

media release

Live Export review a missed opportunity | RSPCA

The RSPCA is profoundly disappointed that one of the cruellest aspects of live export – un-stunned slaughter – can continue.

The independent review into live export, conducted by Bill Farmer, has failed to address the necessity of stunning animals unconscious prior to slaughter.

“This review was an opportunity to properly protect animals at the point of slaughter but instead there is no recommendation on stunning and the government has made no commitment to require it,” RSPCA Australia CEO Heather Neil said.

“The fact that the number of Australian cattle that will be stunned in Indonesia is expected to grow from 8% to around 90% in just six months shows that it’s entirely possible to overcome any perceived barriers when the incentive is there and that markets can respond quickly if the supply of Australian animals depends on it.

“The Government needs to make it clear to the export industries that if they don’t announce targets for stunning, by country, and act themselves, they will make it a requirement.”

Ultimately it is incredibly disappointing that this review did not investigate options to phase out the trade.

“The cruelty exposed in Indonesia was the last straw for many Australians who have run out of patience – the public overwhelmingly does not support live export.

“With our meat exports worth six times more than live exports there is a strong economic case for reform and planning to move away from the live trade would better position producers for the future.”

The RSPCA however welcomed the very positive step towards full traceability of all exported animals through a controlled supply chain.

“This is something welfare groups have been pushing for a number of years because while ever private sale is allowed there is no way to set standards for the treatment of Australian livestock.

“While it’s unacceptable that it has again taken the industry being under threat to see proper protections put in place, we are pleased this is finally occurring.

“It is important to not to lose sight of the scale of the suffering that has led to this point. 6.4 million cattle have been exported to Indonesia over the past 18 years, 160 million animals to all markets since the live trade began.

“It is unforgivable that it is only through animal welfare groups being prepared to act as live export watchdogs has this industry been brought to account.”



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