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## PRESS RELEASE

### Veterinarians form new group opposing live export

A group of prominent veterinarians have founded a new organisation focusing on the need to phase out export of live animals for slaughter.

Spokesperson Dr Sue Foster says Vets Against Live Export (VALE) counts among its members and advisors two professors of animal welfare in Australian veterinary schools and an on-ship veterinarian who has first-hand experience of the live trade.

Dr Foster said “The national professional body, the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA), continues to condone live export despite overwhelming evidence that regulatory enforcement of animal welfare standards is non-existent, and attempts to improve animal welfare in importing countries have consistently failed.

“We believe that the live export trade for slaughter exposes millions of animals to significant and unnecessary pain, suffering and abuse. It is therefore crucial to correct the public’s impression that all vets – or indeed all AVA members – support live export.

“VALE’s aim is to lead the transition away from live export by giving the public and government a balanced and objective scientific view of animal welfare and regulation of the industry. Our members have direct experience of the willingness of exporters to hide the truth about poor animal welfare and will be seeking to expose this to the public.”

Dr Foster hopes that the Australian Veterinary Association will support VALE’s goal of phasing out the live export trade and assisting with the transition back to a localised slaughter industry with export of refrigerated meat, which would benefit many more Australians through the creation of regional jobs.

“It has repeatedly been demonstrated that the trade is very risky and unreliable. More needs to be done to ensure the long term viability of Australia’s livestock industries, and the AVA should support that notion,” she said.

In addition to the tremendous response to VALE from veterinarians in Australia there has been strong interest in VALE from overseas.

“This is a global issue which has attracted international attention and will continue to do so,” said Dr Foster.

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