

Statement from Emanuel Exports

Emanuel Exports has taken decisive steps in the past week to uphold welfare standards and further mitigate the risks of exporting sheep to the Arabian Gulf during the Northern Hemisphere summer.

Emanuel Director Nick Daws said Emanuel shares the determination of industry, producers and the Federal Government that the conditions experienced in [Qatar in August 2017](#) are never repeated.

“This tragedy has been heartbreaking for our company and we apologise to producers and the broader community for the outcome in Qatar in August last year,” Mr Daws said.

Emanuel’s forthcoming shipments will also designate Kuwait as the first discharge port. This practice, which was prevented by geopolitical tensions in the Gulf last year, is a significant welfare safeguard.

“The dry climate of Kuwait, where up to half of the sheep in Gulf shipments are delivered, means we will discharge a large number of animals in conditions where moisture build-up is negligible,” Mr Daws said.

Furthermore, sheep supplied by Emanuel for Gulf consignments will also be loaded at 17.5 per cent below the stocking density required by the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL).

“Lighter stocking and discharging at Kuwait first means that en route to Qatar, sheep can be spread out more because the stocking density will be about 50pc of the rate required by ASEL,” Mr Daws said.

“This is critical because of the unique humid summer conditions that can be experienced in Qatar, which can increase the chance of heat-related welfare risks, especially when Qatar is the first discharge port. These measures go directly to the factors which lead to last year’s tragic, high-mortality voyage.”

Emanuel is also negotiating new arrangements with the importer to ensure shared control of the conditions in which sheep are loaded at the port and transported during the voyages to the Gulf.

“The exporter is responsible for welfare, so even the importer assumes ownership of the sheep upon loading onto the vessel, we need to work more effectively with the importer, our accredited vets and stockpersons to ensure all appropriate animal welfare precautions are in place,” Mr Daws said.

Emanuel has also taken action to respond to Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) breaches reported last week, namely the mishandling of sheep in Qatar and supply chain leakage in Oman.

“Working with our in-market consultant and the importer, an improved raceway leading to the Qatar facility was constructed within a day and further animal handling training was provided,” Mr Daws said.

The two facility employees guilty of welfare breaches were removed from the site and reprimanded. The facility remains closed to Australian sheep while an audit is completed.

“Furthermore, Emanuel will cease supply to Oman and will not resume supply until we, as the exporter, are confident that improved market systems are in place to uphold ESCAS requirements,” Mr Daws said.

In 2017, Australian sheep exports totalled 1.95 million sheep, worth A\$249 million (FOB). Western Australia supplied 1.65 million of that, worth A\$207 million. Of the national total in 2017, Emanuel Exports purchased, prepared and exported 1,384,860 sheep, representing 71pc of all sheep exported.

“Our large industry presence means we have a unique role in maintaining an ethically viable trade, and we’re committed to taking proactive steps to ensure the sustainability of our industry,” Mr Daws said.