



12 December 2013

Dr Paul Grimes
Secretary, Department of Agriculture
CANBERRA
ACT

c/- Lady Barron Post Office
Flinders Island
Tasmania 7255
info@vale.org.au

Dear Dr Grimes

Cruelty to Australian cattle in Gaza – exporter Livestock Shipping Services (LSS)

I am the president of VALE (Vets Against Live Export). We have over 120 members from the veterinary and related professions in Australia, most of whom are registered veterinarians. VALE has consistently called for a transition away from live export but also for more accountability, transparency and continuous improvement by the live export industry to ensure acceptable animal welfare standards whilst the trade continues.

I write regarding footage which has been collated by Animals Australia of cattle ostensibly exported to Israel which seemingly were then transported to Gaza. It appears the relevant exporter was Livestock Shipping Services (LSS). I presume that you and/or your staff have seen this very distressing footage. Needless to say, the slaughter and handling were not compliant with OIE recommendations.

With the introduction of ESCAS two years ago, the expectation was that it would safeguard animal welfare at end destinations. It was accepted that it would not prevent breaches but it was assumed that when breaches occurred and exporters were found to be non-compliant, that there would be action. However, breaches of ESCAS have occurred repeatedly since its inception with no penalty. LSS in particular has been involved in many of the breaches, prompting even the export industry and their spokesperson Ms Alison Penfold to suggest that this particular company should be sanctioned.

VALE request that you take immediate action and suspend LSS's licence and issue them with a "show cause" notice under section 23 of the *Australian Meat and Livestock Industry Act 1997* requiring them to explain how these animals ended up outside ESCAS-approved destination and facilities.

I am happy to discuss this with you by phone (0423 783 689) or email (info@vale.org.au).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S Foster".

Dr Sue Foster BVSc MVetClinStud FANZCVS (Spokesperson; President)