



Abuse at the port: Phelan

by DAVID BELL

FORMER Melville deputy mayor Trish Phelan claims "blatant" breaches of the Animal Welfare Act are occurring at Fremantle wharf during livestock loading.

She says she's seen heads and legs sticking out of pens and animals being trampled.

"It's not being regulated and the breaches are blatant and there are no prosecutions because there's no one to police it," she said.

"We haven't seen any animal

welfare inspectors...their funding has been stripped away."

The former adviser to controversial federal Liberal MP Dennis Jensen says injuries are ignored, "unless an animal is obviously dying or blatantly and visually injured, everything else is considered okay".

"They can arrive at saleyards with disease, unhealed injuries, pregnant... as long as they are walking or standing they are considered okay."

A spokesperson from the WA local government department confirmed no animal inspectors were at the loading on Tuesday.

"The Animal Welfare Branch has received an official complaint regarding potential welfare issues with the sheep loading at Fremantle this week," the spokesperson said. "This will be investigated."

Mayor Brad Pettitt is opposed to live animal trading: "I support a shift towards a phaseout of the live sheep trade," he acknowledged. "But given that it is a part of the working port at the moment it should be done to the highest standards."

The *Herald* contacted the WA Livestock Transporters Association but didn't hear back.