

**Submission
No 132**

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

Name: Mr Scott Smith
Date Received: 11 September 2024

Dear Inquiry Panel,

I spent my childhood in rural New South Wales on a property with farmed animals. Over time, I have come to realise that we must improve our treatment of these sentient beings. I am writing this letter following the advice from a member of the Australian Alliance for Animals who informed me about the inquiry and its possible implications.

I believe the live sheep export trade is fundamentally incompatible with acceptable standards of animal welfare. Despite recent regulatory reforms, the inherent issues concerning animal welfare within the trade remain unresolved. In fact, these changes have only served to emphasise the severity and extent of the welfare problems.

Regrettably, sheep continue to endure hot, humid conditions during their 2-3 week long sea voyages to the Middle East. Forced to stand, lie and sleep in their own faeces, they are exposed to numerous and cumulative stressors, such as inanition, lameness, salmonellosis, infection, and respiratory diseases due to high ammonia levels onboard.

Furthermore, Australian sheep exported to the Middle East are still slaughtered while fully conscious. In contrast, Halal-accredited slaughter in Australia, which includes lamb and mutton exports to the Middle East, involves stunning. The practice of slaughter without stunning inflicts considerable pain and distress on sheep, and it is unlikely that Middle Eastern abattoirs and Halal authorities will change this practice and accept stunning in the near future.

Live sheep exports have severely damaged Australia's international reputation. The most effective way for Australia to demonstrate leadership in animal welfare is by transitioning away from the trade and using our scientific and technical expertise to influence animal welfare standards globally.

It is noteworthy that most Australians support the end of live sheep exports. This sentiment was echoed in the submissions to recent inquiries on the phase-out of this practice. Of the 800 submissions and 3,300 survey responses received by the 2023 Independent Panel on the Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports, over 80% supported the phase out. Moreover, of the 13,000 submissions and items of correspondence received by the House Agriculture Committee Inquiry into the Ending Live Sheep Exports by Sea Bill 2024, over 85% expressed support for the Bill.

The NSW sheep industry has been independent of the live export trade for many years. No sheep from NSW have been sourced for live export since at least 2018 when exports from Port Adelaide ceased. Even then, the numbers were negligible. The 2023 report of the Independent Panel on the Phase Out of Live Sheep Exports did not identify any perceived impact on the NSW industry from the phase out.

However, the damage to Australia's international reputation caused by the cruelty of the live sheep export trade does affect NSW, as it has negative implications for the entire sheep industry.

In conclusion, Australians overwhelmingly support an end to live sheep exports. We no longer wish to bear witness to the suffering and cruelty associated with the trade and we are fully aware that more humane alternatives exist. I believe it is time we act decisively to remedy this situation.

Regards,

Scott Smith