

Welfare of sheep during road transport

Public sentiment survey results

Most sheep and other farmed animals will be transported at some point in their lives – e.g. to other farms, saleyards, feedlots, or abattoirs. In Australia, the transport of sheep may involve journeys of up to 48 hours, with no access to water or feed, before animals are required to be rested. Animals are usually transported in purpose-built trucks, which are open and exposed to the elements. Transport is stressful for farmed animals because it often involves separation from familiar environments and social groups, forced interaction with unfamiliar animals, unfamiliar handling by people, overcrowding, water and feed deprivation, fatigue, and exposure to extremes of temperature and humidity. Transport regulations are intended to minimise risk to animal welfare during the transport process with a key component being that animals are fit for transport and able to travel the intended journey. The following research results, conducted for RSPCA Australia by McCrindle, show public sentiment related to the transport of sheep by road.

How do you feel about the following aspects of sheep transport in Australia?

During the transport process, adult sheep can legally be without water for up to 48 hours.



Sheep are typically transported on multi-deck trucks with open sides and top without protection from severe weather.



Sheep are typically transported in a standing position and space provided may not allow for lying or rising after falling.



■ This is acceptable
 ■ I have some concerns about this practice
 ■ This is unacceptable
 ■ I don't know enough to answer

Do you believe there should be strict monitoring and enforcement of the legal requirements to ensure unfit sheep are not loaded for transport?



■ Yes, definitely
 ■ Yes, somewhat
 ■ No, not really
 ■ No, not at all
 ■ I don't know enough to answer

Currently, unless the journey is expected to exceed 24 hours, records are not kept indicating when transported sheep last had access to water.

Do you believe there should be a requirement to keep records of when sheep last had access to water even if a journey is intended to last less than 24 hours?



■ Yes, definitely
 ■ Yes, somewhat
 ■ No, not really
 ■ No, not at all
 ■ I don't know enough to answer