

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

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 17 September 2024

Partially
Confidential

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a long-standing advocate for animal rights and a concerned citizen deeply troubled by the treatment of animals within the live export industry, I am grateful for the opportunity to express my views on the proposed phase-out of Australian live sheep exports by sea.

The live sheep export trade starkly contrasts with the standards of animal welfare we should strive for as a society. The underlying issues of animal welfare persist despite recent regulatory reforms, which, in fact, have only served to emphasise the deeply rooted problems within the industry.

The live sheep export industry often points to declining mortality rates as an indication of improved animal welfare. However, mortality rates are a severely limited measure, giving no insight into the myriad of grave welfare issues animals face before death. The experience of surviving animals remains unaccounted for. The continued reliance on mortality rates as a performance measure, as recommended against by the 2018 McCarthy Review post the MV Awassi Express incident, only underscores the lack of change within the industry.

Upon arrival in the Middle East, Australian sheep undergo slaughter without prior stunning, causing extreme distress, fear, and pain as they consciously endure the cutting of tissue and bleeding out. In contrast, Australian practices include stunning before slaughter, sparing the animals this traumatic experience, even under Halal-accredited slaughter for meat exports to the Middle East.

By supporting global animal welfare organisations such as RSPCA International, the World Society for the Protection of Animals, Compassion in World Farming, and Humane Society International, Australia can contribute to raising global animal welfare standards. These organisations actively promote the implementation of WOAHS standards in developing regions.

The Australian public is overwhelmingly supportive of ending live sheep exports. This sentiment is reflected in recent consultations on the phase-out, with over 80% of the 800 submissions and 3,300 survey responses to the 2023 Independent Panel on the Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports supporting the phase-out. Similarly, over 85% of the 13,000 submissions and correspondences to the House Agriculture Committee Inquiry into the Ending Live Sheep Exports by Sea Bill 2024 expressed support for the Bill.

The NSW sheep industry has not relied on the live export trade for several years, with no NSW sheep sourced for live export since 2018. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest any significant impact on the NSW sheep industry due to the phase-out. The 2023 Independent Panel on the Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports found that the high freight costs would hinder any sustainable and reliable interstate trade between WA and NSW.

The Australian public is increasingly calling for an end to live sheep exports. We are unwilling to continue witnessing the associated cruelty and suffering when more humane alternatives are available. It is time for us to listen to the collective voice of the people and act accordingly.

Regards,