

**Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Industry—Inquiry into the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Amendment (Restrictions on Stock Animal Procedures) Bill 2019**

ANIMAL DEFENDERS OFFICE—ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

The CHAIR: One final question from me. We are going to hear from a doctor who is proposing an alternative procedure. I just want to gauge your group's opinions on that procedure and, I guess, assess where that opinion comes from. The procedure is from Dr John Steinfort. You might be familiar with this, he proposes a cryogenic freezing of the area as an alternative to, I guess, an incision. I was wanting to hear your thoughts on that proposal as an alternative and if you have seen it in practice, and if you do oppose it what is that opposition based on if you have not seen it?

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: Do you want to take the question on notice and come back to us?

The ADO reiterates the statement made by its Executive Director, Ms Ward, during the hearing. ADO lawyers are unfamiliar with the process and cannot comment on its benefits or otherwise in terms of resolving the many welfare issues associated with breeding and using sheep who are susceptible to flystrike to produce wool in Australia.

We note, however, that in January 2020, RSPCA Australia stated that '[t]here is no scientific evidence to suggest that the current application technology [of steining] causes any less pain or distress to sheep [than mulesing]. Irrespective of adaptations of the method itself, the application of liquid nitrogen directly to the skin, will cause pain to the lamb.'

In its submission to the inquiry into the bill, veterinary advocacy group Sentient also opposes the steining procedure due to welfare concerns associated with its use.

We also note media reports of wool buyers such as Kathmandu who have not accepted the practice as a humane alternative to mulesing.

Overall, therefore, the ADO does not support a practice that respected animal protection advocates refuse to endorse.