



STOP TASMANIAN ANIMAL CRUELTY COMPLAINT November 2011

Stop Tasmanian Animal Cruelty

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December 21. 2011

Dr Gardner Murray

Manager, Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health group

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

PO Box 858

CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Dr Murray

RE : Australian farm animals, Live Exports and OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code

We write to express our concerns in relation to Australia's claim to be proactive in working with the World Organisation of Animal Health (OIE) to prevent cruelty perpetrated upon animals destined for slaughter, in saleyards, and especially in live export

Article 7.2.8 (3) of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code states, in relation to the **use of electric goads:-**

*"The use of such devices should be limited to battery-powered goads on the hindquarters of pigs and large ruminants, and never on sensitive areas such as the eyes, mouth, ears, anogenital region or belly. Such instruments should not be used on horses, **sheep and goats of any age**, or on calves or piglets"*



Electric prod on head of sheep 26.10.2010



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17.03.2011



13.06.2011



29.09.2011



29.09.2011



28.04.2014



24.12.2011



13.06.2011



13.06.2011



As you will see in the photographs above, taken in 2010 and 2011, these transporters and stevedores are clearly using electric goads on sheep, who clearly cannot move to escape the pain. In panic, the animals can be seen rearing onto the backs of other sheep. Our observations show **the extensive use of electric goads on sheep during the loading and unloading of trucks, and during the loading of ships. The use of these electric devices is a serious non-conformance and needs to be addressed immediately.**

It is clear from these photographs and the video footage below that the use of these devices is routine, gratuitous and endemic, and most often in cases where the animals have nowhere to move to. The result is that they rear on top of other animals, or fall, potentially causing serious injury to all the animals. Such animal handling is clearly inhumane and contrary to all known animal protection statutes, any code of practice, and certainly in violation of Australia's claimed commitment to OIE standards.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmeM8D2ykDM&feature=player_embedded

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=IZvzlfA97CI#!

The above videos, filmed at various live export loadings, show the full extent of this gratuitous violence against these animals, the relentless use of these goads on sheep and



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cattle, including their heads, faces, and anogenital regions as well. Clearly, this abuse is systemic at these loadings, and it includes kicking the faces of the already panicking animals. These unsatisfactory practices have continued unmonitored and unchecked for years, and apparently no penalties are applied for breaching any of the animal welfare statutes in this country.

We recognise that the OIE standards are 'recommendations', and even if they state 'should', rather than 'must', if Australia wants to make any claim about having 'good' animal welfare standards, the use of these devices on these animals must be expressly prohibited. This prohibition must be rigorously enforced, and this means that your Department is responsible for this enforcement.

Could you please advise as a matter of urgency, what action DAFF intends to take in ensuring full compliance with the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code recommendations, and animal protection statutes in the context of this issue within Australia.

Yours sincerely

SUZANNE CASS

Stop Tasmanian Animal Cruelty

Cc Dr Jennifer Davis
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International Programs and Disease Intelligence
World Organisation for Animal Health
Email: oiie@oiie.int
OIE delegates in countries which import Australian animals
Media outlets in countries which import Australian animals
Retail outlets which stock meat from Australian animals