



Live EXPORT Update

News from WA's Livestock Export Industry - June 2006

Counter point

WA's livestock export industry has launched a major public campaign to counter the tactics of extremist animal liberation groups and the adverse media attention they have been generating.

Meat and Livestock Australia and Livecorp have linked with the WA Livestock Exporters' Association, WA Farmers, the PGA, and the Livestock Transporters' Association to urge city people to look beyond the public attacks on their industry by extremist groups.

MLA general manager of Livestock Exports, Mike Hayward said the industry was using new reports, improved procedures, outcomes and facts to dispute many of the arguments being pushed by the animal liberation movement against the live export trade.

"Our campaign is coming together at a time when we are also beginning to see tangible benefits emerging from the wide ranging initiatives started several years ago and dealing with animal welfare improvement at every level of the industry," Mr Hayward said.

"These are facts and positives that will always be rejected by extremists, but we believe they will

be accepted by the majority of people who respond to balanced, factual information.

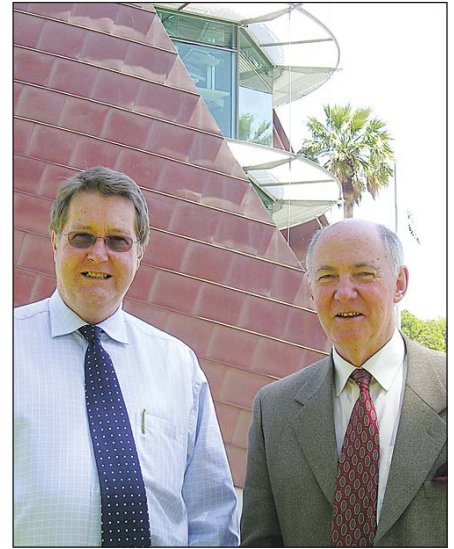
"New reports such as those by Alliance Research Economics released last week and by Hassall & Associates (due for release in the near future) are bringing out valuable new information about this industry, the new standards it is setting, and how its value and importance to farmers and the economy is increasing."

WA Livestock Exporters' Association chairman John Edwards said the new public campaign was serving to unite the industry in WA.

"Until now this has been a one-sided argument in favour of our opponents," he said.

"But even though we may still have some serious legal and public issues to address, we will be letting everyone, from the man in the street through to the state and federal politicians know that the livestock export industry is an essential service that will be defended."

Monthly advertorial pages in The West Australian



MLA Livestock Export general manager Mike Hayward (left) and WA coordinator Peter Lang

and selective use of suburban newspapers will promote the Livestock Export campaign messages.

LEGAL THREAT

THE decision by the WA Government to test its animal welfare legislation against Emanuel Exports and its directors has sparked widespread anxiety across the industry.

The case has so far had several adjournments in the Magistrates Court, but is now expected to proceed to a test of state jurisdictional powers against the federal constitution with a further hearing in July.

WALEA chairman John Edwards said strong national industry support had developed for Emanuels in their defence of the state charges.

"A negative precedent for the industry in this case would expose most sections of the livestock industry to legal action under WA's Welfare Act and those in other states," he said.

"That would not only pull the live export industry to a standstill, it would also potentially bring into question many accepted farming and trucking practices involving livestock."

Mr Edwards said industry support was based on the view that Emanuel Exports and its directors had fully complied with national livestock shipping regulations as well as the provisions of the state Welfare Act, and that the state charges should be ruled invalid.

New push out of Fremantle

THE traditional legacies of sheep trucks plying the narrow, crowded streets of Fremantle and large livestock vessels using the port may be set to disappear as the industry shifts its focus to a proposed new port at James Point, Kwinana.

Speculation is increasing that the state government may soon give the green light to James Point Pty Ltd - a local consortium of investors, engineers and transport interests - to develop a new private port in the Kwinana industrial area.

A \$1 billion Outer Port Harbour project is also under assessment in an adjacent area by the Fremantle Port Authority (FPA) as it moves to accommodate commercial development of the existing Fremantle port.

FPA continues to argue that the livestock industry does not need to move out of Fremantle.

However, even the RSPCA and other animal welfare groups are supporting the industry push away from Fremantle to James Point.

WA Livestock Exporters' Association (WALEA) chairman John Edwards said the port move was the next major stage in upgrading and restructuring the industry.

"Apart from the sight, sound and smell liabilities of moving livestock and feed through the centre of Fremantle, there have been increasing logistical problems with traffic and residential concerns as well as welfare issues with frequently stopping

trucks," he said.

"The proposed new facility at James Point not only uses Anketell Road as a dangerous-goods-approved main access route with virtually no residential issues, but a section of the new port facilities will be tailored by the developers to accommodate the live export industry."

Mr Edwards said the James Point proposal was originally endorsed by the Court government, but had lost momentum with the change of government.

"Our interest has been rekindled now that a new public awareness process has started on the new port options at Kwinana and there will be livestock industry-wide support for the private port concept," he said.

WALEA had written to WA Premier Alan Carpenter seeking to expedite the process for government approval of the Point James facility.

"We find it difficult to accept that the Fremantle Port Authority proposal to develop a parallel offshore loading facility at Kwinana at a minimum estimated cost to the state government of \$850 million, would offer the right solutions quickly enough to meet an urgent livestock industry timetable," the WALEA letter said.



WA Livestock Exporters' Association chairman John Edwards