



## **Media Statement**

---

1<sup>st</sup> June 2011

### **Cattle Industry call for Government Action on Indonesia**

Cattle producers and members of the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association have been horrified and angered by disturbing and graphic footage of animal cruelty inflicted upon Australian cattle in Indonesia.

Footage shown on the ABC four Corners program depicted inhumane, unnecessary and cruel practices during the processing of Australian cattle in a number of Indonesian abattoirs.

It is hard to find words to describe what we have seen, said NTCA President Rohan Sullivan. I have never seen or heard of such abuse during my own visits to Indonesia in the last 12 to 18 months, and what I saw sickened me. I also know that what we saw is not common practice and that the improvements that have been made and implemented over the years were not featured.

The reaction from Australians is entirely understandable, however to cattle producers and families who proudly devote their lives to the care and production of cattle, this has been a day of great distress, said Rohan. I have been inundated with calls from members of the public and producers immediately following the program.

Cattle producers who have, in good faith, contributed levies to drive improvement in animal welfare are incensed, disappointed and affronted, said Rohan.

Clearly, solving this requires intervention at the highest levels, with government to government agreement and a mandate for change from Indonesian government, commercial, and religious authorities. We support Minister Ludwig's initial announcements and will stand ready to provide what ever assistance and support necessary.

The question we're asking ourselves, said Rohan is if we exit this market, will this drive any change in the system for cattle in general, whether they be from Indonesia or elsewhere? We certainly can't change it if we have no relationship with the system and have no place in it, said Rohan.

The frustration that we feel must be the impetus for positive change. But our view is that you develop positive change through relationships, not by destroying them. Producers are also demanding that their cattle are treated humanely and in line with their standards and expectations, and those of the wider Australian community.

Northern Territory producers are calling for a commitment from the federal government to establish a solid line of communication and negotiation now, at the highest levels, with the Indonesian authorities to drive a solution that can be to the benefit of both countries and more importantly the animals which are part of this relationship. Australian Ministers need to get on aeroplanes today and speak to their counterparts in Jakarta. Cattle producers and their cattle need to be supported not abandoned, Rohan said.

The NTCA has been proactive in raising the profile of welfare and in 2010 at its annual conference hosted a visit by a high-level delegation from Indonesia including the Indonesian Agriculture Minister and Indonesian industry, the Australian Agriculture Minister and a guest speaking appearance from the CEO of Australia's RSPCA.

There is a platform for continued improvement which has been developed by industry, so let's build on it, said Mr Sullivan.



## NORTHERN TERRITORY CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

# Media Statement

---

### **The Northern Territory Cattleman's Association (NTCA)**

The Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association is the peak primary industry group in the Northern Territory representing over 90% of the Territory's cattle herd. With over 220 pastoral leases, our industry manages a landmass in excess of 620,000 square kilometres and a herd of over 2 million head. Annual turnoff is around 600,000 with over 50% of these going to live-export and domestic markets.

The pastoral industry is the Northern Territory's third largest GDP earner, accounting for more than 50% of primary production in the NT and generating over \$400 million in direct income. In 2010, over 300,000 cattle were exported live through the Port of Darwin. Live cattle exports are of critical importance to the northern pastoral industry and the northern Territory economy as a whole.

The industry directly provides in excess of 1800 jobs, mainly in rural areas of the Northern Territory. Industry supports hundreds of indigenous and non-indigenous families across the Northern Territory. Between 50% and 60% of Northern Territory producers and families rely solely on the live export trade. By area, employment and economic contribution the pastoral industry is the dominant industry in land management in the NT, with a predominant focus on long-term sustainable production. Over 85% of all NTCA members are active participants in Conservation, Environmental and Landcare groups throughout the Northern Territory and the Association encourages members to join their local groups.

### **Enquiries:**

Rohan Sullivan, NTCA President (08) 8975-4321

Luke Bowen, NTCA Executive Director, (08) 8981 5976, 0427 815 990