

# **SUBMISSION TO SENATE ENQUIRY**

**ANIMAL WELFARE BILL 2003**

## **Livestock Animal Welfare Standards**

### **(PALE) PEOPLE AGAINST LIVE EXPORTS**

**People against Live Exports would encourage standard animal welfare codes of practise to include all animals being transported not just animals going for live exports.**

**TAGS should be enforced for LIVE Exports, however for local plants this is not required given the correct procedures are always followed re log books there is a way easily to trace the source of supply if a problem should occur.**

**However there is NO SUCH trace once these Animals leave our country and the good business sense of purchases and efficient suppliers will wish to provide their customers with the same safe guards as we enjoy here.**

**If these people overseas are prepared to pay top price for a product despite the goods then they such be assured they can trace the area and exact farm for health and safety purposes. This seems only fair.**

**The local stock is well traced and under the control of The Health Department and all other agencies that work together in this country.**

**The Following is an example of why local Markets have no need to TAG However Once an Animal Goes on Board a ship the Customer overseas has no such guaranties or capacity to source the trace of a diseased animal. This could Cause serious health problems and it would be irresponsible for Live Exports or their agents to suggest they NOT Tag giving their valued customers the same level of protection as we already enjoy in Australia.**

**FOLLOWING IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE LEVEL OF CARE AND PROTECTION LOCALLY SLAUGHTERED MEAT AND THEIR CUSTOMERS SHARE .**

**Veterinary Newsletter to members in Northern Territory and in bordering towns, to livestock industry groups in the Northern Territory, and to departmental staff.**

**Department of Agriculture - press release**

**"Even the new techniques used to identify anthrax in the environment are unlikely to yield positive answers as to how the disease ended up in the State's south-west border region.**

**"We'll probably never know the definitive answer to that," said Department of Primary Industries veterinarian Lee Taylor, who has been closely involved in investigating the current anthrax cases. "That's just the nature of the disease we're dealing with."**

**The January 9 outbreak, the first in the State since 1993, affected two properties - at Dirranbandi and Wandoan. It triggered a preventive program in which 1020 head of cattle were vaccinated and temporary quarantine restrictions placed on stock movements from them.**

**Dr Taylor said newly implemented laboratory technology had been used in the current outbreak to find anthrax spores in the soil around animal remains long past their traditional pathological use-by time.**

**As to how and why the outbreak happened, knowledge of the disease and its history in Australia pointed to possibilities, he said.**

**"In this outbreak, tracebacks have confirmed that anthrax was not introduced through recent cattle or sheep movements from interstate or any other means. It has most likely been in the soils of that area for a long time. An animal could have died there years ago and the spores from where it died may have only recently become available to livestock."**

**He said most anthrax cases recorded in Australia were seen in what was known as the anthrax belt of New South Wales and Victoria. Conditions in these areas favoured survival of anthrax spores in the soil. The soil pH was alkaline and the soils prone to flooding.**

**"Anthrax tends to occur along waterways and their associated floodplains during the summer months in this area. The infection can be released from soil in areas**

where animals died many years ago, possibly by earthworks or other soil disturbance.

**"Extremes of rainfall, either too much or too little, can set off outbreaks by either releasing spores in the soil, or concentrating stock around water and supplementary feeding points where they ingest the bacterial spores in soil that is accidentally consumed."**

**Dr Taylor said the property at Dirranbandi, where the current events, started had a lot of these factors present.**

**"Another interesting feature is the presence of an old stock route through the property. Travelling stock was the way anthrax was spread after it was first introduced to Australia in the mid-1800s. In this case, there is nothing to suggest that the problem was related to stock deaths on the stock route."**

**He said the Wandoan cattle initially diagnosed with anthrax were agisted on the Dirranbandi property for a period of time during 2001. Just before leaving the property, they were fed some hay on the ground and most likely picked up anthrax spores from soil contaminating the feed. Three cattle died before leaving the Dirranbandi property.**

**"Based on positive soil tests at the site of the carcass, it is reasonable to conclude that these cattle had anthrax. Other cattle exposed to anthrax subsequently died after movement back to their home property at Wandoan in December 2001.**

**"There is a time period between when cattle or sheep ingest anthrax spores and when they die from the disease - usually around four to 10 days. This explains how anthrax got from Dirranbandi to Wandoan."**

**Dr Taylor said during this "incubation" phase anthrax did not present a risk to other animals or humans. It was after an animal died that it was possible for the disease to spread to other animals.**

**He said the considerable media and public interest in anthrax was fanned by concerns about human health and recent bioterrorist activities. However, anthrax was certainly not new in Australia. It had a long history in the country, being first recognised in 1847 near Sydney.**

**Animal losses due to anthrax in Australia were very low because of early recognition, stock movement controls and the use of an effective vaccine.**

**"The public health implications of anthrax are that it can be a serious disease in humans and potentially fatal if exposure to the organism is not treated"**

**Cattle anthrax case in Qld  
10 Jan 2002**

**The first case of anthrax in cattle for three and a half years has been recorded, with 10 animals dying from the disease in southern Queensland. It has been reiterated that anthrax spores can lie dormant in the soil for up to 50 years and that there are no suspicious circumstances surrounding the case.**

**South-east Queensland**

**Australia was officially declared free of TB in December 1997.**

**However, on 11/12/00, TB was found in a National Granuloma Submission Program (NGSP) sample from a Santa Gertrudis heifer slaughtered at Coominya Abattoir in Queensland. Culture confirmed the diagnosis in early February.**

**The heifer was purchased from a property at Wandoan (Qld), but originated from a property at Bollon (Qld). This property was sold in September 2000 and a whole-herd dispersal occurred prior to sale, mainly in July and August 2000. Most were sold at saleyards at Roma and Goondiwindi, with 1,349 cattle being sold to 56 destinations.**

**Tuberculosis has been detected in seven additional trace-forward properties, four of which are in New South Wales. The finding of a total of 12 positive animals on these properties has triggered further destocking, tracing and testing activity. At least one generalised case has been found suggesting this animal may have been a potent source of spread of the disease. Culture positive results have been obtained from a number of these animals. In total, over 1,000 cattle have been destocked from trace-forward properties.**

**The source of infection for this TB outbreak is still being investigated. It may have been present in cattle on the property or introduced in purchased stock from Queensland or the Northern Territory.**

#### **North-west Queensland**

**Evidence to date indicates that while the level of TB on the index properties is not high, the age of the infected animals means that a considerable proportion of the herd may have been exposed. This will require a rigorous program to ensure that any residual infection is eradicated.**

#### **11/1/2002 - Anthrax outbreak on two cattle properties in Queensland.**

**Two cattle properties in southern Queensland have been quarantined as a result of an outbreak of anthrax.**

#### **A case of human anthrax in Victoria**

**A human case of anthrax was identified through surveillance of knackery workers who had been exposed to**

**infected cattle. The outbreak in cattle has affected 38 herds in the Stanhope/Tatura area of central northern**

**Victoria. The human case, was a 39 year old male. Public health measures are in place to prevent further human**

**cases. *Comm Dis Intell* 1997;21:47-48.**

**Anthrax, caused by *Bacillus anthracis*, is primarily a disease of ruminants which infects humans. Cases in animals,**

**particularly cattle, occur in Victoria across a wide area in the south of the State, and along the Goulburn and Murray rivers.**

**Anthrax was detected on two adjoining dairy farms in the Stanhope/Tatura area in central northern Victoria.**

**The number of affected properties remained low until 4 weeks later when the number of affected properties and**

**cattle began to escalate rapidly. 38 herds had been affected, including both milking and non-milking dairy herds.**

**Meat from these carcasses had already been sold. Immediate control measures taken by the Department of Human Resources**

**Services followed the outbreak. • local doctors were advised of the outbreak, provided with a fact sheet, and advised what steps to take, and specimens were sent to the Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory (VIDRL).**

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**1. Infectious Diseases Unit, Department of Human Services, Level One (South), 115 Victoria Pde, Fitzroy Victoria 3065.**

**2. Department of Human Services, Loddon Mallee Region, Victoria.**

**Surely Live exporters Feel they have an obligation to provide the SAME Service to their overseas customers.**

**(PALE) has long been opposed to live exports and calls on the Government again that the practise is banned however given the Governments reluctance to do so we are quite sure they will at least enforce the TAGS that were recommended**

**(PALE) calls for the introduction of satellite navigation systems which will allow tracking and tracing transport at any moment of the journey.**

**The installations of such systems should receive funding from all interested parties in the Industry including the DPI. These devises save valuable man power, time, staff and wages. We also recommend that inspections include at least 20 per cent of the transported animals each year within each state. Control missions should be carried out each year in each state should include Veterinary Officers in each State also within a reasonable range or on call veterinary officers working on a pro rata basis. Poor enforcement of Animal Welfare Legislation has always been a problem and thanks to these measures) PEOPLE will be more equipped to carry out these tasks with the Australian Police DPI officers and possibly with the assistance of transport officers as well after receiving training and attending courses accredited to existing Animal welfare groups and other persons who hold an interest in this area.**

**Transport officers are within these areas in their line of duty controlling the transport trucks, so it makes good sense for these officers to be further trained saving the tax payer money and providing animal welfare that in some cases where they may not be other officers.**

**At certain times the army may also be empowered where distance be an issue and often army officers and personal training in these locations.**

**Further calls for all members of boards and committees be made up of independent people to be elected by the public that further no person shall have a conflict of interest or a direct involvement in the meat industry or live exports.**

**This is paramount for staff to be enabled to carry out their duties along with police and appointed transport and dpi officers.**

**We further recommend that in remote areas or areas deemed acceptable elected persons may be trained and sworn in to operate as inspectors----- However these - inspectors are only to act in the line of a de-facto inspector and to contact one of the above officers mentioned should they deem there to be a problem.**

**They will how ever have the power to stop question inspect and require the operator to co operate until another officer arrives on the scene.**

**The need for all transport trucks to be made to keep an up to date log which will be kept up to date i.e. pick up time stops food rest water. Failure to comply with these conditions will ensure a fine of a reasonable size to deter these drivers or companies whom are notorious failing to comply further.**

**We would encourage strongly a reward to be given to anybody assisting with information as to the mistreatment or failure to comply with the codes of practise or inflicting cruelty onto any animal.**

**Officers to inspect all vessels carrying live stock which especially includes ships before loading. We recommend a registered independent survey shipping company with books open to the public be put into place for inspections of All ships.**

**Officers and elected officers will have the power to stop loading of any boat not meeting standards and they must remain independent. It would be folly to expect a not for profit organization to carry all the costs of these increased inspectors and suggests a new levy be charged to all parties involved in this industry to be made available to pay the staff without interference to the staff in anyway what so ever.**

**Again the satellite tracking will keep costs down for all involved.**

**In fact (PALE) PEOPLE AGAINST LIVE EXPORTS encourages we adopt the new Animal Welfare Codes of Practise adopted by Europe.**

**A copy of this policy of Animal Welfare Codes of Practise is attached to this Submission.**

**Animal Welfare is a number two to three issue world wide and we feel it is well time Australia caught up with many other countries and then improve some different animals require different levels of care and different levels of actual transport time and we will address that animal by animal in the second part of our submission. There are also other considerations which would be best served by further discussions**

**Animal transport and handling recommendations codes of practice continued  
Part 2**

**(PEOPLE AGAINST LIVE EXPORTS have long campaigned for animals who are destined for the meat market to be sold direct from farm to slaughter house. In this day of modern technology there seems no reason why overseas practices long in place can not be adopted in Australia. In fact this could then be used as a**



**point of tracking cutting out stolen stock and millions of dollars in loss, man power and providing healthier less stressed animals and above all cutting the transport time to absolute minimum which has long been a concern of many as a matter of record.**

**Selection of live stock and their preparation for transport by sea. (PALE) recommends as previously stated it is preferable for buyers to arrange to purchase stock direct from the farm.**

**In this day of computers, telephones, emails and traveling stock and station agents there is no reason not to purchase direct.**

**Animals are to be purchased giving consideration to not only the codes of practice in place but finding a way to police these activities to ensure correct procedures are being followed.**

**Again this is where the public nominated person could be utilized along with accredited members of local shire council's ministers of churches, dpi officers, (PALE) police transport and other groups working with (PALE as spotters and inspectors working in a nominated manner..**

**The most cost effective and indeed effective will be the satellite links to these farms. Most already have satellite links with home schools for children etc.**

**(PALE) also considers that unless a practicable manner and licensing of farms is introduced with staff allotted to handle and care for stock based on numbers > beasts per handler is introduced animal welfare is not controllable and is not being taken seriously.**

**We recommend that all farmers and farms are visited at least once per year to enforce animal welfare standards are up help especially this could be said of feed lots which (PALE) PEOPLE AGAINST LIVE EXPORTS feels closer attention is required. WE STRONGLY OBJECT TO FEED LOTS FOR ANIMAL WELFARE ISSUES AND DISEASE ISSUES**

**All other codes of practice current should be not only in writing but enforced far more stringently by united officers as previously stated-**

**We recommend accreditation of farmers and large fines to offenders with a final suspension of that license or accreditation if the farmer is to be fined more than twice under the code.**

**Selection is then to be carried out in a manner complying., and given great consideration to the codes of practice land transport of animals for live exports and all animal transport= transport by road of animals destined for slaughter ships or further fattening to be limited to 6 hours or 500km.**

**All vehicles will possess a forced ventilation system or air conditioning.**

**All vehicles will have means to measure temperature and humidity in the livestock section which can be monitored in the driver's cabin.**

**Animals transported for longer than 8 hours must be given sufficient space to lay down-all at the same time. Abattoirs to be reopened to accommodate the long recommendations of RSPCA that an animal be slaughtered to as close as possible to place of supply.**

**All vehicles and drivers must allow adequate inspection of each of the animals at all times.**

**An official vet must be present during loading for journeys of longer than 8 hours in order to ensure that all animals are fit for travel and that stocking density is correct.**

**All drivers must receive training and have their competence independently assessed.**

**The number of inspections to verify the adherence of regulations should be increased and the procedures should be increased substantially adopting procedures uniform through out the states.**

**(PALE) PEOPLE AGAINST LIVE EXPORTS again recommends strongly that satellite navigation and positioning system such as global positioning is urgently put into place, in order to keep costs down and to provide proper enforcement of animal's welfare codes of practice.**

**All vehicles are to be inspected and to have rubber matting kept in good repair on floor and loading ramp.**

**Shade covers that can be pulled over in the case of a breakdown where there are no trees.**

**All trucks to have a co-driver especially in places far out back like northern territory and other outback areas where (PALE) further submits that animal welfare programs are part of police and public cadet training with regular refresher courses and public schools and others teach animal welfare as part of school curriculum**

**(PALE) also submits that all drivers receive proper training and certification.**

**Managing of livestock at quest -registered pre-embankment premise.**

**That independent officers and previously mentioned accredited persons conduct this inspection in conjunction with quest staff at all times to carry out the many different relevant issues in regards to the animal welfare.**

**That all vessels are to be inspected before the loading of the animals without exception to ensure standards.**

**(We submit if this is not carried out by EXPORTS inspectors and accredited**

**assistance the animal welfare codes of practice are of no value and the industry is not serious about improving animal welfare standards.**

**(PALE) PEOPLE AGAINST LIVE EXPORTS is opposed to live exports however we must undertake to inspect ships in a fair and responsibly manner.**

**(PALE) PEOPLE AGAINST LIVE EXPORTS submit that a vet is on board or vets on all ships to all destinations and whilst onboard they are in control of the animal on board that ship.**

**A (fine anybody throwing animals overboard or down mincers alive. The fine shall be substantial the first time and the boat barred from Australian animals there after.**

**24 hour video surveillance made available to the public both ends is required if there is nothing to hide then it seems reasonable.**

**Thankyou Ladies and gentleman of the senate**

**Wendy Lewthwaite**

**PALE**

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