

**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,

I am [redacted], an Australian citizen deeply perturbed by the ongoing practice of live sheep exports by sea. The chilling scenes from the Awassi Express continue to haunt me, as I am unable to reconcile with the horrifying conditions these animals are subjected to. The idea of these innocent creatures being transported in deplorable conditions only to meet a cruel end in countries with inadequate animal welfare laws is disheartening. Thus, I urge the government to take immediate action to cease this trade, a sentiment shared widely among the Australian public.

The live sheep export trade is fundamentally flawed, given its inability to uphold basic animal welfare standards. Both historical accounts and current scientific evidence concur that this trade is inherently cruel and needless. The industry's argument that death rates have declined is misleading, as mortality is not a sound measure of animal welfare. It neglects the grave welfare concerns preceding death and provides no insight into the experiences of surviving animals. The 2018 McCarthy Review, conducted post the MV Awassi Express incident, strongly urged the industry to discontinue the use of mortality rates as a performance metric. Regrettably, the industry and its advocates continue to rely on this flawed measure, indicating a lack of change.

Upon reaching the Middle East, Australian sheep face the distress of slaughter without prior stunning. This results in extreme pain and fear due to the physical restraint, tissue cutting, and blood loss. In stark contrast, Australian slaughter practices include stunning prior to slaughter, sparing the animals from such traumatic experiences. This includes Halal accredited slaughter for meat exports to the Middle East.

Australia has the potential to contribute significantly towards enhancing global animal welfare standards by supporting organisations such as RSPCA International, World Society for the Protection of Animals, Compassion in World Farming, and Humane Society International. These bodies are committed to advancing welfare standards, particularly in developing regions, through the implementation of WOAHS standards.

The Australian public's desire for an end to live sheep exports is evident. This sentiment was reflected in recent submissions to inquiries on the phase-out, with over 80% of the 800 submissions and 3,300 survey responses supporting the phase-out, according to the 2023 Independent Panel on the Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports. Furthermore, more than 85% of the 13,000 submissions to the House Agriculture Committee Inquiry into the Ending Live Sheep Exports by Sea Bill 2024 supported the bill.

The NSW sheep industry has not depended on live export trade for several years. Indeed, no NSW sheep have been used for live export since at least 2018 when exports from Port Adelaide ended. The 2023 Independent Panel's report on the phase-out failed to identify any significant impact on the NSW industry due to the phase-out. However, the negative impact on Australia's international reputation due to the cruelty associated with the live sheep export trade does have repercussions for the entire sheep industry, including NSW.

I implore the Labor government to honour the commitment made to ban live exports. It is crucial not to yield to the pressure from farmers seeking to intimidate both the government and the public. The live export industry is fraught with suffering and dishonesty, and I suspect underhand dealings and fraudulent insurance claims are prevalent. This trade is simply not sustainable.

I appreciate your attention to these views, shared by many Australians, and trust in your commitment to animal welfare and public sentiment.

Regards,