



Animals Australia

The Voice for Animals

10 August 2004

Mr Alex Olah
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee
SG 62
Parliament House
Canberra 2600

Dear Mr Olah,

*Inquiry into Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Legislation
Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2004*

Further to our telephone conversation, I confirm that it is not possible for an Animals Australia representatives to attend the public hearing of the Senate RRA&T Committee to be held tomorrow (11 August) at Parliament House in Canberra at this short notice. However, I wish to indicate that Animals Australia is keenly interested in the hearing and the Bill, and ask that you bring these brief comments to the notice of the Senators.

Our comments are provided against a backdrop of our total opposition to the practice of live animal export. Sending Australian animals by sea to other countries causes unnecessary and unreasonable suffering to millions of animals each year during the various phases of assembly and transport, but then also through the inadequate and cruel handling and slaughter methods in many of those importing countries. This submission **must not** be interpreted as giving even tacit support to this industry.

In regard to these amendments to the *Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry Act 1997* we make the following brief comments:

- 1) Animals Australia supports the gathering of compulsory fees from industry to assist with research and development – obviously needed whilst the live export of animals continues.
- 2) New Section 64B (Payments to the live-stock export research body) gives the Minister the ability to impose conditions on the use of the funds contributed through Commonwealth funds (taxpayer funds) to match those raised through the compulsory

levy on live exports. It is our view that the Bill should further require that such conditions require that:

- a) those funds be wholly used to enable research to be undertaken into animal welfare and animal health issues;
- b) an advisory group be established which includes at least two animal welfare representatives, to have input into the type of research undertaken using the R&D funds collected from industry and matched by Government; and
- c) annual reports of the R&D program and any completed papers be published by the Government.

It is of concern that in other livestock industry R&D programs community animal welfare input is rarely sought. Given the history of the live export debate, and the demonstrated high level of community concern for the welfare of exported animals, I appeal to the Committee to ensure that in this Bill the basic requirement of animal welfare advice and input is a requirement for the management of these funds (half of which will be from the community).

I would be happy to answer any questions asked of Animals Australia by the Committee members through correspondence, and would undertake to respond promptly if at all possible.

Yours sincerely,

Glenys Oogjes
Executive Director

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