

13th July 2011
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Rural Affairs and Transport
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Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Terms of Reference

TOR should include an investigation that incorporates phasing out the live trade (i.e. a transition from live exports to a boxed meat only trade). Every time we export animals overseas to a country that has lower standards, it is a failure - a failure of our duty of care to those animals and it is a failure to producers who need and deserve certainty of the stability of their markets. The review should provide an opportunity to comment on alternatives to the live trade and we encourage people to do so under point g). We have provided a few key points for you to consider when addressing the terms of reference.

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

Using World Organisation of Animal Health (OIE) standards as a benchmark is not acceptable – they are well below Australian standards and do not require upright preslaughter stunning (rendering the animal unconscious to pain) and they do not exclude the roping restraint, tripping and casting of animals that occurs in Indonesia and other importing countries and that causes unacceptable suffering. Standards must be mandatory and include the requirement that animals are upright and stunned (rendering them unconscious to pain) prior to slaughter.

While the Standards take a “whole of chain approach” covering all aspects of the livestock export trade from planning through to on-board management, many sections of the Standards lie outside the jurisdictional powers of the Australian Government, and could only be enforced under State and Territory legislation.

No Australian State or Territory government has yet legislated to recognise the ASEL, and, as a result, large sections of the ASEL are effectively unenforceable. The adequacy and effectiveness of current Australian regulatory arrangements for the live export trade

Current regulatory arrangements are totally inadequate. As soon as Australian animals leave Australia they have no protection against cruel treatment. Importing countries do not have basic animal welfare legislation/anti-cruelty legislation (or, enforce such legislation) and as such these animals have absolutely no protection once they leave Australia. Any assurance that Australian animals will be protected from cruelty and mistreatment is not guaranteed in legislation and therefore cannot be relied upon. The types of livestock suitable (weight, age, body condition, breeds) for export as feeder or slaughter animals

No live animals should be exported from Australia as feeder or slaughter animals. Available scientific evidence shows that exporting animals live directly compromises their welfare. The best animal

welfare outcome is achieved when the animal is slaughtered humanely as close to their point of production within Australia and under Australian law.

Transporting animals from a cold (Australian Winter) to hot climate (Northern Summer) exacerbates heat stress (which can lead to suffering and a prolonged death) 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

A high level of monitoring is required to ensure standards are met, particularly at the point of slaughter. For e.g. where MLA-trained operators may revert to old practices as soon as no one is looking.

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There are risks to animal welfare at each stage of the journey from loading, to transport, at the feedlot, and at slaughter. **Stress is cumulative.**

In the case of cattle and pastoral sheep, these animals are unused to frequent handling and are fearful of humans. This increases the risk to their welfare throughout the live export process.

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