



12 June 2011

## **BUDDHIST STATEMENT ON LIVE EXPORT TRADE OF ANIMALS**

The Buddhist community of Australia believes that the live export of animals for slaughter is needless and cruel, and we call for an immediate and permanent ban on this trade.

Recently the ABC on its [4 Corner's program](#), screened a shocking expose on how Australian cattle are being slaughtered in Indonesia. The conditions in the slaughter house were cruel and incomprehensible. For example in one scene an animal broke its leg on the slippery floor and was simply unable to move. But despite this the helpless animal was subjected to repeated abuse. In another scene an animal was filmed trembling with abject fear because it had been forced to watch the slow and clumsy slaughter and dismemberment of its fellow cattle as the animal awaited its own fate.

Animals are living beings just as we are. The main difference is that they have no voice and so our responsibility as individuals and as a community is to speak and act on their behalf. We believe this is one of those issues where governmental leadership has to be shown to bring us all forward on this matter which has touched the hearts of all Australians. We commend Animals Australia and Ms White for her brave documentary footage.

Unnecessary suffering in the slaughterhouse can be minimised by stunning the condemned animal with a stun gun before it's throat is cut (for the animal to bleed to death in accordance with the religious rites of Indonesia). This TV program has rightly caused a public uproar and has generated debate about whether the live export of Australian cattle should be banned i.e. live export should be replaced by the exportation of carcasses.

The Buddhist position in Australia is that if any animal is to be slaughtered then it should be slaughtered according to the method that is acceptable to the RSPCA. With regard to all animals: they should always be stunned first before slaughter. The RSCPA's standards may be found at their website at this link: <http://kb.rspca.org.au/entry/116/>. We believe there should be just one standard of animal slaughter in Australia.

The Buddhist community is aware and respectful of the economic importance of the animal trade to Australia and would like to see changes that can be introduced that will mean a win for our farmers as well as a win for the animals. We note New Zealand stopped the live export of cattle many years ago. We also note that the Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union also supports the banning of Live Exports (<http://amieu.net/>).

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Mr Kim Hollow  
*President*