



The Honourable Mark McGowan  
Premier of Western Australia

27 May 2020

Dear Premier,

Greetings from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). We were saddened and concerned to hear that six crew members on board the live-export vessel the *Al Kuwait*, which is docked in Fremantle, have tested positive for the coronavirus. This news, however, is not surprising – with the rest of the world in lockdown, and as countless businesses that rely on international travel have gone into financial freefall, the live-export industry has continued to operate, ferrying animals to their deaths and exposing humans to infection.

**This is yet another example of the risks of prioritising profit over lives. We urge Western Australia to end live export and to push the federal government to ban this disgraceful trade.**

Numerous investigations have revealed rampant cruelty aboard live-export ships. Over the weeks-long voyages in cramped, sweltering-hot conditions, many animals die of dehydration, starvation, or disease, while others are trampled to death or drown in their own waste. Of course, the suffering doesn't end when the boat docks in the Middle East – weak animal protection laws mean they're subjected to abuse and slaughter methods that would be illegal here. It's no wonder 75% of Australians oppose this barbaric trade.

Evidently, animals aren't the only ones who suffer in the live-export trade. Crew members aboard these ships are exposed to dangerous levels of ammonia, carbon dioxide, and highly flammable methane – from the animals and their waste. In 2016, veterinarian Dr Lynn Simpson spoke out about human rights concerns within the industry, saying, "What shocked me most [about live export] was the disregard for humanity and the poor conditions that many seafarers are forced to endure."

Animals also carry zoonotic diseases. We understand that the *Al Kuwait* outbreak wasn't caused by infected animals, but **just as abattoirs and other animal-exploiting facilities are potential breeding grounds for the next pandemic, so, too, are live-export ships – with the exacerbating factor of worldwide travel.**

Season after season, the live-export industry causes humans and animals to suffer. The outbreak aboard the *Al Kuwait* is yet another reason this trade must end. We sincerely hope the Western Australian government will make the responsible and humane decision to move away from this archaic industry and work with the federal government to shut it down altogether.

Yours faithfully,

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