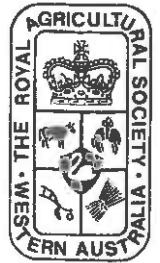


THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



3 May 2013

To the Animal Welfare Standards Public Consultation Committee
Locked Bag 3006
DEAKIN WEST, ACT 2600

Dear Chairperson

The Royal Agricultural Society of Western Australia (The RAS) wishes to make comment on the proposed Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines applicable to the penning of sheep. The following proposed two clauses would prohibit the penning of sheep individually.

Clause G5.3 states under handling

'Sheep should be restrained and isolated for the minimum time necessary. Sheep isolated in a pen should be provided with a pen mate'.

Clause G9.14 states under sheep behaviour

'Sheep should not be housed in single pens'.

Whilst this is a sensible prohibition for sheep not use to being penned separately, it is not necessary for sheep that have been prepared for isolation, such as stud sheep presented for sale or exhibition or competition at agricultural shows including the Perth Royal Show. Sheep have been exhibited or sold in individual pens for many decades without detriment to their welfare.

It is also sometimes good husbandry for lamb welfare to hold a ewe with newborn lamb(s) in an isolation pen until a strong bond is established between mother and offspring.

So that these practices are not prevented, The RAS suggests the following wording:

Clause G5.3 to be amended to: 'Sheep should be restrained and isolated for the minimum time necessary. Sheep isolated in a pen should be provided with a pen mate *if isolation is causing them distress*'.

Clause G9.14 to be amended to: 'Sheep should not be housed in single pens *if it causes them distress*'.

Thank you for the opportunity to make comment to these proposed Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for sheep.

Yours faithfully

Hugh Harding
President, Royal Agricultural Society of Western Australia