

Ludwig 'told of animal cruelty months ago'

July 13, 2011

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Agriculture Minister Joe Ludwig was warned about the mistreatment of live exports eight months before footage of animal cruelty at Indonesian abattoirs came to light.

In a departmental briefing prepared for incoming ministers, Senator Ludwig was told that the treatment of exported animals in "destination countries" continued to cause community concern, *The Australian* reported today.

"If livestock industries cannot manage animal welfare concerns effectively, the issue is likely to threaten their standing in the wider Australian community and use of their products," the briefing by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Department read.

"If not appropriately handled, animal welfare concerns could threaten the long-term viability of several livestock industries. Even though the industries operate within their legislated requirements, there is a real risk they could lose public acceptance."

Mr Ludwig has been criticised for his handling of the matter after imposing a temporary ban on live cattle exports to Indonesia.

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