

Submission
No 57

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

Name: Rebecca Cameron
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To The Committee,

As part of the NSW community, I am writing to express my concern about the welfare implications of live sheep trade. The overwhelming evidence indicates this industry is simply not acceptable by contemporary standards. The Australian community is largely in favour of terminating our involvement in this trade. In relevance to this inquiry, the phase out does not economically impact our state.

The live sheep export industry is fundamentally at odds with acceptable animal welfare standards. Any attempts to address the inherent animal welfare issues through recent regulatory reforms have been ineffective. In fact, these reforms have only served to underline the depth and severity of the welfare problems within the industry.

On their 2-3 week sea voyages to the Middle East, sheep are forced to endure hot, humid conditions where standing, lying and sleeping in their own faeces is a norm. These animals are subjected to numerous and cumulative stressors, including inanition, lameness, salmonellosis, infection, and respiratory diseases due to the high ammonia levels on board.

The suffering of sheep continues upon arrival in the Middle East, where they are slaughtered without stunning, causing extreme pain, fear, and distress. In contrast, in Australia, sheep are stunned before slaughter, even for Halal accredited slaughter for the meat export trade to the Middle East.

Australia can play a role in improving global animal welfare standards without participating in live sheep exports. We can use international organisations, such as the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), and international trade agreement negotiations to encourage nations to adopt higher standards.

Support for phasing out live sheep exports is widespread among Australians. McCrindle Research's national poll in 2022 showed that 78% of Australians supported a phase out, and a more recent poll in May 2023 found that 71% of Western Australians, including 69% in rural and regional areas, backed the phase out.

The NSW sheep industry has not relied on the live export trade for many years, and no NSW sheep have been sourced for live export since at least 2018. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest that the phase out of live sheep exports will have any significant impact on the NSW sheep industry. The 2023 Independent Panel on the Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports concluded that increasing interstate trade between WA and NSW following the phase out is unlikely, given the barrier of high freight costs.

In conclusion, Australians overwhelmingly support an end to live sheep exports. We are deeply concerned by the suffering and cruelty associated with the trade. I hope the NSW Parliament takes these views into consideration as part of their inquiry.

Regards,
Rebecca Cameron