

**1<sup>st</sup> Letter. Emailed to Four Corners through website email portal 04.11.2012.**

Letter to Four Corners – From Jo-Anne Bloomfield. Hodgson River Station Katherine NT. 03.11.12

Attention ABC broadcasting executive, 4 Corners programming and Sarah Ferguson

It appears that yet again you wish to denigrate the live export industry with another program concerning the treatment of Australian animals sold to foreign countries.

Like many others in the live animal export industry my taxes contribute to the ABC via parliamentary funding. ABC's Charter, its Independence and accountability are dictated by its Editorial policies and standards (ABC Editorial policies Principles and Standards 2011).

It is my view that ABC have not followed some of these policies and standards in the Four Corners 'A Bloody Business' aired 31<sup>st</sup> May 2011 and Lateline 'New footage of abuse in Indonesian abattoirs' aired 28<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

I would like to know if the ABC charter will be followed in another program about to be aired, on 5<sup>th</sup> November by Four Corners 'Another Bloody Business',

I would like to make some suggestions regarding potential stories you may wish to pursue and a couple of retractions that as a taxpayer I would appreciate being made. I would also like an explanation as to the relevance of the points I raise in regards to the ABC's Editorial policy standards.

- **At the Senate Inquiry, 14th September 2011, Sarah Ferguson admitted that interviewees were not shown the 'A Bloody Business' footage obtained in Indonesia prior to the interview. Sarah Ferguson only verbally explained the footage to the interviewees prior to the interview.**

*Please disclose publicly if it is standard practice when interviewing for a story you are filming to not show the interviewee the film footage that your questions are based on, considering section 5.1 of the ABC Editorial policies.*

**ABC Editorial Policies 2011 #5 Fair and honest dealings. Page 5**

Dealing with participants

5.1 Participants in ABC content should normally be informed of the general nature of their participation

Rohan Sullivan lodged a formal complaint against the ABC regarding his interview on 'A Bloody Business' and Luke Bowen also spoke about his comments being taken out of context (QLD Country Life. 'NT Cattlemen blast ABC over program' 22.09.11)

*Please disclose publicly if Four corners will be giving a fair opportunity to these people to respond with others in the industry particularly in relation to northern Australia and Indonesian cattle exports concerning 'A Bloody Business', considering section 5.3 of the ABC Editorial policies.*

**ABC Editorial Policies 2011 #5 Fair and honest dealings. Page 5**

**Opportunity to respond.**

5.3 Where allegations are made about a person or organisation, make reasonable efforts in the circumstances to provide a fair opportunity to respond.

- **The animal shown in the 60Minutes footage shown on 'A Bloody Business' was not an Australian Animal and this was admitted by Sarah Ferguson at the Senate Inquiry, 14th September 2011.**

Sarah Ferguson stated:

"It is a small error based on taking something from somebody else's program and we can correct that easily".

Unfortunately Australian viewers thought it was an Australian animal and continue to do so.

*Please disclose this error publicly in 'Another Bloody Business' and make a retraction, considering standards 2.1 and 2.2 of the ABC editorial policies.*

**ABC Editorial Policies 2011 #5 Fair and honest dealings. Page 5**  
**Principals.**

The ABC has a statutory duty to ensure that the gathering and presentation of news and information is accurate according to the recognised standards of objective journalism.

Credibility depends heavily on factual accuracy.

Standards.

2.1 Make reasonable efforts to ensure that material facts are accurate and presented in context.

2.2 Do not present factual content in a way that will materially mislead the audience.

- **The footage filmed by Animals Australia was misleading:**
- **The abattoir located in Taliwang, West Nusa Tenggara, Lombok, had NEVER received Australian cattle and this was not clearly stated in your program.**
  - **The abattoir Terpadu, Bogor, West Java, had not received any Australian cattle since early 2011, it had no plans to use Australian cattle and it was unlikely that footage taken there showed Australian cattle.**

*Please disclose that this footage was misleading publicly in 'Another Bloody Business' and make a retraction, as per ABC Editorial policies 3.1a and 3.1b. Stipulate that the animals in those segments were owned and controlled by the laws of another country and did not fall under Australian jurisdiction when filmed or the current period of ESCAS. (Export Supply Chain Assurance System).*

Please also note that footage supplied by Animals Australia is not always what it is purported to depict. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries found that the ear tag in the animal shown in the 'new' Indonesian footage supplied to Lateline by Lyn White in January 2012 was in fact from an animal slaughtered some weeks before the footage was supposedly filmed. This was confirmed by ESCAS. Additionally footage purported to be from ECAS approved abattoirs was in fact not from approved abattoirs.

“Two abattoirs were not part of approved supply chains controlled by Australian exporters, nor were the animals seen in the footage sourced from Australia”.

<http://www.daff.gov.au/aqis/export/live-animals/livestock/investigation-report>.

**ABC Editorial Policies 2011 #5 Fair and honest dealings. Page 5**

**Principals.**

A commitment to accuracy includes a willingness to correct errors and clarify ambiguous or otherwise misleading information. Swift correction can reduce harmful reliance on inaccurate information especially given content can be quickly, widely and permanently disseminated.

**Standards**

3.1 Acknowledge and correct or clarify, in an appropriate manner as soon as reasonably practicable:

- a. significant material errors that are readily apparent or have been demonstrated; or
- b. information that is likely to significantly and materially mislead.

- **In 2011 4Corners filmed in excess of 15 hours footage on Indonesian soil and in Indonesian abattoirs for ‘A bloody business’. Approximately 15 ½ minutes of this footage was aired, with only 35 seconds shown of the ‘stunning’ process.**

Vast improvements have been made in Indonesia abattoirs, slaughter houses and exporter supply lines. For example, footage from the Jalan Abattoir, Near Medan, Sumatra, showed a black steer trembling in a raceway before slaughter. This abattoirs lairage has now been altered to ensure improved handling, with water and feed available right up to point of slaughter. Improvements have also been made in regards to knocking boxes dependent on the form of stunning used. Some exporters have adopted a policy 100% stunning with their clients.

*Therefore, in the ‘thoroughness of the journalistic effort’ (Sarah Ferguson, Senate Inquiry, 14.09.11) please return to Indonesia and film improvements made since June 2011. Please also publicly disclose and credit the improvements that had already been implemented by the industry prior to the Live Export Ban being put in place in June 2011.*

*Considering Animals Australia and RSPCA’s obvious intentions to Ban Live exports, please explain ABC’s decisions to use so much of their (AA’s and RSPCA’s)film footage and views considering standards 1.3.of ABC Editorial policies.*

**ABC Editorial Policies 2011 #5 Fair and honest dealings. Page 5**

**Principals.**

**Standards**

1.3 Ensure editorial decisions are not properly influenced by political, sectional, commercial or personal interests.



- **40% of the Indonesian population is involved with Agriculture in some way and the reductions in the animal import permits and loss of income in already poor rural areas has affected them adversely.**

*Please return to Indonesia and shoot a 4Corners exposé on the effect of the reduction of animal import permits and the loss of income on an already poor rural population. Please interview the Indonesian public and workers in the agriculture industry.*

- **‘A Bloody Business’ has created a platform for political grandstanding by politicians and other public figures. Greens Senator Lee Rhiannon sponsored the Live Animal Export (Slaughter) Prohibition Bill 2012. This bill would have a devastating impact on northern Australia. Recognising this, 25 questions regarding the effects of the proposed ban were posted on the Facebook page ‘Ban Live Exports Now’ created by Senator Rhiannon. These were posed to question Senator Rhiannon’s understanding of the consequences of a ban on animals, land, economics and people. Senator Lee Rhiannon has made a half-hearted attempt to answer the first 14 questions and to date, has refused to answer anymore.**
- *Please visit northern Australia, and shoot a 4Corners exposé on the effect of a ban on live animal export. Please ensure the exposé covers all aspects of a potential ban, including the effect on animals, the land, economics and people, to ensure that the people of Australia gain a more in-depth understanding of this complex issue.*
- **People will be watching the Four Corners Monday program ‘Another Bloody Business’ with great interest. Not only at the actual content of the program but how ABC portray the industry. Will it be in a fair and factual way? Some affected by the Live export ban of June 2011 have begun legal proceedings in a class action against Government based on the actions of government having been detrimental and possibly catastrophic to their business earnings.**
- *Is it of concern that if the next Four Corners program ‘Another Bloody business’ is regarded as damaging to industry that ABC may risk countering legal action from Live animal export industry members for damage to their business and livelihoods? Based on Four corners not showing a true and balanced view point of the circumstances it may portray.*