



17 December 2021

## Export advisory notice 2021/23

# Have your say on the 2021 *Review of live sheep exports by sea to, or through, the Middle East during the Northern Hemisphere summer*

Species: Sheep

Countries: Middle East countries and the Russian Federation

## Attention

- All

## Purpose

To advise stakeholders that the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment has commenced consultation on the 2021 draft report *Review of live sheep exports by sea to, or through, the Middle East during the Northern Hemisphere summer*.

## Key points

- The department is reviewing the effectiveness of regulatory settings for the export of live sheep by sea to, or through, the Middle East during the Northern Hemisphere summer (1 May to 31 October), including a prohibition on all exports during the hottest months of the Northern Hemisphere summer.
- We analysed data and reports for 15 voyages that occurred in the Northern Hemisphere summers of 2019, 2020 and 2021. In addition, we considered previous Northern Hemisphere summer voyage outcomes, scientific literature and Bureau of Meteorology climate analysis and data.
- Key issues considered in the review include:
  - the effectiveness of the current regulatory settings in reducing the occurrence of heat stress and heat-related mortalities
  - whether the current regulatory settings are maintaining acceptable animal welfare outcomes, and supporting the sustainability of the live sheep export industry
  - evidence-based options to maintain or modify the prohibition dates.

- On 17 December 2021 the draft report was released for public consultation via the Have Your Say webpage at <http://haveyoursay.awe.gov.au/NHS-prohibition-review>. The consultation period concludes on 28 January 2022. The department intends to complete the review by the end of February 2022 to give farmers, exporters and customers certainty and to enable planning for the 2022 Northern Hemisphere summer.
- The draft review recommends changes to the prohibition periods currently specified in the Export Control (Animals) Rules 2021 (Animals Rules) defining:
  - absolute prohibition periods for nominated destinations that align with the hottest, most humid part of the Northern Hemisphere summer and where heat stress risks in live sheep export voyages cannot effectively be mitigated, and
  - conditional prohibition periods for some destinations where heat stress risks can effectively be mitigated through the application of additional measures including upper weight limits, selection of heat tolerant breeds, wool length requirements, minimum vessel pen air turnover (PAT) scores, additional space on board, additional preparation time and feeding requirements at Registered Establishments and increasing fodder provided during the voyage.
- Depending on the final outcome of the review, the department may make changes to the Animals Rules.

## Background

- Following an interim prohibition during the 2019 Northern Hemisphere summer, the department conducted a Regulation Impact Statement process into proposed regulatory changes for live sheep exports to the Middle East during the Northern Hemisphere summer. Prohibition periods and additional export conditions were subsequently implemented in 2020, and continued under the *Export Control Act 2020* and associated subordinate legislation that took effect from 28 March 2021.

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