

media release

LIVE EXPORTS THREATEN JOBS IN CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

The RSPCA today called on the Queensland Government to invest in local jobs by seriously reconsidering the future of live cattle exports out of Queensland.

RSPCA Australia CEO, Heather Neil, said cattle shouldn't be going past a local meat processing facility to get onto a ship, only to be slaughtered overseas.

"Cattle exported overseas for slaughter are not only subjected to unnecessary stress but they take Australian jobs with them. We saw it in Biloela yesterday with the loss of 40 jobs and now employees at Rockhampton's major meatworks factory are also facing an uncertain future.

"There's no doubt that Central Queensland meat processors are doing everything they can to value-add to their products and support the local workforce, but the reality is that the supply of cattle will always dictate operating capacity.

"Live cattle exports strip employment opportunities out of local communities and when jobs go, regional economies suffer.

"Queensland and indeed, Central Queensland, is heavily reliant on the cattle industry. Of all the states, Queensland has the highest number of people employed in meat processing.

"Sending live cattle overseas to be slaughtered not only puts these jobs at risk but threatens future employment growth by denying the state significant value-adding opportunities.

"The RSPCA appeals to the Queensland Government to put in place a plan to take advantage of these opportunities and invest in local jobs while significantly improving the welfare of cattle."