

Live Export: A message from an ordinary bloke to the Australian Senate

I am just an ordinary Australian bloke trying to earn a living. I live on a cattle station in a not-very-glorified shed and I work hard in the bull dust and heat. I am a self-taught mechanic and also a grader, loader and dozer driver.

This is the only kind of work I know and enjoy. I love working in the cattle industry; it is my livelihood. Frankly, the decision to ban live export is completely stupid. We need to work with Indonesia, not against it. We need to understand a lot more about the facts than we do at the moment. I don't think a bunch of animal liberationists know very much at all about this industry. Funny how they get all the say.

Yet the decisions about our lives are being made by a bunch of idiots in cities with no knowledge of the real bush in this country.

No-one I work with ever accepts animal cruelty. Many things have changed in our cities in the last 25 years and many things have changed in the bush too. We feed supplement to the cattle to keep them in good condition. We know how to handle cattle without stressing them.

I believe we need to quickly get live export happening again for the good of our country, and so people like me are able to keep the jobs we have. How will anyone ever have the courage to invest in industry if it can be stolen from you at a moment's notice by governments?

If the government doesn't sort this out, I will be out of a job. I am happy working where I am, and really think the Senate has to send a strong message about the importance of the northern cattle industry to Australia.

Thanks for taking the time to read my submission. If any of you are ever at the Mataranka Homestead, ask for Howdy, and over a beer I will tell you about it firsthand.

Anthony Houghton aka "Howdy"