

Submission
No 113

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

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 15 September 2024

Partially
Confidential

Dear Sir/Madam,

For decades I have opposed the live sheep exports by sea due to its fundamentally inhumane nature. No amount of profits should be gained by subjecting sheep to this horrific trade. Enough is enough.

Both historical and contemporary scientific data underscore the impossibility of conducting this trade in a manner that aligns with acceptable animal welfare standards. It is evident that recent regulatory reforms have failed to address the inherent animal welfare issues, highlighting how deep-seated these problems are within the trade.

Australian Merino sheep struggle to withstand high humidity environments. It is disheartening that they continue to suffer prolonged heat stress on the majority of voyages as they pass through the hot, humid equatorial region, and enter the Red Sea and Persian Gulf regions. The live sheep export industry's claim that death rates have fallen does not hold as a valid measure of animal welfare. Mortality rates overlook the multiple, severe animal welfare issues that precede death and offer no insight into the experiences of the animals that survive.

Upon arrival in the Middle East, Australian sheep are slaughtered without stunning, causing them extreme pain, fear and distress. It is important to note that in Australia, sheep are stunned before slaughter, which spares them the conscious experience of the neck cut and bleed out process. This includes Halal accredited slaughter for meat exports to the Middle East. Unfortunately, there are no foreseeable prospects for Middle Eastern abattoirs and Halal authorities to accept stunning and change this practice.

Australia does not need to participate in live sheep exports to contribute to the global improvement of animal welfare standards. We can achieve long-term and widespread animal welfare benefits by working through international forums like the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and international trade agreement negotiations to encourage nations to elevate their standards. Australia can also support the work of civil society groups such as RSPCA International, the World Society for the Protection of Animals, Compassion in World Farming and Humane Society International. These organisations actively pursue programs in developing regions to support the implementation of WOAH standards.

National polling has shown that the majority of Australians support a phase out of live sheep exports. This sentiment is also reflected in the overwhelming number of submissions to recent inquiries supporting the phase out. It is evident that the Australian community does not wish to continue witnessing the suffering and cruelty associated with the trade, especially when more humane alternatives exist.

The NSW sheep industry has not relied 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. The NSW sheep industry has very limited exposure to the trade given the small volumes making up less than 3% of annual national turn off and less than 2% of national sheep meat export value. There is no evidence to suggest the NSW sheep industry will experience any significant impacts due to the phase out of live sheep exports.

In conclusion, it is imperative that Australia leads the way in animal welfare by transitioning away from the inhumane and unnecessary live sheep export trade. Such a move would not only align with the sentiments of the majority of Australians, but it would also serve to preserve the reputation of our nation and the welfare of our animals.

Regards,