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Live exporters' proposed improvements just paper over the cracks – again.

Vets Against Live Export says the clear scientific evidence, coupled with footage of dreadful conditions on live export ships, means that summer shipments of sheep should stop now. The call by live exporters for independent observers on voyages and an independent regulator will not stop the suffering on sheep ships to the Middle East and is an attempt to deflect attention from the main issue.

VALE spokesperson Dr Sue Foster said, “Our 2014 review of the science relating to heat stress in sheep clearly showed that significant numbers of sheep will inevitably suffer on these long export voyages where there are very high temperatures coupled with high humidity. The sheep simply cannot cool down and cook from the inside.

“Faisal Ullah's secret footage showed us what we have never seen before, which is an independent view of what these animals suffer. For years the industry has opposed putting independent vets on the ships because it has known these conditions would have been revealed to the public.

“The evidence now available from our scientific paper and this footage clearly show summer live export shipments are associated with unacceptable and unavoidable cruelty. The claims of the industry that animal welfare conditions on these ships are the best in the world have been shown to be cynical lies.

“There are many animal welfare problems apart from heat stress in live export. Therefore, each live export voyage outside the summer months or on relatively short trips should be observed by an independent vet. Their reports should be made public and should include video footage of onboard conditions. Oversight of the trade must be given to a regulator independent of the Department of Agriculture.”

–ENDS–

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