

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee

Questions on Notice – Wednesday, 10 August 2011 Canberra ACT

Inquiry into Animal welfare standards in Australia's live export markets

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Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee

Inquiry into Animal Welfare Standards in Australia's Live Export Markets

Public Hearing – Canberra – 10 August 2011

Questions Taken on Notice

World Society for the Protection of Animals

Page Number	Question
3-4	<p>Senator EDWARDS: I am interested in looking at some of the representations because obviously there is a lot of politics involved. Your organisation asserts that 79 per cent of people think it is cruel. You then go on to say that polls show that 79 per cent of Australians think that live sheep exports are cruel. Are you able to table for this inquiry those polls and the questions you asked which led to that result?</p> <p>Mrs Jankevics: Sure. I was not working for WSPA when that poll was released, so I will have to double-check on that with certain people, but I am sure I can get my hands on that and forward it on.</p>

WORLD SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS

Answer to question taken on notice – 10 August 2011

Galaxy Poll

Prepared for: World society for the Protection of Animals July 2010
Live Sheep Trade Study

Methodology:

- This study was conducted on the Galaxy Omnibus on the weekend of Friday 23 July to Sunday 25 July 2010.
- The sample of 1,100 respondents aged 16 years and over, was distributed throughout Australia as follows:
 - NSW/ACT 330
 - Victoria/Tasmania 310
 - Queensland 200
 - South Australia 130
 - Western Australia 130
- Interviews were conducted using CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing) with telephone numbers randomly selected from electronic White Pages. All interviewers were personally trained and briefed on the requirements of the study.
- Age, gender and region quotas were applied to the sample.
- Following the completion of interviewing, the data was weighted by age, gender and region to reflect the latest ABS population estimates.

Main findings:

- The large majority (79%) of Australians, agree that live sheep exports are cruel. Females especially say this (90%), and younger Australians (85% among 16-24 year olds). Almost three in four (70%) of females would 'strongly agree' that live sheep exports are cruel.
- Three in four (76%) of Australians agree that Australia should stop exporting to countries that do not meet either Australian or international standards for animal welfare. The large majority (85%) of women say this.
- Most (86%) Australians agree that the Australian government should phase out the live sheep export trade if there is an alternative that saves Australian jobs. Almost all (93%) of younger (16-24 year old) Australians say this, as do 91% of females.

Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee

Inquiry into Animal Welfare Standards in Australia's Live Export Markets

Public Hearing – Canberra – 10 August 2011

Questions Taken on Notice

Animals Australia

Page Number	Question
17	<p>Senator BACK: Ms White, what days were you in Indonesia in 2011?</p> <p>Ms White: Can I take that question on notice? It was in the second half of March.</p>
17	<p>Senator BACK: Coming to Sumatra, we see in the program some footage of the taxi into which you got. Did you use the same driver every time you were in Sumatra?</p> <p>Ms White: No, we did not.</p> <p>Senator BACK: So you used a different driver each time?</p> <p>Ms White: We had a local animal advocate with us.</p> <p>Senator BACK: Yes, but the actual taxidriver—the person who we saw filmed, the driver getting into the vehicle driving off.</p> <p>Ms White: That would have been the local animal advocate that was with us.</p> <p>Senator BACK: So he was also a taxidriver? Do you know what his name was?</p> <p>Ms White: No, I cannot recall that.</p> <p>Senator BACK: Could you take that on notice so that you can inform the committee.</p> <p>Ms White: I can certainly ask, yes.</p>
22	<p>Senator ADAMS: Firstly, I would like to know from both organisations: how much government funding do your organisations obtain?</p> <p>Ms Oogjes: Absolutely minimal. Our primary income is from our supporters and community donations. We get a small grant from the federal government because we provide a service as an umbrella organisation—is which our organisation is—representing 40 organisations providing input to government inquiries and committees and such things. So that is a small grant in aid each year. It represents less than a per cent of our income.</p> <p>Senator ADAMS: So how much is it?</p> <p>Ms Oogjes: I will take that on notice, but it is in the order of about \$30,000 per year.</p> <p>Ms Neil: RSPCA Australia receives a grant in aid from the department of finance in the order of \$30,000—I will come back to you with the exact amount.</p> <p>Senator ADAMS: What is that for?</p> <p>Ms Neil: That actually funds our animal scientific seminar and the provision of animal welfare science updates to the wider community. Many senators, MPs and industry bodies receive it and find it very valuable. It is an analysis of the latest animal welfare science.</p>
24	<p>Senator XENOPHON: Okay. I will put these questions on notice to the RSPCA and Animals Australia. You have both been critical of the governance structures and</p>

	<p>about potential conflicts of interest with the department, MLA and LiveCorp. Could you on notice set out what you think would be a better governance structure to deal with animal welfare issues and to avoid conflicts? Secondly, if it is within your knowledge, can you outline what your understanding is of what the impact of the New Zealand ban on live sheep exports several years ago has been on the New Zealand market? Thirdly, OIE standards do not actually require a stunning at this stage. Can you outline what that is not the case and whether there are moves to have stunning as the standard practice? Finally, in relation to the mark IV boxes, can you outline whether you have had a chance to assess those and whether you have had a chance to see how they would be compliant or not with international standards? That is it, Chair.</p>
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13 September 2011

Committee Secretary
Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Committee members,

Animals Australia responses to Questions on Notice –
Inquiry into *Animal welfare standards in Australia's live export markets*
Committee Hearing of 10 August 2011.

Page 17:

Senator BACK: Ms White, what days were you in Indonesia in 2011?

Answer: Ms White was in Indonesia in the second half of March 2011, from 15/3/2011 – 23/3/2011.

Senator BACK: Coming to Sumatra, we see in the program some footage of the taxi into which you got. Did you use the same driver every time you were in Sumatra?

Ms White: No, we did not.

Senator BACK: So you used a different driver each time?

Ms White: We had a local animal advocate with us.

Senator BACK: Yes, but the actual taxidriver—the person who we saw filmed, the driver getting into the vehicle driving off.

Ms White: That would have been the local animal advocate that was with us.

Senator BACK: So he was also a taxidriver? Do you know what his name was?

Ms White: No, I cannot recall that.

Senator BACK: Could you take that on notice so that you can inform the committee.

Ms White: I can certainly ask, yes.

Answer: We are advised by the local animal protection group that they do not wish to be named, nor the driver named, for fear of reprisals in Indonesia.

Page 22:

Senator ADAMS: Firstly, I would like to know from both organisations: how much government funding do your organisations obtain?

Ms Oogjes: Absolutely minimal. Our primary income is from our supporters and community donations. We get a small grant from the federal government because we provide a service as an umbrella organisation—is which our organisation is—representing 40 organisations providing input to

government inquiries and committees and such things. So that is a small grant in aid each year. It represents less than a per cent of our income.

Senator ADAMS: So how much is it?

Ms Oogjes: I will take that on notice, but it is in the order of about \$30,000 per year.

Answer: Animals Australia received \$31,560.00 as a 'grant-in-aid funding for the 2010-11 year from the Department of Finance and Deregulation. The grant is for the purpose of providing a co-ordinated animal welfare view and input into government agriculture, environment and science portfolios.

Please also note that my estimate in regard to the statement that the grant represents 'less than a percent of our income' was not correct. It is a higher % than that (but our accounts have not been completed for this year).

Page 24

Senator XENOPHON: Okay. I will put these questions on notice to the RSPCA and Animals Australia. You have both been critical of the governance structures and about potential conflicts of interest with the department, MLA and LiveCorp. Could you on notice set out what you think would be a better governance structure to deal with animal welfare issues and to avoid conflicts?

Answer: We concur with the answer provided by RSPCA Australia to this question in regard to concern about co-funding of overseas animal welfare projects given the deficiencies of past projects (see the Animals Australia submission to the inquiry).

Further, there is a clear conflict of interest in the current governance of the live export industry by the Department of Agriculture. On its website and in other statements and publications, the Department is a clear proponent of the industry whilst also being the key enforcement body through the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service. This conflict has manifest itself to the detriment of animal welfare in our view through:

- The knowledge of overseas treatment of Australian animals being unsatisfactory and below OIE Guidelines, yet continuing to support the live export industry and provide joint funding (see our submission to the Committee pages 6 and 7 which outline DAFF's knowledge),
- The conflict evident in the Department's attempt to promote both live animal exports and an export meat trade (see our submission page 3 and 4),
- The failure of AQIS to appropriately pursue its own recommendations to the industry, in particularly recommendations relevant to onboard issues such as heat stress management/density, management and treatment of enteritis on board, and vaccinations for pneumonia to reduce deaths on board, and
- The failure of AQIS to enforce and sanction breaches of the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL).

In regard to the failures to adequately enforce ASEL, it has become clear over the past seven years (since ASEL was introduced) that AQIS avoids taking significant action such as revoking an export license, even when the breach causes significant welfare problems, preferring instead to merely impose further conditions on the following voyage/s. This has meant that practices have occurred without subsequent sanction allowing, for example, cows to give birth on board ship, ship's decks to be so slippery that cattle fall and break their legs or do the 'splits' and are thereafter unable to rise, and animals with severe infections permitted to be loaded, resulting in widespread outbreaks of serious infections during the voyage. Furthermore, AQIS has been prepared to allow other important breaches to go unpunished, including allowing responsible persons to leave the ship before voyages are completed, allowing ships to depart with inadequate food onboard, and allowing voyages to take place where there are not sufficient persons available to look after animals properly.

We therefore believe that the role of overseeing live export (whilst ever it continues) in terms of compliance with ASEL, and the overseas monitoring of animal welfare of Australian animals exported live should be the responsibility of a statutorily-created independent body. This body should also have direct responsibility for the contracting of those whose responsibility it is to monitor the wellbeing of animals exported live, including veterinarians and stockpersons on board ships, and any persons responsible for monitoring overseas. This is particularly important given what we think is compelling evidence of exporter pressure on veterinarians to under-report onboard mortalities.

Secondly, if it is within your knowledge, can you outline what your understanding is of what the impact of the New Zealand ban on live sheep exports several years ago has been on the New Zealand market?

Answer: Please refer to the comprehensive answer provided by RSPCA Australia on this point.

Thirdly, OIE standards do not actually require a stunning at this stage. Can you outline what that is not the case and whether there are moves to have stunning as the standard practice?

Answer: Please refer to the comprehensive answer provided by RSPCA relevant to the position of the OIE.

Further, it should be noted that during a current Australian review of the animal welfare aspects of slaughter, and thus the role of stunning in humane slaughter, the current international scientific literature has been fully explored. Each of two major Australian reviews provided to PIMC in November 2009 (the first by Drs Adams and Sheridanⁱ, the second Hemsworth, Fisher, Mellor and Johnsonⁱⁱ) deferred to the Scientific Report of the Animal Health and Welfare Panel of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in its 2004 review 'Welfare Aspects of Animal Stunning and Killing Methods'.

Extract from Section 1.1 of the EFSA report:

'The animals which are slaughtered have systems for detecting and feeling pain and, as a result of the cut and the blood loss, if not stunned, their welfare will be poor because of pain, fear and other adverse effects. The cuts which are used in order that rapid bleeding occurs involve substantial tissue damage in areas well supplied with pain receptors. The rapid decrease in blood pressure which follows the blood loss is readily detected by the conscious animal and elicits fear and panic. Poor welfare also results when conscious animals inhale blood because of bleeding into the trachea. Without stunning, the time between cutting through the major blood vessels and insensibility, as deduced from behavioural and brain response, is up to 20 seconds in sheep, up to 25 seconds in pigs, up to 2 minutes in cattle, up to 2 1/2 or more minutes in poultry, and sometimes 15 minutes or more in fish.' [Published in 'The EFSA Journal' (2004), 45, 1-29] (our emphasis)

These descriptions and the volume and quality of the scientific assessment that underpin this information, show clearly why Australia must ensure that all its animals (in Australia or overseas) are stunned prior to slaughter and should actively work to ensure this becomes a standard requirement in the OIE Guidelines.

Finally, in relation to the mark IV boxes, can you outline whether you have had a chance to assess those and whether you have had a chance to see how they would be compliant or not with international standards?

Answer: Please refer to the comprehensive answer provided by RSPCA Australia on this last point.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide further information on these issues. Please contact me if you require for clarification.

Yours sincerely,



Glenys Oogjes
Executive Director

ⁱ 'Specifying the Risks to Animal Welfare Associated with Livestock Slaughter without Induced Insensibility', Adams and Sheridan, 2008

ⁱⁱ 'A Scientific Comment on the Welfare of Sheep Slaughtered without Stunning, AWSC and the AWSBC, July 2009

Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee

Inquiry into Animal Welfare Standards in Australia's Live Export Markets

Public Hearing – Canberra – 10 August 2011

Questions Taken on Notice

Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association

Page Number	Question
34	<p>Mr Beer: About five or six years ago I met with LiveCorp to discuss some of the issues regarding facilities. We did not go too far there. I also met representatives at a major port in Victoria—exporters; wharf people plus contractors on the wharf; and feedlot operators, as I said. At sort of hit a brick wall. We have tried.</p> <p>Senator XENOPHON: On notice, could you give some more details about the nature of the meetings and when you put these concerns to them. I understand that you have focused on this more closely in the last three to four weeks, but are you planning to raise these issues directly with the department and LiveCorp and MLA as a result of your forensically looking at these regulations?</p>

THE AUSTRALASIAN MEAT INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES' UNION

(Federal Council)



Federal Secretary
BRIAN CRAWFORD

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22 August 2011

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

BY MAIL AND FAX: (02) 6277 5811

Re: Inquiry into Animal Welfare Standards in Australia's Live Export Markets

I refer to the above and page 41 of the transcript of the public hearings conducted in Canberra on 10 August 2011. During the presentation of our submission, we took on notice the issue of the number of temporary migrant workers in the Australian meat processing industry and undertook to provide figures from the Department of Immigration once we had received them.

Please find following this correspondence:

- (i) A copy of our initial inquiry upon the Department of Immigration on 22 June 2011; and
- (ii) The reply we received from the Department of Immigration on 19 August 2011.

The total number of temporary migrant workers in every category we could possibly think of is **2407**, however we add two qualifications. Firstly, this figure includes secondary visa holders. These are spouses and dependent children. Whilst our practical experience is that many secondary visa holders do work in the meat processing industry, it is certainly not the case that all of them do. Secondly, the figures include numbers from the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme, which is essentially an immediate pathway to permanent residence, as distinct to a temporary stay sub-class 457 visa.

In our submission to the Committee (#290), we noted at page 45 that the most recent Australian Bureau of Statistics figures indicate that **31 584** workers were directly employed

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22 August 2011

in meat processing (2008/09). We also noted that due to some recent closures and shift layoffs, that figure might currently be around the 30 000 mark.

We would appreciate it if you could provide this correspondence to the members of the Committee.

If you have any enquiries in relation to the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards



BRIAN CRAWFORD
FEDERAL SECRETARY
A.M.I.E.U.

Lee Norris

From: Lee Norris
Sent: Wednesday, 22 June 2011 1:51 PM
To:
Cc:
Subject: Statistics - Temporary Skilled Meatworkers Sub Class 457 Visa holders

Hi Jasmine

I'm an official with the meatworkers Union in Queensland. An outreach officer from the Department filling in for Julie Garrett suggested I contact you for some information.

During discussions with several House of Reps politicians in Canberra last week, a question asked of me often was "aren't the majority of meatworkers in Australia foreign temporary workers?"

I could only give an estimation of the percentages based on my experience. I feel it would be highly beneficial if I could give accurate figures in the future.

Would you be able to provide me with statistics of:

1. The current number of 457 visa holders in Australia as "skilled meatworkers" nominated under the meat industry Labour Agreements, including secondary visa holders; and
2. The current number of sub-class 457 visa holders in Australia nominated as Slaughterpersons under the standard 457 program, including secondary visa holders (this number should be small and dwindling); and
3. The current number of permanent RSMS visa holders in Australia nominated under the (soon to be impermissible) "slaughterperson" nomination.

This would be greatly appreciated. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me

Regards

Lee Norris
AMIEU

Sent from my iPhone



Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Citizenship

19 August 2011

Hi Lee

Thank you for your enquiry.

As you are already aware, workers who have been in Australia on a Subclass 457 visa as a 'skilled meat worker' cannot be approved for a Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) visa, as this is not a recognised occupation in the RSMS program. New workers from overseas wishing to work as slaughterers, boners or slicers must be sponsored under the new Meat Industry Labour Agreement and be nominated as skilled meat workers.

From September 2007, reforms to the RSMS program meant that under ANZSCO, the occupation of Slaughterer (831212) was reduced to a Skill Level 4 occupation and can therefore only be approved as an exceptional appointment. ANZSCO also reduced the skill level from a trade occupation in ASCO to a semi-skilled occupation in ANZSCO.

DIAC provided a transition period for clients where it would continue to assess the occupation of Slaughterer, despite the lower skill requirement for the occupation under ANZSCO, to ensure clients were not unfairly treated. This transition period no longer applies and DIAC assesses Slaughterer on the same basis as all other semi-skilled occupations.

As a consequence, this occupation can only be approved as an exceptional appointment if the employer can demonstrate the work is different from any other slaughtering positions in Australia. The applicant must have been employed by the employer and have held a Subclass 457 visa granted for the occupation of Slaughterer for the last two years. The occupation of 'Skilled Meat Worker' is not an ANZSCO occupation and would not meet this requirement.

Bearing the above in mind, please see the answers to your enquiries below:

1. The number of Subclass 457 visa holders in Australia employed as 'skilled meat workers' nominated under the Meat Industry Labour Agreement:

Primary sponsored persons: 1030

Secondary sponsored persons: 1170

Total: 2200 workers

2. The number of Subclass 457 visa holders in Australia nominated as Slaughterers under the standard 457 program, including secondary visa holders:

Primary sponsored persons: 80

people our business

6 Chan Street Belconnen ACT 2617

PO Box 25 BELCONNEN ACT 2616 • Telephone (02) 6264 1111 • Facsimile (02) 6225 6970 • Website: www.immi.gov.au

- 2 -

Secondary sponsored persons: 40

Total: 120 workers

N.B: these numbers relate to visas granted under previous eligibility arrangements for the 457 program. No further 457 visas are being granted in these occupations.

3. The number of permanent RSMS visa holders in Australia nominated under the ANZSCO 831212 Slaughterer occupation:

Primary sponsored persons: 58

Secondary sponsored persons: 29

Total: 87 workers

Out of the 87 permanent RSMS visa holders mentioned above, only 18 of those will still hold valid permanent RSMS visas after 31 December 2011.

If you have any further enquiries regarding the above information, please don't hesitate to contact me on (02) 6264 3525 or email me at meat.mining.construction@immi.gov.au

Regards,

Jasmine Byrne
Meat Industry Labour Agreements
Labour Agreements Section
Department of Immigration & Citizenship

Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee

Inquiry into Animal Welfare Standards in Australia's Live Export Markets

Public Hearing – Canberra – 10 August 2011

Questions Taken on Notice

RSPCA

Page Number	Question
22	<p>Senator ADAMS: Firstly, I would like to know from both organisations: how much government funding do your organisations obtain?</p> <p>Ms Oogjes: Absolutely minimal. Our primary income is from our supporters and community donations. We get a small grant from the federal government because we provide a service as an umbrella organisation—is which our organisation is—representing 40 organisations providing input to government inquiries and committees and such things. So that is a small grant in aid each year. It represents less than a per cent of our income.</p> <p>Senator ADAMS: So how much is it?</p> <p>Ms Oogjes: I will take that on notice, but it is in the order of about \$30,000 per year.</p> <p>Ms Neil: RSPCA Australia receives a grant in aid from the department of finance in the order of \$30,000—I will come back to you with the exact amount.</p> <p>Senator ADAMS: What is that for?</p> <p>Ms Neil: That actually funds our animal scientific seminar and the provision of animal welfare science updates to the wider community. Many senators, MPs and industry bodies receive it and find it very valuable. It is an analysis of the latest animal welfare science.</p>
24	<p>Senator XENOPHON: Okay. I will put these questions on notice to the RSPCA and Animals Australia. You have both been critical of the governance structures and about potential conflicts of interest with the department, MLA and LiveCorp. Could you on notice set out what you think would be a better governance structure to deal with animal welfare issues and to avoid conflicts? Secondly, if it is within your knowledge, can you outline what your understanding is of what the impact of the New Zealand ban on live sheep exports several years ago has been on the New Zealand market? Thirdly, OIE standards do not actually require a stunning at this stage. Can you outline what that is not the case and whether there are moves to have stunning as the standard practice? Finally, in relation to the mark IV boxes, can you outline whether you have had a chance to assess those and whether you have had a chance to see how they would be compliant or not with international standards? That is it, Chair.</p>

14 September 2011

Committee Secretary
Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Committee

RSPCA Australia response to Question on Notice - Hearing date 10 August 2011

Thank you for the opportunity to respond in detail to the Questions on Notice from Senator Adams and Senator Xenophon. We will address each of their questions in turn on the following pages.

Every animal exported live for slaughter is vulnerable at every stage of the export process. Some of these vulnerabilities (or risks to animal welfare) may be able to be minimised or managed in a highly regulated and controlled environment while others, particularly those relating to the stress of long distance transport, the suffering associated with unstunned slaughter, the requirement for cultural change, and the need to monitor welfare outcomes, are more difficult or impossible to overcome on an individual animal basis.

In the interest of animal welfare, the live export trade must end and be replaced with a meat-only trade.

Yours sincerely



Heather Neil
Chief Executive Officer
RSPCA Australia

Attachment 1: Animal welfare risk management framework

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RSPCA Australia response to Question on Notice

Hearing date 10 August 2011

Senator ADAMS: Firstly, I would like to know from both organisations: how much government funding do your organisations obtain?

In the financial year 2010-2011, RSPCA Australia received a grant-in-aid from the Australian Government Department of Finance and Deregulation of \$31,560.00. The grant-in-aid provides funds for the production of RSPCA policy and position papers; for the annual RSPCA Australia Scientific Seminar; for education of the community through targeted education campaigns, the website and the quarterly *Animal Welfare Science Update*; and, for the provision of specialist advice through various committees.

Senator XENOPHON: Okay. I will put these questions on notice to the RSPCA and Animals Australia. You have both been critical of the governance structures and about potential conflicts of interest with the department, MLA and LiveCorp. Could you on notice set out what you think would be a better governance structure to deal with animal welfare issues and to avoid conflicts?

It is RSPCA Australia's view that, if the Government is going to invest in animal welfare improvements overseas, then this should be done separately from any industry involvement in that country. This support could be provided through overseas aid and other in-country assistance programs carried out in collaboration with local authorities as part of efforts to implement or improve animal welfare regulation. For example, through the Australian Agency for International Development's (AusAID) global food security initiative, which aims to lift agricultural productivity, and through the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) which commissions research and training into improving sustainable agricultural production in developing countries.

The live export industry is only ever going to invest in animal welfare improvements overseas if it is necessary to maintain market access and to convince the Australian community that live exporters care about animal welfare.

There should be no (financial) gain other than a measurable improvement in animal welfare - essentially a public good - and a transfer of knowledge that will allow continued improvement in years to come.

RSPCA Australia does not support the continued co-funding of MLA/Livecorp projects overseas for the purpose of promoting live exports. If the Government is going to invest any money in relation to the current export industry, it should be in the development of options that would allow northern cattle producers currently supplying the live trade to restructure their business and have easier access to a commercially viable domestic meat-processing option.

We are concerned that DAFF does not appear to be spending sufficient time on exploring alternatives to live exports and assisting producers to plan and restructure their businesses for a future without live exports. Recent events have also shown that no contingency plans are in place to manage any disruption to the live export trade.

It should also be mentioned that AQIS, in their formal role of enforcers of the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL), in fact lack the necessary powers to enforce some sections of these Standards

as they lie outside the jurisdictional powers of the Australian Government and can only be enforced by State/Territory legislation¹.

We also refer to the Australian Meat Producers Group submission² to this enquiry which provides recommendations for the reform of MLA and Livecorp and the role of Government in the live export process that are worthy of further consideration.

Senator XENOPHON: Secondly, if it is within your knowledge, can you outline what your understanding is of what the impact of the New Zealand ban on live sheep exports several years ago has been on the New Zealand market?

New Zealand's concern with the live sheep trade were particularly raised in 1990 when the then (very new) Cormo Express, said to be state-of-the-art, left New Zealand for the Middle East and almost 10,000 sheep died *en route* due to inadequate ventilation causing heat stroke, pneumonia, other diseases and failure to eat. This incident led to years of debates and a regime of every shipment being scrutinised by a special stakeholder committee. Relatively few slaughter animals were exported from New Zealand to the Middle East- usually only one or two small shipments a year of ram lambs for the religious festivals. Problems with high death rates continued and New Zealand focussed on high quality processed lamb in the last decade or so.

The debate surfaced again when Saudi Arabia wanted more sheep from New Zealand. They had invested in New Zealand properties to raise Damara and other Middle Eastern sheep breeds.

A public debate and formal consultation process on the live export of animals for slaughter ensued.

In December 2007, the Government of New Zealand essentially prohibited the export of livestock for slaughter unless the risks to that country's trade reputation could be adequately managed. Exemptions to this prohibition are only considered if³:

- the export is for slaughter of livestock in commercial slaughter houses;
- the importing country has requirements in place that meet the World Organisation for Animal Health Guidelines for the Slaughter of Animals;
- cattle exported for slaughter must be stunned prior to slaughter in accordance with any of the methods described in the Guidelines;
- the importing country has requirements in place that meet the World Organisation for Animal Health Guidelines for the Transport of Animals by Land, Sea and Air, in relation to the unloading and post-journey handling and transport of livestock;
- a pre-shipment audit of slaughter facilities by inspectors nominated by MAF, and carried out at the exporters' expense, demonstrates compliance with the above requirements; and
- any other matter the Director General of MAF considers necessary to manage the risks to New Zealand's reputation as a responsible exporter of agricultural products.

An overview of the consultation process that preceded this decision can be found in *Analysis of submissions: New Zealand's requirements for export of livestock for slaughter*⁴.

¹ See *Australian Livestock Export Standards - a flawed process* published by RSPCA Australia in 2008 and available at http://www.rspca.org.au/assets/files/Campaigns/RSPCA%20analysis%20of%20MLA%20LE%20standards%20report_web.pdf.

² Available at http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/rat_ctte/live_exports_2011/submissions.htm (submission no. 426).

³ Source: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/commercial-exports/animal-exports/export-livestock-slaughter>.

⁴ Available at <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/files/regs/exports/animals/nz-req-export-livestock-slaughter-subs.pdf>.

In June 2011, former New Zealand Agriculture Minister and former Deputy Prime Minister Jim Anderton, conducted an interview on ABC radio outlining the purpose and the impact of the prohibition. Some key points from this interview⁵:

- “The local industry has come to the conclusion that the game (live exports) isn’t worth the scandal”
- New Zealand has a “substantial international reputation for animal welfare” to protect.
- The decision to effectively ban live exports in 2007 was a “combination of concern for animal welfare” and the “economic backlash” if their reputation was harmed.
- He says it is the lowest form of commodity export as all further processing is done overseas “even the killing, and in some of those areas it is pretty barbaric”.
- The prohibition order was to address the “need to have every element of the chain sewn up to standards we approve. But of course because a country cannot demand what happens on the soil of another country in a legal sense we had to hand over these cattle and sheep to the (country)”.
- “We were putting at risk our major high-value technologically-improved processing of meat and dairy products and all the rest at risk for a relatively small amount of money. Ridiculous. Even if bigger, the principle would be the same, it would put at risk a 20 to 30 billion dollars in exports”.
- “New Zealand is now deliberately in the area of high value-added exports of chilled meat on supermarket shelves in Europe and Japan and processed meats into Indonesia and Malaysia and wouldn’t want to turn back the clock”.
- “They’re low commodity exports... all you can describe them as are appallingly bad, like the lowest level of commodity exports you can possibly make and you are exporting jobs at the same time and you are doing away with any possibility of high added value processing. It is a no brainer as a country and we would not ever think about it (resuming live export) now.”

Since the prohibition, there have been no new applications for export of slaughter animals.

Senator XENOPHON: Thirdly, OIE standards do not actually require a stunning at this stage. Can you outline why that is not the case and whether there are moves to have stunning as the standard practice?

Chapter 7.5 of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code sets out general principles for the slaughter of animals⁶. They are recommendations only and there is no legal obligation on OIE member countries to implement or enforce them. OIE animal welfare standards have been developed in recognition of the link between animal health and animal welfare with seven standards adopted since 2005. Prior to that, the OIE’s focus was animal health and disease.

The OIE recommendations for the slaughter of animals do not explicitly require stunning but provide fairly extensive information on the different methods available for different species as well as the animal welfare issues associated with each - these issues relate mainly to the competency of the operator, maintenance of the equipment and effectiveness of restraint of the animal.

The 178 OIE member countries are all at different stages of development in terms of recognising animal sentience and the obligation to ensure the welfare of animals in our care. With some countries not yet even providing legal protection in the form of animal cruelty legislation, the OIE recommendations for the slaughter of animals inevitably were seen to need to start from a low base. It is our view, that the OIE recommendations are an acceptable starting point for those countries lacking any form of code or

⁵ Available at <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/saturdayextra/stories/2011/3245820.htm>.

⁶ Available at http://www.oie.int/index.php?id=169&L=0&htmfile=chapitre_1.7.5.htm.

standard of animal welfare. However, given the overwhelming scientific evidence pointing to the suffering of animals that are slaughtered whilst fully conscious, it is also our view that the OIE recommendations, at the very least, should include the requirement for stunning.

In its 2011-2015 Strategic Plan⁷, the OIE points out that one of its major roles is the development of scientifically based standards and guidelines. They also acknowledge that acceptance of the standards is based on, among other things, the use of a scientific, risk-based approach to standards development but that standards should also be representative of the different scenarios around the world to ensure relevance.

Through its Strategic Plan, the OIE has committed to working with member countries to ensure their animal welfare standards are consistent (or not conflicting) with those of the OIE. As the OIE works towards the improvement of animal welfare on a global scale, it is our view that member countries, including Australia, must urge the uptake of practices that offer a welfare advantage - this includes stunning prior to slaughter.

Senator XENOPHON: Finally, in relation to the mark IV boxes, can you outline whether you have had a chance to assess those and whether you have had a chance to see how they would be compliant or not with international standards?

Problems with the operation and animal welfare outcomes of the Mark 1 box were identified in 2003, and a Mark 2 design was proposed which allowed animals to be slowly tilted into a horizontal position, rather than tripped onto their side to fall onto a sloping concrete slab. In 2009, a further modification - the Mark 3 - allowed the animal to be lifted in a V-shaped restraint and then tilted on its side exposing the head and neck in readiness for slaughter. In 2009⁸ and 2010⁹, reviews of the Mark 1, 2 and 3 restraining boxes eventually resulted in the development of a new Mark 4 design based on a rotating calf crush.

The Mark 4 box is a modified tilting calf crush with a scissor-frame squeeze to restrain the animal prior to and during rotation. When the animal is partially rotated it is then intended that a rope is applied to restrain the head against the side of the box. When the box is fully rotated the animal is at 90 degrees to the vertical (i.e. is horizontal). The Mark 4 box was designed to be readily adaptable to incorporate the use of stunning.

The following animal welfare issues relating to the Mark 4 box are of concern:

- It appears common that the animals' head and neck are left unrestrained leading to violent head slapping (slamming the head against the box in an attempt to right itself);
- From photographs we have seen, the box appears too long increasing the risk that the animal will not be in the correct place when being held and rotated;
- the stress of an animal resisting restraint and attempting to right itself;
- the risk of unnecessarily prolonged restraint;
- pain during and after the throat cut associated with unstunned slaughter (up to 2 minutes after the throat cut assuming an effective cut);
- the effectiveness of the throat cut (i.e. one single cut with a very sharp knife of sufficient length and severing both carotid arteries) given the position of the neck and head and their close proximity to the table;

⁷ Available at http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/About_us/docs/pdf/5th_StratPlan_EN_2010_LAST.pdf.

⁸ Available at <http://www.mla.com.au/Research-and-development/Final-report-details?projectid=15112>.

⁹ Available at <http://www.mla.com.au/Research-and-development/Final-report-details?projectid=15078>.

- the risk of inhalation of blood as the throat is cut;
- the risk of occlusion of arteries after the throat cut (thus delaying the onset of unconsciousness);
- the need for a competent person to operate the equipment (training may be provided to a number of people but what is the retention rate of people who have been trained and what is their capacity to pass their skills on to others should that be required); and
- the need for on-going maintenance of the equipment to ensure effective operation.

We are currently seeking further information and video footage of the Mark 4 box in operation in order to determine whether the box can be used in conjunction with upright stunning. In particular, we want to clarify whether the animal can be kept still to ensure accuracy of the stun and whether the animal is supported sufficiently to hold it after it loses consciousness.

In terms of compliance with the OIE guidelines (Chapter 7.5), correct operation of the Mark 4 box would need to ensure:

- “Animals should be handled in such a way as to avoid harm, distress or injury.” (Article 7.5.2, 1.e);
- “avoidance of excessive pressure applied by restraining equipment that causes struggling or vocalisation in animals” (Article 7.5.2, 4.a.ii.);
- “avoidance of jerking or sudden movement of restraining device” (Article 7.5.2, 4.a.v.);
- where stunning is used, animals are stunned according to provisions in Article 7.5.7, sections 1, 2 and 3 as appropriate;
- the throat cut is carried out according to the provisions in Article 7.5.7, section 5; and
- methods considered unacceptable on animal welfare grounds (Article 7.5.10) are not carried out.

Regardless of assessment against OIE guidelines, RSPCA Australia is of the view that upright restraint immediately followed by stunning prior to bleeding out is the only humane way to slaughter an animal at an abattoir.

In 2008, a paper prepared for the Australian Government’s own review¹⁰ of policy on slaughter practices concluded the following about methods of restraint that invert the animal (as per the Mark 4 box):

“Livestock restraint is a welfare concern for all forms of livestock slaughter. It weighs heavily for the slaughter of non-stunned livestock because poor restraint will hinder correct throat cutting and delay the onset of circulatory collapse and unconsciousness. Inappropriate restraint such as inverting livestock on their backs is a source of distress in its own right and will delay the onset of unconsciousness.

Proper restraint of livestock in a comfortable upright position during the act of slaughter is made possible by restraining devices of various types. Restraint of this sort will assist towards a rapid loss of consciousness after throat cutting. Proper restraint at the last step will effectively dampen arousal in animals that have been handled gently throughout the whole slaughter process.”

In 2009, the Animal Welfare Science Centre provided the Australian Government with a scientific comment on the welfare of sheep slaughtered without stunning¹¹. They concluded:

¹⁰ Available at http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/aaws/specifying_the_risks_to_animal_welfare_associated_with_livestock_slaughter_without_induced_insensibility.

¹¹ Available at http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/aaws/a_scientific_comment_on_the_welfare_of_sheep_slaughtered_without_stunning.

“..., these review findings indicate that because the slaughter of sheep by ventral-neck cutting without prior stunning is likely to cause pain, slaughter of sheep without stunning poses a risk to animal welfare in the period between the time of the neck cut and the time of loss of awareness.”

In 2009, the Animal Welfare and Product Integrity Committee (a subcommittee of the Primary Industries Ministerial Council) endorsed an ‘animal welfare risk management framework’ (see Attachment 1) relating to slaughter without stunning. It specifically stated that “restraint for all species should maintain the conscious animal in an upright position” and that “the use of inverting restraint boxes for cattle is in itself an animal welfare risk and not acceptable”.

RSPCA Australia’s recent analysis of slaughter of Australian cattle in Indonesia also reviewed methods of restraint that invert the animal¹²:

“Various reports describe casting, or other methods of restraint where animals are inverted or rotated prior to slaughter, as being stressful and unacceptable (EFSA 2004; FAWC 2003; Grandin 2009). Upright slaughter is the only accepted method for cattle in the UK (FAWC 2003); the American Meat Industry Foundation states that animals must be held in a comfortable, upright position and that “trip floor boxes or leg clamping boxes are unacceptable” (AMI Foundation 2005).”

¹² Available at <http://www.rspca.org.au/assets/files/Campaigns/Jones%202011%20-%20Slaughter%20of%20Australian%20cattle%20in%20Indonesia.pdf>.

Attachment 1: Animal welfare risk management framework

ATTACHMENT 1

ANIMAL WELFARE RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK
 ENDORSED BY THE ANIMAL WELFARE AND PRODUCT INTEGRITY
 COMMITTEE OF THE PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

<i>ANIMAL WELFARE RISK MANAGEMENT: ARRANGEMENTS FOR UNSTUNNED SLAUGHTER</i>
Exclude 'flighty' breeds/mobs/groups by selection at source as well as through ante-mortem assessment for suitability;
Handling and restraint to be in line with best practice and well constructed facilities suitable for the size and breeds concerned. Restraint for all species should maintain the conscious animal in an upright position, with head restraint to prevent the edges of the cut touching while the animal is conscious;
The use of inverting restraint boxes for cattle is in itself an animal welfare risk and not acceptable;
Handling and slaughter to be performed by competent personnel;
Slaughter equipment including knives are maintained for purpose with immediate irreversible stunning if the animal evidences distress once in the slaughter box for restraint OR at the position for slaughter;
The numbers and speed at which animals are slaughtered by a particular operator is limited to ensure best practice outcomes;
The animal should be 'immediately' rendered 'insensible to pain and distress' after it has had its throat cut;
That species-specific methods of stunning where two operators are involved, one to perform the throat cut, the other to perform the stunning operation, are applied to provide this outcome in all species;
Regulatory requirements for post-cut assessment of the effectiveness of the throat cut prior to shackling would be obviated by effective stunning ¹ .
Control the numbers of animals subjected to unstunned slaughter to meet known demand for which contracts exist

¹ This does not however mean that religious requirements to assess the completeness of the cut would be obviated, that is a matter for the religious authorities to determine. It does mean that the previous requirement that animals cannot be shackled until it is confirmed that both carotid arteries and jugular veins are severed would be obviated providing the animal was effectively stunned

Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee

Questions Taken on Notice by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Public Hearing – Animal Welfare Standards in Australia's Live Export Markets Canberra – Wednesday, 10 August 2011

Page	Question
60	<p>Chair: I will go now to some questions. What cost is the industry being charged by DAFF on an hourly rate and per ship/per animal onshore and offshore for providing live cattle export services. In other words, it is about the charging regime you are charging the industry.</p> <p>Ms Schneider: I will have to take that one on notice. I do not have the information here.</p>
60 and 61	<p>Chair: Who is specifically supposed to manage animal welfare in the live export program?</p> <p>Mr Morris: If you are talking about the welfare issues associated with animals on board ship then they are the responsibilities of firstly the exporter, but they are covered under the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock.</p> <p>Chair: Who has responsibility for that in the department?</p> <p>Mr Morris: That is handled through AQIS.</p> <p>Chair: Who in AQIS has that responsibility?</p> <p>...</p> <p>Chair: You can take it on notice if you like. Who is the person who sits at the top of the table not around the table in charge of that?</p> <p>Ms Cale: We will have to take that on notice because it is something that crosses across.</p>
61 and 62	<p>Senator Back: Thank you. Can you give the committee advice on the number of abattoirs in Indonesia that meet OIE compliance and what their daily kill capacity is? Do you have that information, or could you get it to us on notice?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Senator Back: I want to ask the same question with regard to abattoirs that are meeting OIE standards and tunning. Can you give us that figure now, or can you give it to us either on notice or progressively. We just want to have some understanding of numbers and kill capacity.</p> <p>Mr Morris: We can certainly see what we can provide.</p>

63	<p>Senator Back: Do you know how long the ship remained alongside before the pressure of the iron ore exporters was such that the vessel was moved back out to sea. Was it two days? Three days?</p> <p>Mr Morris: I would have to check that.</p> <p>Ms Cale: We would have to get that advice from the exporter.</p>
63	<p>Senator Back: This close consultation was on the sixth and seventh – it must have been the sixth also, was it? On 6 June there must have been close consultation, if the veterinarian was told not to sign that document. Can you advise us when the exporters themselves were advised of this decision, and who did that? And when was that? Was it on 7 June? Was it on the eighth?</p> <p>Mr Morris: We will have to double-check that. As I said, the order was signed on 7 June, and the minister official announced it on the eighth. In terms of who he consulted with in between those two things, we will have to double-check that and get back to you. I am taking it on notice.</p> <p>Senator Back: This is how I am advised that industry personnel were alerted, and you might be able to confirm it or not. There was a direction from cabinet, presumably through the minister, to the foreign affairs minister who was in Budapest and was instructed to communicate with the Indonesian foreign minister who fortunately was in Budapest. He in turn advised the President of Indonesia, who in turn advised primary industry minister or agriculture minister Suswono, who in turn advised live-stock director-general Prabowo. It was from that gentleman that the live export executives learnt that the trade was being suspended. Is that an accurate reflection?</p> <p>Mr Morris: I do not know for sure, but certainly there are other elements to that chain that are missing that we are aware of. For example, Minister Ludwig called his counterpart, Minister Suswono , on the seventh as well. Whether Minister Suswono first found out from our minister I do not know. Certainly our minister made that call, and that was during the day on the seventh. So that happened in advance. In terms of advising industry, I think we will have to take that on notice and just double-check exactly what time they were advised.</p>
64	<p>Chair: If I could just go back briefly to my questions, I might put these on notice so that you can formally give some consideration to them. Did DAFF advise the minister to suspend all live trade to Indonesia?</p> <p>Mr Morris: These decisions were taken at a Cabinet level so we would have to consult with the minister about what is appropriate for us to release.</p> <p>Chair: If you do not mind, Mr Morris – and you have my full sympathies; I notice you have been over there working your little butt off, and my congratulations on that – I will put these on notice. The information I have been given is that the course that was taken by the government is not the course of advice provided to the government. Did you consult with the Northern Territory Government, the Queensland government and the Western Australian government in preparing advice for the federal government?</p> <p>Mr Morris: It depends. There have been various points of advice and, certainly in recent times and over the last couple of months, there has been detailed consultation with the Northern Territory, Western Australian and Queensland governments, particularly</p>

	<p>around the impacts on northern producers.</p> <p>Chair: Prior to the decision?</p> <p>Mr Morris: Prior to – I will need to confirm that.</p>
66	<p>Senator Adams: Thank you. Mr Morris, we had evidence from a submission in Darwin in which the comments were about the past minister for agriculture Mr Burke and the efforts he had made when he went to Indonesia to look at feedlots and to go and visit an abattoir. Was the current minister invited, when he went to Indonesia to visit a feedlot or visit an abattoir?</p> <p>Mr Morris: The minister has had two visits to Indonesia. He had one earlier this year – I think in March – and another one in June this year. The March one was obviously a more general visit, and I understand at that time he did not visit any feedlots or abattoirs. On the more recent visit, due to the sensitivities of the issues at the time, he did not visit feedlots or abattoirs at that time either.</p> <p>Senator Adams: Was he invited to?</p> <p>Mr Morris: I would have to double-check that.</p> <p>Senator Adams: Could you take that on notice, as I would be very interested?</p>
66	<p>Chair: Can you provide on notice to the committee the first knowledge that the department and/or the government had of the evidence that Animals Australia and the RSPCA had put together?</p> <p>Mr Evans: Yes. I can take that on notice.</p>
69	<p>Senator Siewert: Could you just outline something – and I may need to put some questions on notice. You say family businesses account for 91 per cent of businesses but only 70 per cent of the intended exports. So you have six per cent of farm businesses that have 65 per cent of the trade. So most of them are family businesses – they are big but they are family businesses? Is that the way I should interpret the report?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Senator Siewert: What I am trying to do is clarify something. I want to differentiate or find out about family businesses, which account for 91 per cent of the businesses but, it says, only 70 per cent of the intended exports. Only six per cent account for 65 per cent. Can you just explain that, because I cannot understand where you get some of these figures in the report from. Sorry.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>DrPenm: I could take it on notice to give you a precise interpretation because in our survey we are analysing using 50 per cent of the intended export numbers. We are trying to maintain confidentiality and make the report more readable in addressing the issue, but the concentration of 50 per cent naturally depends on the number of intended exports. If I intend to sell 100 head of cattle, 50 per cent is 50, but with large operations that 50 per cent could be very large. So I will seek further clarification to answer your question on notice.</p>

70	<p>Senator Siewert:I have one last question which you will probably also need to take on notice. When Indonesia changed the weight limit, which I have been pursuing all day, did you do any modelling of the impact that would have on the sector?</p> <p>Mr Morris: I will go back and look at previous editions of <i>Australian Commodities</i> because normally when we do our forecasting there would be numbers in there on expected exports. If there was any of that work done I think it would be in that context. So I will check that for you and let you know.</p>
77	<p>Senator Edwards: I am going to come back to the climate change sector, because you seem to be getting all the money issues. Can you provide this inquiry, more specifically me, with a breakdown of how we are going to spend the extra \$70 million that we have announced today and how we are spending the \$100 million so that I can get some clarity. As you are probably sensing, there is a great degree of discomfort in what, I think, you are proposing. I do not think it is a solution. All you are doing is adding a burden to an industry that you have quite clearly heard does not deserve it. Within what time frame could you deliver that to this inquiry?</p> <p>Mr Morris: If you would like, we are happy to provide you with the exact numbers on notice.</p>
	<p>Additional Questions - Senator Heffernan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do your staff who approve export licenses assess welfare as part of that approval? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If not, why not? - If so, why did they fail? 2. Has the Department engaged with Indonesia on the welfare of Australian stock? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What have they achieved? 3. Did DAFF advise the Minister to suspend all trade in live cattle to Indonesia? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On what basis?

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Public Hearing – Animal Welfare Standards in Australia's Live Export Markets

August 2011

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 1

Division/Agency: Biosecurity Animal

Topic: Export fees

Hansard Page: 60

The Chair asked:

What cost is the industry being charged by DAFF on an hourly rate and per ship/per animal onshore and offshore for providing live cattle export services. In other words, it is about the charging regime you are charging the industry.

Answer:

A copy of the charging guidelines for the Live Animal Exports Program is available on the department's website - www.daff.gov.au/aqis/export/live-animals/fees-charges/exports

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Public Hearing – Animal Welfare Standards in Australia’s Live Export Markets
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 2

Division/Agency: Live Animal Exports Taskforce

Topic: Management of animal welfare in live export program

Proof Hansard Page: 60 and 61

Senator Heffernan asked: Who is specifically supposed to manage animal welfare in the live export program?

Mr Morris: If you are talking about the welfare issues associated with animals on board ship then they are the responsibilities of firstly the exporter, but they are covered under the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock.

Senator Heffernan asked: Who has responsibility for that in the department?

Mr Morris: That is handled through AQIS

Senator Heffernan asked: Who in AQIS has that responsibility? Who is the person who sits at the top of the table not around the table in charge of that?

Answer:

The Agricultural Productivity Division deals with broad animal welfare policy issues and manages the preparation and updating of the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock.

Animal Division (AQIS) is responsible for ensuring that exporters comply with the requirements in the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock, including those related to animal welfare.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Public Hearing – Animal Welfare Standards in Australia’s Live Export Markets
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 3

Division/Agency: Trade and Market Access

Topic: Indonesian abattoirs that meet OIE standards

Proof Hansard Page: 61 and 62

Senator Back asked:

Senator Back: Thank you. Can you give the committee advice on the number of abattoirs in Indonesia that meet OIE compliance and what their daily kill capacity is? Do you have that information, or could you get it to us on notice?

Senator Back: I want to ask the same question with regard to abattoirs that are meeting OIE standards and stunning. Can you give us that figure now, or can you give it to us either on notice or progressively. We just want to have some understanding of numbers and kill capacity.

Mr Morris: We can certainly see what we can provide.

Answer:

As part of the Notices of Intention (NOIs) to export process, AQIS does not receive information around abattoir capacity as this is a commercial matter. However, as at 15 August the 4 NOIs that have been approved involve 4 different abattoirs.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Public Hearing – Animal Welfare Standards in Australia’s Live Export Markets
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 4

Division/Agency: Biosecurity - Animal

Topic: Suspension of livestock trade with Indonesia

Proof Hansard Page: 63

Senator Back asked:

Do you know how long the ship remained alongside before the pressure of the iron ore exporters was such that the vessel was moved back out to sea. Was it two days? Three days?

Answer:

This information is not required or gathered by the department in administering its regulatory responsibilities.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Public Hearing – Animal Welfare Standards in Australia’s Live Export Markets
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 5

Division/Agency: Live Animal Exports Taskforce

Topic: DAFF consultation with Industry

Proof Hansard Page: 63

Senator Back asked: On 6 June there must have been close consultation, if the veterinarian was told not to sign that document. Can you advise us when the exporters themselves were advised of this decision, and who did that? And when was that? Was it on 7 June? Was it on the eighth?

Senator Back asked: This is how I am advised that industry personnel were alerted, and you might be able to confirm it or not. There was a direction from cabinet, presumably through the minister, to the foreign affairs minister who was in Budapest and was instructed to communicate with the Indonesian foreign minister who fortunately was in Budapest. He in turn advised the President of Indonesia, who in turn advised primary industry minister or agriculture minister Suswono, who in turn advised live-stock director-general Prabowo. It was from that gentleman that the live export executives learnt that the trade was being suspended. Is that an accurate reflection?

Answer:

On 6 June 2011, the department informed the licensed export company that Permission to Leave for Loading would not be granted for the consignment of approximately 1,926 head of cattle which were due to load in Port Hedland that evening destined for Indonesia.

We are unaware of the accuracy of this sequence of events.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Public Hearing – Animal Welfare Standards in Australia’s Live Export Markets
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 6

Division/Agency: Live Animal Exports Taskforce

Topic: DAFF advice to Government

Proof Hansard Page: 64

Senator Heffernan asked: Did DAFF advise the minister to suspend all live trade to Indonesia?

Senator Heffernan asked: The information I have been given is that the course that was taken by the government is not the course of advice provided to the government. Did you consult with the Northern Territory Government, the Queensland government and the Western Australian government in preparing advice for the federal government?

Mr Morris: It depends. There have been various points of advice and, certainly in recent times and over the last couple of months, there has been detailed consultation with the Northern Territory, Western Australian and Queensland governments, particularly around the impacts on northern producers.

Senator Heffernan asked: Prior to the decision?

Answer:

Prior to the decision to suspend the trade, DAFF provided advice to the Minister identifying a range of options that could be taken to improve animal welfare in the live export trade.

There was a wide range of information on the northern live cattle industry available to inform government’s decision making.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Public Hearing – Animal Welfare Standards in Australia’s Live Export Markets
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 7

Division/Agency: Trade and Market Access

Topic: Ministers Visit to Indonesia

Proof Hansard Page: 66

Senator Adams asked:

Senator Adams: Thank you. Mr Morris, we had evidence from a submission in Darwin in which the comments were about the past minister for agriculture Mr Burke and the efforts he had made when he went to Indonesia to look at feedlots and to go and visit an abattoir. Was the current minister invited, when he went to Indonesia to visit a feedlot or visit an abattoir?

Mr Morris: The minister has had two visits to Indonesia. He had one earlier this year – I think in March – and another one in June this year. The March one was obviously a more general visit, and I understand at that time he did not visit any feedlots or abattoirs. On the more recent visit, due to the sensitivities of the issues at the time, he did not visit feedlots or abattoirs at that time either.

Senator Adams: Was he invited to?

Mr Morris: I would have to double-check that.

Senator Adams: Could you take that on notice, as I would be very interested?

Answer:

Minister Ludwig visited Indonesia 8-13 March 2011 and again 19-21 June 2011. Minister Ludwig was not formally invited to visit a feedlot or an abattoir for either visit.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Public Hearing – Animal Welfare Standards in Australia’s Live Export Markets
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 8

Division/Agency: Live Animal Exports Taskforce

Topic: Knowledge of Four Corners footage

Proof Hansard Page: 66

Senator Heffernan asked: Can you provide on notice to the committee the first knowledge that the department and/or the government had of the evidence that Animals Australia and the RSPCA had put together?

Answer:

The Australian Live Export Corporation (ALEC) first alerted the Department to footage on Indonesia by Animals Australia on 30 March 2011, although it was not known what the footage portrayed.

Departmental officers viewed small segments of the footage for the first time during a meeting with the RSPCA on 30 May 2011.

The Department contacted the ABC, Animals Australia and the RSPCA on 31 May 2011 to request all available footage. The footage was received on 1 June 2011.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Public Hearing – Animal Welfare Standards in Australia’s Live Export Markets
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 9

Division/Agency: ABARES

Topic: ABARES survey of beef cattle producers in northern live cattle export regions

Proof Hansard Page: 69

Senator Siewert asked:

I want to differentiate or find out about family businesses which account for 91 per cent of the businesses (in northern live export regions) but only 70 per cent of the intended exports. Only six per cent account for 65 per cent (of intended exports). Can you just explain that?

Answer:

According to the ABARES survey of beef cattle producers in northern live cattle export regions undertaken 24 June to 1 July 2011, the largest 6 per cent of farm businesses in northern live cattle export regions (around 78 businesses) accounted for 65 per cent of the intended exports to Indonesia in 2011. Around 60 per cent of these large businesses were family farm businesses, defined as family farms, partnerships and small private companies and they accounted for 39 per cent of total intended exports. The remaining 40 per cent of these large farm businesses were corporate, defined as public companies, large private companies and indigenous corporations. These corporate farm businesses accounted for 26 per cent of total intended exports.

Overall, family farm businesses account for 91 per cent of beef cattle producers in northern live cattle export regions and for 70 per cent of intended exports for 2011.

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Public Hearing – Animal Welfare Standards in Australia’s Live Export Markets
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 10

Division/Agency: ABARES

Topic: Modelling of the impact of the live cattle weight limit

Proof Hansard Page: 70

Senator Siewert asked:

I have one last question which you will probably also need to take on notice. When Indonesia changed the weight limit, which I have been pursuing all day, did you do any modelling of the impact that would have on the sector?

Answer:

Discussion on the impact of the weight limit imposed by Indonesia on Australian live cattle exports was presented in the June and September 2010 issues of *Australian Commodities* (pages 328-9 in the June 2010 issue and pages 505-6 in the September 2010 issue).

Senate Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
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Question: 11

Division/Agency: Climate Change

Topic: Assistance Packages

Hansard Page: 77

Senator Edwards asked:

Can you provide this inquiry, more specifically me, with a breakdown of how we are going to spend the extra \$70 million that we have announced today and how we are spending the \$100 million so that I can get some clarity?

Answer:

The Government has approved the following measures to assist businesses impacted by the temporary suspension of the live cattle export trade to Indonesia:

Assistance Package	Approved Funding
Income Recovery Subsidy	\$3.0 million
Short-term Business Assistance Package: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$5,000 Business Assistance Payment; and• \$20,000 Business Hardship Payment.	\$30.0 million
Medium-term Business Assistance Package: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grants for Financial Advice for pastoralists• Subsidised Interest Rate	\$0.8 million \$7.4 million [#]

[#] estimated to leverage new working capital loans in the order of \$60 million.

The Subsidised Interest Rate is expected to encourage an injection of approximately \$60 million of new working capital into the industry when business owners negotiate new loans with their commercial lender. The \$100 million to be injected in the market as referred to by the Minister includes the estimated value of new working capital loans and the support provided by the government in the assistance packages listed above. The Australian Government will pay interest up to 8 per cent in the first year of a new of loan up to \$300,000, phasing down in the second year.

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Question: 12

Division/Agency: Live Animal Exports Taskforce

Topic: DAFF advice to Minister Ludwig

Proof Hansard Page: Additional Questions – Senator Heffernan

Senator Heffernan asked:

1. Do your staff who approve export licenses assess welfare as part of that approval?
 - If not, why not?
 - If so, why did they fail?

2. Has the Department engaged with Indonesia on the welfare of Australian stock?
 - What have they achieved?

3. Did DAFF advise the Minister to suspend all trade in live cattle to Indonesia?
 - On what basis?

Answer:

1. Any individual or organisation wanting to export livestock must obtain a licence in accordance with the Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry Act 1997 and sub-ordinate legislation.

As part of an application for a livestock export licence, the exporter must submit an operations and governance manual. The operations and governance manual outlines how the business will operate and how the business will comply with the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL). As part of its consideration of approval for an export licence, AQIS checks that the exporter’s manual is in accordance with the ASEL for the on farm preparation, land transport, registered premises, vessel preparation and loading, on board management and air export components of the live export process. Prior to the recent Order for Indonesia post arrival elements of the supply chain were only regulated for Egypt.

2. Project report for animal welfare activities in Indonesia are publicly available at <http://www.daff.gov.au/market-access-trade/iac/live-animal-trade>.

3. Prior to the decision to suspend the trade, DAFF provided advice to the Minister identifying a range of options that could be taken to improve animal welfare in the live export trade.