

Submission for the Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture

Addendum to Submission Dated 1 August 2019

I refer to my submission for the Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture dated 1 August 2019 which I sent to the Committee on 1 August 2019.

Since making this submission, I have come to know additional information about an illegal slaughterhouse operating in Koo Wee Rup, Victoria. In light of this new evidence (detailed below), I am submitting this Addendum to my original submission dated 1 August 2019.

Andy Meddick MP was given footage of an illegal slaughterhouse operating in Victoria by the makers of 'Dominion: Documentary, Aussie Farms' which was anonymously provided to them. Andy Meddick MP has taken this footage to the authorities who are now investigating the matter. The footage was obtained by an animal advocate and shows extreme illegal animal cruelty, including *"fully conscious sheep writhing in a metal cradle after having their throats cut, sometimes taking minutes to die"*. The footage also *"shows a number of alleged food safety breaches, including workers butchering meat in their street clothes, and cats and a peacock wandering in and out of the shed while slaughtering is taking place"*. The footage also shows *"butchered meat being put into the boot of a car, apparently in breach of regulations on refrigerated transport"*. The animal advocate also *"collected photos apparently showing sheep heads with ear tags illegally removed. Victoria's statutory authority for regulating meat, poultry, seafood and pet food, PrimeSafe, is investigating the allegations"*. Andy Meddick MP stated that the footage reveals numerous biosecurity breaches and gross breaches of animal welfare, including the failure to comply with rules for slaughter that require animals to be stunned before being stuck with a knife to prevent a slow and painful death: see < <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-02/video-footage-reveals-alleged-cruelty-at-illegal-slaughterhouse/11375854> >.

In my original submission dated 1 August 2019, I emphasised that animal cruelty is a reality of the animal agriculture industry and related industries and while this includes legislated animal cruelty, it is deeply concerning and disturbing that in addition to the legalised cruelty farm animals are subjected to, farm animals are also subjected to illegal cruelty (one **type** of **unauthorised activity** on Victorian farms and related industries). I referred to examples of this, including footage of chickens being abused at Bridgewater Poultry earlier this year and the fact that a Lakesland egg farmer was convicted of serious animal cruelty last year (see my original submission points 1, 2 and 3 addressing terms of reference a, b and d). The **new evidence** of the illegal slaughterhouse provides further proof of illegal and gross animal cruelty in the animal agriculture industry and related industries. It also provides proof of other **types** of illegal/**unauthorised activity** conducted by the animal agriculture industry and related industries: serious food safety breaches and breaches of regulations on refrigerated transport and illegal removal of sheep ear tags. As emphasised in my

original submission, the **prevalence of unauthorised activity** on Victorian farms and related industries is only exposed through the undercover work of animal advocates and whistleblowers. The **new evidence** confirms this.

In my original submission dated 1 August 2019, I also emphasised that in the context of **biosecurity** and antimicrobial resistance, intensive animal agriculture is the greatest threat (see my original submission under points 2 and 4 addressing terms of reference b and f). The **new evidence** of the illegal slaughterhouse provides further proof of serious **biosecurity** breaches.

Indeed, it is because the illegal/unauthorised activities of the animal agriculture industry and related industries is covert and, even when exposed by animal advocates/whistleblowers, not given the same exposure as other illegal activity, ALL submissions made on behalf of the animals are at a significant disadvantage from the outset compared to the submissions made by the animal agriculture industry and related industries (and their supporters). Those acting on behalf of the animals only have knowledge of illegal activity that is exposed when it is exposed, whereas those in the animal agriculture industry and related industries who know (or ought reasonably know) about illegal activity not only fail to disclose it but also deny it. I believe that this must be taken into account when considering the submissions.

Submitted by Dr Ulla Secher, 2 August 2019