

Media release

Livestock export industry launches ambitious plan for animal welfare improvements

May 22, 2011

Australia's livestock export industry today launched its strategic vision for improving animal welfare outcomes in our livestock export markets.

Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) Chairman Don Heatley said an important part of this vision is the development of comprehensive action plans for each key export market, with the first plan to be implemented in Indonesia – Australia's largest and most important market for cattle exports.

“At the core of the strategy, the industry is committing to only supply Australian livestock to facilities where supply chains meet or exceed the relevant sections of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) animal welfare standards. Our deadline for meeting this goal is 2015, however we will be working hard to achieve this as early as possible,” Mr Heatley said.

“This is an ambitious plan that will enable our industry to have tighter control over animal welfare outcomes in our overseas markets. It will deliver a system to identify, monitor and address welfare requirements through the implementation of endorsed livestock welfare standards.”

Mr Heatley said the strategy and action plans flow from an independent review of Indonesian facilities conducted last year.

Key elements of the Indonesian Action Plan include:

- Implementing endorsed livestock welfare standards for port, transport, feedlot and abattoir to ensure Indonesia is operating at, or above, OIE standards.
- The establishment of an Indonesian Animal Welfare Taskforce consisting of a team of Australian livestock experts and 20 new Indonesian animal welfare officers to conduct a stock take of all facilities and locations processing Australian livestock.
- Following the stock take, deliver necessary infrastructure upgrades and provide point of processing training to every facility processing Australian cattle.

“Our Indonesian trading partners are committed to the implementation of our action plan announced today. This is a big step by a developing country – Indonesia will be at the forefront of any developing countries adopting OIE standards,” Mr Heatley said.

LiveCorp CEO Cameron Hall said the strategy would support and enhance the industry's investment in a range of programs designed to improve animal welfare in the markets where Australia supplies livestock.

“It again demonstrates that the industry is committed to implementing lasting animal welfare improvements in our key livestock export markets. We are the only country in the world investing in animal welfare in our overseas markets.”

Cattle Council of Australia CEO David Inall said the live cattle trade was vital to cattle producers and regional communities, particularly in the north of Australia. The trade is also important to indigenous communities.



“Indonesia is the most important market for many of our northern producers and the type of cattle produced in the north are well suited to that market. We also know that demand from Indonesia helps to underpin cattle prices right across the country,” Mr Inall said.

“Over time we have developed a sophisticated supply chain from Australian producers to Indonesian feedlots so this initiative launched today will further develop that relationship.”

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For a copy of the Strategic vision for in-market animal welfare visit and the Indonesian action plan visit <http://www.mla.com.au/About-the-red-meat-industry/Livestock-exports>

To see the improvements the industry is making in our overseas markets visit www.youtube.com/livestockexporttruth

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