

Quaker Concern for Animals in Britain, one of the oldest - established faith-based animal protection societies, would like to make some brief points in support of **Against Animal Cruelty Tasmania's** detailed submission on the proposed Animal Welfare Legislation. In essence, if the RSPCA - "Five Freedoms" recommendation means anything at all, there would have to be radical changes implemented in the sphere of farming animals.

As an aside, almost everything requested by Australian animal advocacy groups would apply in Britain.

- The circumstances under which **egg-laying hens** are kept are abhorrent in the extreme, and there should be a serious intention to bring about an end to the system. De-beaking should be banned immediately, since it causes severe trauma to the birds. Wire floors and crowded space are unacceptable. To go back to the 5 Freedoms, in nature, hens use dust baths, roost high and nest in privacy; there is no way these freedoms are possible in the battery system.
- As we understand it, it is not illegal to cram up to 30,000 **broiler chicks** into sheds and, like the layers, they never see the light of day or feel grass under their feet. To counter the diseases created by these conditions, they are routinely fed on a diet of antibiotics and growth hormones (the latter illegal in the European Union). There must be a limitation placed on the number of birds per enterprise, and limitations on the numbers of birds in sheds.
- **Pigs - sows** are confined to concrete and metal cages barely larger than their own bodies for most of their lives. Codes of Practice state that hooved animals become "foresore" from being confined on concrete surfaces, yet the "Model CoP for the Welfare of Animals - Pigs" provides for just that. Again, they never see daylight, except when they are loaded onto trucks headed for the slaughterhouse, by which time they are worn out from constant breeding and many are unable to walk. In Britain, the sow stall is now illegal, but farrowing crates are still permitted - again, the freedom of a mother to express her maternal instincts and the freedom of juvenile creatures to have the comfort of their mothers, is severely curtailed. Far from the natural system causing aggression, as producers maintain, it has been observed that when a sow, often driven mad by confinement, is freed from the crate, she behaves in aggressive ways towards other animals. The piglets, weaned precociously, which would not happen in the wild, have deficient immune systems and more routine medication is necessary to attempt to prevent disease.
- **The live export trade** has been denounced as the gross cruelty that it is by various interest groups, and a WA exporter is facing cruelty charges over what was a voyage "representative of the industry" (Animals Australia, 2005). Animal welfare in the trade is measured solely by

mortality rates, without regard to the fact that for every animal who dies, countless others suffer appallingly - blindness, lameness, salmonellosis, starvation (inanition, shy feeding), and trauma from brutal handling. The government and the industry openly state that they cannot influence animal welfare in importing countries, so we would ask that no animals be sent to countries which have absolutely no animal welfare safeguards in place. As we understand it, many reviews have failed to address these issues. The live export trade must end, because it is inherently cruel.

- **Animals in saleyards and feedlots** are often left without food, water or shelter. Safeguards must be put into place to address the issue of "curfews" and shelter at these establishments. **"Bobby" calves and young lambs**, removed from their mothers and often too weak to stand should never be loaded for transport. None of these callous procedures will pass the 5 Freedoms test.
- **In addition, animals are now routinely being transported on trucks from Western Australia to the Eastern states** - simply because there is no journey time limit in the Model CoP. Clearly this is a cruel, unnecessary and indefensible practice and it must be banned. Animals should be slaughtered as close as possible to the point of production.
- **Surgical mutilations** - mulesing and the docking of the tails of dairy cattle and horses must be banned. We are informed that the docking of the tails and the cutting of the ears of dogs is not permitted. It is totally unacceptable that a mutilation which is considered cruel on companion animals should pass unquestioned in the case of farmed animals.

- This is, in fact, a crucial point and one we would ask should be addressed. People who would not condone cruel treatment inflicted upon their companion animals seem to be taking the view that the creatures one "uses" for food are less intelligent, less sensitive, less subject to pain and distress, of lesser importance and, as such, their natural requirements are to be ignored.

Quaker Concern for Animals strongly refutes this argument and takes the view that we are all God's creatures and all deserve compassion and, perhaps more important, respect.

- We are wholly in support of **AACT's** submission and ask you to give it your serious consideration.

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