

### Background

- Since 2003 **Animals Australia has conducted 8 investigations**: seven into the treatment of Australian animals exported to the Middle East and one in Indonesia. These investigations have consistently revealed appalling animal cruelty as a routine part of the live export trade.
- A 2006 Animals Australia investigation in Egypt aired on *60 Minutes* resulted in a public backlash that **forced the government to ban the live trade of sheep and severely limit the export of cattle to that country**.
- Despite damning evidence of similar animal abuse in other countries that Australia exports animals to, the Australian government has continued to support the live export industry and turn a blind eye to animal suffering.
- Animals Australia's most recent investigation into the treatment of Australian cattle in Indonesia aired on *4 Corners* on 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2011 and has sparked unprecedented public outrage about live animal export.

### The Facts

- During the last 30 years, **Australia has sent more than 150 million sheep and cattle** to be slaughtered in other parts of the world, such as the Middle East and South East Asia.
- Depending on their destination, the journey by boat can take up to 3 weeks, during which time the animals remain in cramped conditions and must endure all weather extremes.
- Every year, thousands of animals die during the journey. In 2010, just under 30,000 **sheep died en route** to the Middle East and 1,000 cattle died on ships.
- The majority of countries importing Australian animals have **no laws to protect animals from cruelty**.
- Sheep exported to the Middle East, are **routinely mishandled, dragged**, and many have their **legs bound** together and are **thrown in the boots of cars**, in a region that often has temperatures hovering near 50°C in summer.
- Cattle exported to Indonesia are routinely treated brutally prior to slaughter, including being tripped to the floor by ropes. Common abuses documented include: **eye gouging**, being **whipped, hit and kicked**, having their **tail broken** and even having their **leg tendons slashed**. Similar abuse of cattle has been documented in the Middle East.
- The vast majority of Australian animals exported to the Middle East and South East Asian countries, including Indonesia, are **slaughtered whilst fully conscious**. Animals Australia's investigation in Indonesia revealed cattle were suffering an average of 11 cuts to the throat and often many minutes of pain, thrashing and bellowing before losing consciousness.

### The Damage

- Local people throughout the Middle East and South East Asia believe that Australians approve of their treatment of animals. They have reached this logical conclusion based on our willingness to provide them with animals for slaughter for over 30 years. Rather than inspiring desperately needed change in attitudes and handling – the continued supply of Australian animals is **reinforcing long held beliefs that their cruel treatment of animals is acceptable**.
- The operation of Australia's live export industry, and the tens of thousands of animals that die en route each year sets an example that profit is more important than animal welfare and that animals are nothing more than chattels to be traded and slaughtered.

### Debunking Industry Spin

- *"We need to keep exporting to achieve welfare improvements in importing countries."* After 30 years of exporting, and millions of dollars invested in training programs and facilities in importing countries, investigations consistently reveal unspeakable cruelty to animals (including at slaughterhouses that have received Meat and Livestock Australia training). Recent footage from Indonesia also exposed Australian installed "restraint boxes" to be **entrenching cruel practices** and causing immense suffering to animals. These "restraint boxes" were partly funded by the Australian taxpayer.
- Time and time again, **the live export industry has proven that they do not care about animal welfare and cannot be trusted to be honest with the Australian public**. Their inadequate efforts to improve welfare standards are only aimed at appeasing public outrage. Every year, millions of animals suffer in this trade, while the industry continues to introduce ineffective and even damaging 'welfare improvements'.
- *"If we don't supply them animals, somewhere else will."* Following the ban on exporting sheep to Egypt in 2006, rather than replacing this trade with animals from other countries, Egypt increased chilled meat imports from Australia. Australia is also the only exporting country without foot and mouth disease - which means, in the case of Indonesia, they would not be able to import live animals from elsewhere.
- The strongest way for Australia to encourage importing countries to improve their animal welfare standards is to **call an immediate ban on live animal export** and convey to these countries that **we will not support animal cruelty**.
- The Gillard government may have been able to claim it was unaware of the horrors that animals would face in importing countries before, but now it is fully aware. **It is unforgivable that it would knowingly condone Australian animals being sent to this fate**. Every day of inaction sees thousands more animals needlessly suffering on ships and brutalized in overseas feedlots and slaughterhouses and the Gillard government's inaction makes them culpable for the suffering of every one of these animals.