

Mattsen Prosecution:

Sheep truck driver Chris Mattsen faces the Magistrates Court in Midland Western Australia charged with cruelty under the Animal Welfare Act 2002.

It will be alleged by the State Solicitors Office acting for the State Animal Welfare Unit Inspectorate that on 12 March 2009, while unloading sheep from his truck, Mr Mattsen threw three live 'downer' sheep from the top level onto the ground 4 truck levels below.

A report on this extremely serious incident was subsequently made by a veterinarian at the slaughterhouse and after a thorough investigation by the State Animal Welfare law enforcement Inspectors, Mr Mattsen was charged with **1 count of cruelty to each of the three sheep.**

The case is to be heard 9 July 2010.

'Downer' sheep need immediate assessment to establish the seriousness of their condition. If well enough, they may require assistance by way of humane handling and treatment to either stand or walk. If the animals are moribund, they require immediate euthanasia.

In the above case of alleged cruelty, there was little or no chance of survival. It appears the sheep were given no chance to see if they could stand and walk; the driver just heaved them off the top of a truck without consideration of the pain and suffering being inflicted.

This is the second time a case of this nature will be presented to court. [See Doak prosecution:](#)

This case again demonstrates that there are people operating within the livestock industry who have no care or compassion for the animals they handle and/or transport. The behaviour demonstrated by these truck drivers is the tip of the iceberg. We have been informed and have ourselves observed many times that some are not responsible, they are uncontrolled and are not interested in the welfare of their animals.

These cases also expose the high level of ignorance and indifference to animal welfare by this industry which promotes itself as "best practice" without needing to demonstrate it.

Without oversight i.e. State Animal Welfare General Inspectors (responsible for law enforcement) how often does this type of unacceptable behaviour occur in Western Australia without the perpetrator being warned or charged? We believe it is too often.

How many other reports are pending with the State Animal Welfare Law Enforcement Inspectorate but unable to be investigated because there is only

one State Animal Welfare Law Enforcement Inspector in the field for the whole of WA?

How many more animals have to suffer cruelty, injury, dehydration and stress before the industry is brought to account?