

3/7/2011

The Committee Secretary
The Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Inquiry into improvements in animal welfare for Australian Live Exports
Dear Senators,

Please find this submission to the Committee inquiring into improvements in animal welfare for Australian Live Exports.

The submission initially details past professional negligence and incompetence by the Federal Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) and by the Industry bodies, MLA Ltd and Livecorp Australia, in their legally defined responsibilities in animal welfare and humane caring for Australian exported live cattle when within Indonesian abattoirs. The submission then suggests necessary animal welfare protocols for Halal slaughter in Indonesia..

DAFF has ignored the animal husbandry protocols necessary for the welfare of these cattle in Halal slaughtering, has ceded its animal welfare responsibilities to these Industry bodies and has allowed these bodies to dictate, that the Federal Government's trade agendas are to have more importance than these animals' welfare.

DAFF is aware, from its 3 bio-security import and 2 **export** scandals, since 2004, that the Federal Government with these Industry bodies and vested industry interests, will try to and will conceal each others professional incompetence.

(1)DAFF has failed to improve the animal welfare of these exported live cattle when it had been fully aware of existing animal cruelty for years. DAFF had been made aware of this from written reports from external animal welfare specialists and also from their own staff written reports.

(2)DAFF has not demanded that Industry bodies, MLA Ltd, Livecorp Australia and other affiliated industry bodies be accountable in enacting urgent and necessary changes, to improve these animals' welfare, when within Indonesian abattoirs.

(3) Meat and Livestock Australia Ltd (MLA), Livecorp Australia and the other affiliated industry bodies have been legally constituted by the Federal Government.

Their powers to levy beef producers and receive Government grants exist from their legal treaties and liaisons with Government, but they share responsibilities with DAFF, which include those of animal welfare of the exported cattle to Indonesia.

(4) DAFF issues the export permits which allow these cattle to leave Australia for slaughtering in Indonesian abattoirs.

DAFF's professional animal welfare staff are also responsible for the supply of specialist animal welfare advice to MLA and Livecorp Australia.

MLA's and Livecorp Australia's animal welfare staff have failed to act on written animal welfare reports received from DAFF and after repeatedly seeing for themselves, the extreme cruelty, inflicted on these cattle in Indonesian abattoirs.

The chief animal welfare officer of Livecorp Australia with his family had been moved to Indonesia. The designs of inefficient and expensive MLA "restraint boxes" remains as testimony to his contemptuous ignorance of Halal and professional negligence.

This continued use of these primitive "boxes" without gaining Halal approval for stunning procedures from the many parochial Islamic Imams in Indonesia, is beyond belief.

Industry and DAFF welfare officers should have been aware that non – penetrating stunning devices had been granted Halal approval by all parochial Imams in Malaysia, with, of course, the annual visits by the Imams to inspect each abattoir to confirm the religious holiness of the Halal slaughtering at that abattoir.

These welfare officers failed to adapt other governments' Halal slaughtering procedures to the Indonesian Islamic culture.

Those systems in the U.S., E.U. etc and in New Zealand were ignored.

Within N.Z., the Wairoa system has Halal approval for stunning with an electrical probe to the chest, to cause ventricular fibrillation with animal collapse but is alive and is considered to be not conscious of pain, before the cervical stroke preceding ex-sanguination.

(5) Animal welfare officers and staff members of DAFF, Livecorp Australia and MLA have in fact ignored the cruelty that they had seen in Indonesia.

They were fully aware that continued misuse of thoughtlessly designed 109 non-compressive restraint "boxes" was compounding animal cruelty with the failure to gain Halal approval for stunning devices for these abattoirs.

(6) MLA and Livecorp Australia had organised and purchased 109 non-compressible sides, "restraint boxes" from manufacturers, which they have had installed in 91 Indonesian abattoirs, where Australian cattle were slaughtered.

These "boxes" are totally inefficient in their designs, as necessary animal husbandry tools for Halal slaughter by Indonesian slaughtermen.

The number of each of the 4 types of "boxes" and the individual costs of each type of "box" needs to be determined, as these Industry Bodies refuse to reveal their real costs.

The Committee needs to know how many MLA Mark IV, of the 109 "boxes" were installed in Indonesian abattoirs before the 1st June 2011.

MLA's 4 types of "boxes" were extremely poorly designed.

The "boxes" are of such primitive and thoughtless animal husbandry designs, without any lateral sides' compressible capabilities at all, that they are considered to be a large part of the actual cause of the animal cruelty seen on television in Australia.

Halal slaughtering is culturally obnoxious for Australians but Halal in Levantine cultures, must not have and does not condone any animal cruelty.

Indonesian slaughtermen were seen to vent their violent frustrations, when trying to use these mindlessly designed non-compressible sided "boxes" for Halal

slaughtering, as they were unable to handle the terrified cattle if and when they were released from these "boxes". The workers' fears of personal injury contributed to their furious, spiteful and extreme cruelty towards these terrified cattle.

DAFF, MLA and Livecorp Australia had failed to introduce necessary improvements on the thoughtlessness of designs of these slaughtering boxes.

Only in the **Mark 1V**, is there **"a roll-over to the horizontal" capability, whilst there is still no lateral sides compressive capabilities**, which indicates gross ignorance of the necessary animal husbandry for Halal slaughtering.

(7) Many Australian farmers could cheaply manufacture a more efficient "restraint box" in their farm workshop, than those which the MLA has purchased at huge costs.

Calf cradle- like compressible lateral sides crushes with solid sheet metal sides with portal hinged windows (for access to cervical and/or cardiac areas) which are compressible and thus restrain the animal by squeezing, are necessarily basic for the design.

Additionally, a capability to rotate from the upright to the horizontal position are be added, but be aware that some Imams insist on an animal's upright position and thus rotation may not be accepted everywhere in Indonesia.

Designs depend on solid welding of the sides onto a single framed metal base unit with hinges, concreted into the floor of the race.

Rotation is by manually operated leverage, rachets and wheels, (as in the old wool presses but they have vertical directed bale compression) and having, at rest, dorsally sited, slide-down bail yoking.

The metal basal hinging unit must be concreted in, for stability. The manually operated sides' compression and rotational capabilities are independent of each other but are simple and do not require expensive gearing. Electrical powered hydraulics are not obligatory.

The Managing Director of .MLA has stated in the LAND, 23rd June 2011 that the Mark 1V "restraint box" is an improved design -a roll-over controlled " box":-

"This box (Mark 1V) makes ongoing improvements in the casting process, however its operation requires electricity -run hydraulic motors thus increasing the complexity of its uptake and limiting its commercial use as many abattoirs do not have reliable electricity"

These statements may be seen as an attempt to conceal previous MLA and Livecorp Australia's animal husbandry and animal welfare negligence.

His statements infer an end point to and a limit for, proposed roll-over type improvements in design, so pathetically missing from previous MLA "boxes".

The Managing Director states that abattoirs without "reliable electricity" would not be able to use the Mark IV without electrically powered hydraulics.

This is an attempt to lead away from manually operated, cheaply produced, **compressible sided and rotational improvements** to come.

The manually operated calf cradle type, the truly compressive crushes, with rollover capabilities, hinged side windows and dorsal bailing, as described

above, are awaiting development. They will not depend on electrical power, if it is either not available or "unreliable". Compressible crushes without a roll-over component, retail at \$7000.00 in Australia but a handy man could make a calf cradle compressive type crush with a roll-over protocol, as described, for less than \$2000.00.

(8) *MLA, Livecorp Australia and until June 2011, DAFF and the Federal Government had not sought appropriate rapport with the Indonesian Government. They have ignored the Indonesian Imams. They have not found how to satisfy the parochial Imams with their varied and very ambiguous Halal requirements for pre-exsanguination non-penetrative stunning, so necessary with the on-going use of the thoughtlessly designed MLA boxes.*

Jarvis Model USSS-2A pneumatic stunner has Malaysian approval and advice has been received that it may also receive universal Indonesian Islamic approval.

Unfortunately these air stunners retail at \$21,000.00 each. They require 250psi air compressors and 10 of these are **NOW** available in Australia.

Plans by the Federal Government, DAFF, MLA and Livecorp Australia, to induce the Indonesian to allow Halal slaughter using **Cash type stun guns** with the continuing use of the mindlessly designed MLA "boxes", **are not likely to result in general Halal approval in Indonesia** or resumption of exports.

MLA is considering the purchase of these Cash type stun guns but it is considered to be a public relations exercise for the Australian public, than a real attempt to restart the exports.

(9) DAFF, MLA and Livecorp Australia have failed, until June 2011, to contact other Islamic Governments to determine how such semi-wild cattle, as those going from northern Australia, could be humanely slaughtered, according to Halal requirements in Indonesia.

They have failed in their duty of care to Australian beef producers again by their inept animal husbandry planning protocols for Halal slaughtering and by wastage of funds given to them.

It has been noted since 2000, that the Federal Governments' trade agendas, instrumented with these same Industry bodies and vested industry interests, have compromised the professional integrity of some staff within DAFF.

It is believed that the Board members, executives and certain staff members of MLA and Livecorp Australia should be examined for their lack of care of the export live cattle industry and in their disregard for fiscal responsibility, in wasting funds made available to them.

There is the common perception that there has have been widespread roting of the financial system and gross neglect of responsibilities, by those who know that DAFF will not expose them without revealing their own professional negligence.

Yours Sincerely

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