' destinations are often way below Australian animal welfare standards. Tracking of these animals sent overseas would be hard to enforce in reality so again we would not be able to fully guarantee or safeguard the welfare of these animals. I do not believe that even if recommendations were put in place that they would be adhered to, after all, decades in this trade and we are still seeing appalling treatment of animals on board ships and in receiving countries. There has been no improvements at all for the animals welfare, in fact it has worsened.

Australia cannot guarantee the welfare of animals once they reach other countries and despite 30 years of industry involvement and investigations by animal welfare agencies, animals continue to endure immense suffering. As we have seen time and time again animals being sent overseas are continually being subjected to brutality and being handled in an abjectly cruel way from port to final place of slaughter. We cannot ever ensure our animals are treated humanely in countries where many of whom have no animal welfare laws in place. The bodies responsible have failed these animals dismally and will continue to do so if nothing is done to stop the trade, after all they have had years to implement more humane treatment and have done very little. The way in which these

animals are slaughtered is often done in a way that causes a long lingering painful death by inexperienced workers in abattoirs and worse, people with no training using blunt instruments in places of slaughter that will never be able to be policed. The government cannot even insist on the mandatory use of stunguns in the recent case of the heinous torture of our cattle in Indonesia !! Sheep in the Middle East should not be bundled into boots of cars and on roof racks in 45 degrees heat with no access to water, which it appears is STILL the case even after resumption of the sheep trade after a 3 year ban due to these very issues. The Meat and Livestock Association has spent more money on marketing than ensuring welfare standards are upheld and in fact the Mark 1 restraint boxes have only added to the brutal treatment and enabled more brutal treatment of our cattle in Indonesia, the world's leading slaughter expert Dr Temple Grandin has stated these boxes would be illegal in Australia. The OIE Code sets out international MINIMUM standards for animal welfare, which is far below the minimum standards of major livestock exporting countries like Australia. The OIE standards allow the slaughter of fully conscious animals: this is not permitted under Australian slaughter standards.

Finally, the live export of animals is inherently cruel from start to finish and should be phased out completely. Full consideration should be given to phasing out this trade. The Meat and Livestock Association has been negligent and i feel blatantly ignoring and covering up cruelty. I believe that monetary gain has superceded any commitment to attempt to increase the welfare or conditions these animals have to endure from Port to final destination, in fact as we have seen it has worsened. The only way the welfare of these animals can be ensured is by having the animals kept on shore here in Australia where we can ensure the welfare is at the forefront before and during processing. We have no control once these animals leave our shores.

It is time this barbaric outdated treatment of animals became history. Sometimes ethics do have to come before profits and no more so when the commodity being dealt with is living and breathing and feeling.

I no longer have faith in the government to ensure any change in the way that live export animals are treated.

The spotlight is internationally now on Australia and our great nation's image is being blighted and tarnished by the recent publicity and i feel we can only redeem ourselves by stopping this cruel practice.

I find it totally unacceptable to continue the live export trade and feel it should be halted for good immediately. Australians can never be given a guarantee that the terrible animal cruelty witnessed since live export began will stop and indeed that cruelty associated with the trade increases as we have seen recently.

Yours sincerely