

Kimberley Branch PGA

Peter Camp Chairman

Dear Sir,

Re: Animal Welfare

We feel that an automatic exemption should apply to animal husbandry procedures that are required on animals that present at their first muster, regardless of age.

In extensive rangeland conditions it is accepted that 'clean' musters are not readily achievable. In addition, defined areas may not be mustered in certain years due to seasonal conditions, change of ownership or other factors beyond the pastoralist's control. As a result, a proportion of animals that exceed the maximum age limit for practices such as castrating and de-horning will present at subsequent musters.

In isolated and remote regions such as the rangelands of Western Australia, timely and effective communication is hindered by the lack of infrastructure such as an accessible mobile coverage network. This creates greater complexity and it becomes unfeasible to seek exemptions from relevant authorities, due to the longer times cattle would need to be held in yards to allow the paperwork to be processed. Holding cattle in yards for longer than necessary can lead to greater animal welfare problems than the efficient execution of standard animal husbandry procedures.

We believe the following point should be added to all relevant standards. As an example, in the case of castration the standard should read:

A person in charge must use *pain relief* when *castrating*

unless cattle are:

- 1) less than six months old; or
- 2) it is their first *yarding* and
where the later age is approved in the jurisdiction.

Thanks,

Peter Camp