

Dear Sir,

Please find our views on the terms of the Senate review into the live export industry:

Animal welfare standards in Australia's live export markets

### **Terms of Reference**

On 16 June 2011, the Senate moved that the following matters be referred to the Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee for inquiry and report by 25 August 2011:

1. Investigate and report into the role and effectiveness of Government, Meat and Livestock Australia, Livecorp and relevant industry bodies in improving animal welfare standards in Australia's live export markets, including:
  - a) The level, nature and effectiveness of expenditure and efforts to promote or improve animal welfare standards with respect to all Australian live export market countries;
    - i) expenditure and efforts on marketing and promoting live export to Australian producers;
    - ii) ongoing monitoring of the subscription to, and practise of, animal welfare standards in all live export market countries;
    - iii) actions to improve animal welfare outcomes in all other live export market countries and the evidence base for these actions.
  - b) The extent of knowledge of animal welfare practices in Australia's live export markets including:
    - i) formal and informal monitoring and reporting structures;
    - ii) formal and informal processes for reporting and addressing poor animal welfare practices.

\*Timeliness is important. Act quickly when problems arise or begin to emerge. Good relationships with other countries are important. Much good can be done by building up relationships from which people can see mutual benefit. Being respectful of others' religious practices should happen. Take account of local situations and customs eg use of refrigeration and seek to improve people's circumstances through humanitarian aid.

2. Investigate and report on the domestic economic impact of the live export trade within Australia including:
  - a) Impact on regional and remote employment especially in northern Australia;
  - b) Impact and role of the industry on local livestock production and prices;
  - c) Impact on the processing of live stock within Australia.

\*The live export trade provides an ideal market for cattle producers in northern Australia where, due to climatic conditions, it is not generally possible to fatten cattle for the meatworks market within an economically efficient period of time. The distances and road conditions do not make for economically viable and best animal welfare practices - fat cattle take a lot more room; bruise and stress more easily over long distances. The loss of this market would make it economically unviable to turn off cattle in northern

Australia due to the fact that the live export trade put a price floor in the market. Lowered productivity would cause loss of employment and this has a flow on effect to service towns. There would be a huge loss of export dollars in the Australian economy. Northern meatworks would be of some benefit ie diversification of the markets available to producers but could not do the job of the live export market. Big country, big numbers, high turnover has seen the value of the land improve and this directly affects producers' borrowing power. A crash in the northern cattle industry would have a huge negative effect on the Australian economy. The amount of money which is lent is phenomenal.

3. Other related matters.

\*A reduced northern population would see an increased biosecurity and defense threat.

Yours sincerely,

David and Lorraine McGinnis