

**Submission  
No 46**

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE PHASE-OUT OF  
AUSTRALIAN LIVE SHEEP EXPORTS BY SEA ON NEW  
SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Mr Nick Cook  
**Date Received:** 20 September 2024

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Dear NSW Parliament Inquiry,

I am Nick Cook, an Australian citizen deeply concerned about the abhorrent conditions endured by sheep in the live export trade. I am writing to express my views on the proposed phase-out of this industry and the impact on New South Wales.

The live sheep export trade is fundamentally cruel and unnecessary. Historical experience and current scientific evidence demonstrate that it cannot be conducted in a way that meets acceptable animal welfare standards. Sheep are forced to endure hot, humid conditions during their 2-3 week long sea voyages to the Middle East. They are compelled to stand, lie and sleep in their own faeces, and are exposed to multiple and cumulative stressors, such as failure to eat, lameness, salmonellosis, infection, and respiratory diseases due to high ammonia levels on board.

Furthermore, sheep exported to the Middle East from Australia are still slaughtered while fully conscious. This is a stark contrast to Halal-accredited slaughter in Australia, including for lamb and mutton exports to the Middle East, which involves stunning. Slaughter without stunning inflicts substantial pain and distress on sheep, and there are no reasonable prospects for Middle Eastern abattoirs and Halal authorities to change this practice and accept stunning in the foreseeable future.

The impact on Australia's international reputation has been significantly negative due to live sheep exports. The most effective way for Australia to demonstrate leadership in animal welfare is by transitioning away from this trade. We should be utilising our scientific and technical expertise to influence animal welfare standards on an international scale.

Public sentiment in Australia overwhelmingly supports an end to live sheep exports. This was reflected in submissions to recent inquiries on the phase-out. The Independent Panel on the Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports in 2023 received over 80% support for the phase-out from the 800 submissions and 3,300 survey responses. Similarly, the House Agriculture Committee Inquiry into the Ending Live Sheep Exports by Sea Bill 2024 received over 85% support from the 13,000 submissions and items of correspondence.

The NSW sheep industry has not depended on the live export trade for many years. No NSW sheep have been sourced for live export since at least 2018 when exports from Port Adelaide ceased, and even then, the numbers were negligible. The 2023 report of the Independent Panel on the Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports found no perceived impact on the NSW industry from the phase-out. The 200-page report makes almost no mention of NSW. However, the damage to Australia's international reputation caused by the cruelty of the live sheep export trade does affect NSW as it has negative ramifications for the entire sheep industry.

In conclusion, Australians do not wish to continue witnessing the suffering and cruelty associated with this trade. We know there are better and more humane alternatives. I believe this phase-out is crucial for the betterment of animal welfare standards, not just in NSW or Australia, but to make a significant statement internationally.

Regards, Nick Cook