

Dear Technical Reference Panel

My business and my community are beneficiaries of a strong and vibrant live export trade that focuses on animal welfare.

As a sector, farmers are leaders in animal welfare. It is at the center of everything we do.

I have serious concerns about the recommendations you have made in your draft report into Heat Stress Risk Assessment for the export of live sheep. Your recommendations have set a heat and risk threshold that is impossible to meet and unprecedented globally. Not only will the current draft recommendations effectively shut down live sheep exports, it has the potential to detrimentally effect the export of live cattle as well. Should a heat stress risk assessment as you have proposed be applied to cattle, the viability of the live cattle will also be at risk.

I have also been informed that the Department of Agriculture is considering how interim regulatory action to reflect your recommendations can be undertaken – something which causes me great concern. It is clear that the model proposed requires further work and that a comprehensive process, including a regulatory impact statement must be undertaken.

The sheep and cattle industries are putting together a practical, evidence-based approach, that can put in place good animal welfare practices, as well as allowing a viable trade to be maintained. I am requesting that the panel carefully consider the evidence and develop a more comprehensive solution.

The objectives should clearly be about improving and assuring animal welfare outcomes rather than stopping this viable industry in its tracks.

The livelihoods of thousands of Australian farmers and hundreds of Australian communities are resting on your shoulders.

Yours sincerely,