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HASSALL AND ASSOCIATES SAILS INTO ANOTHER CREDIBILITY DISASTER

Last week, Agriculture Minister Peter McGauran released minimal detail of a report on the live export trade by "independent" agricultural consultancy Hassall and Associates. The reason that the entire report has not been made public is that a report by Hassall and Associates in 2000, claiming that the live export trade "supported 9,000 jobs" was found to contain serious flaws by agricultural economists who *were* in fact independent.

Hassall and Associates is anything but "independent".

Peter Frawley, a director of Hassall and Associates, was a director of the Australian Live Export Corporation until December 2004, and Hassall and Associates has also carried out projects for the pig industry. Furthermore, a former Senior Executive with Hassall and Associates, Ian Rogan, was appointed to a senior position with Australian Wool Innovation in 2004.

Hassall and Associates 2000 report, making the yet to be substantiated claim that the live export trade "supports 9,000 jobs", was found to be flawed by the Western Australian Meat Processing Industry Taskforce, which estimated the figure to be closer to 3,000 jobs, and by Dr Selwyn Heilbron and Terry Larkins, and in both cases, estimates of lost GDP and lost household income were identified.

(Go to Heilbron summary document)

Hassall and Associates has now claimed that this trade supports **12,000 jobs**. We assume that they have extrapolated their 2000 figures, and done some very creative exponential accounting, because many of the 9,000 jobs claimed in 2000 would still exist without the export factor (possibly including café staff who fed transporters, cleaners, and who knows who else?). Since the numbers of animals being exported has substantially declined, we have serious doubts about the claimed 12,000 jobs, not to mention the 30 or so businesses it claims. Nor do we believe that this great increase has anything to do with "added welfare measures" for the doomed animals.

The FACTS

- The Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union has carried out its own studies, and estimates the figure of LOST jobs in that sector to be 40,000. 30 abattoirs have closed down, and there has been no funding provided to those regions by the present Federal government. Each of those job losses means 6-7 associated job losses from "downstream" sectors.
- Minister McGauran, in his media release, also identified what he described as "animal welfare improvements", but they all related to while the animals are still in Australia. He has no evidence of any improvements in the appalling handling and slaughter methods in importing countries, nor could he have. His Department's website openly admits that Australia cannot influence the cultural practices of its "customers".
- Minister McGauran also neglects to mention that Australia exports over **50,000 TONNES** of frozen meat to the Middle East each year, and that this figure is rising. And to claim that these countries lack refrigeration is fatuous in the extreme given the money they spend on infrastructure.
- The economic factors aside, the **BOTTOM LINE IS** that Australia is happy to send MILLIONS of animals each year to face the sort of shocking brutality and cruelty that has been shown on "Sixty Minutes" on several occasions. That brings shame upon the character of every Australian.

IT BRINGS SHAME UPON ALL OF US. DEMAND AN END TO THIS EVIL INDUSTRY.