

Submission
No 75

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

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 19 September 2024

Partially
Confidential

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is _____, a rural resident with firm beliefs against the abuse of animals. I find it necessary to express my views on the impact of phasing out Australian live sheep exports by sea on New South Wales.

Firstly, it is important to note that the live sheep export trade is fundamentally at odds with acceptable standards of animal welfare. The recent regulatory reforms have not addressed these inherent issues and instead, have only served to underline just how deep-seated the welfare problems are within the trade.

A significant issue is that Australian Merino sheep are not adapted to high humidity environments, which they are subjected to on at least 60% of voyages. These voyages traverse hot and humid equatorial regions and enter the Red Sea and Persian Gulf regions, causing the sheep to suffer prolonged heat stress. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that the sheep are exported to some of the world's hottest regions. Considering the predicted increase in extreme temperatures due to climate change, the risk of major catastrophic disasters at sea is only set to increase.

Upon reaching the Middle East, the Australian sheep are slaughtered without being stunned, causing extreme pain, fear, and distress. This is a stark contrast to Australian practices where sheep are stunned before slaughter, including Halal-accredited slaughter for the meat export trade to the Middle East.

Australia's participation in live sheep exports is not necessary for improving global animal welfare standards. Widespread and long-term benefits to animal welfare can be achieved by working through international forums such as the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and in international trade agreement negotiations to encourage nations to elevate standards.

Furthermore, it is crucial to note the public sentiment on this issue. According to a national poll conducted by McCrindle Research in 2022, 78% of Australians supported a phase-out of the trade. This support was also high in Western Australia, where the trade predominantly takes place. A more recent poll in May 2023 found that 71% of Western Australians supported the phase out, including 69% in rural and regional areas of the state.

The NSW sheep industry has not relied on the live export trade for many years. No NSW sheep have been involved in live export since at least 2018 when exports from Port Adelaide ended, and even then, the numbers were negligible. There is no evidence to suggest that the NSW sheep industry will incur any significant impacts due to the phase out of live sheep exports. The 2023 Independent Panel on the Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports found that it was unlikely that there would be an increase in interstate trade between WA and NSW following the phase-out, due to high freight costs.

In conclusion, it is apparent that Australians overwhelmingly support an end to live sheep exports. We are deeply troubled by the suffering and cruelty associated with the trade and we firmly believe that more humane alternatives exist.

Regards,