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Export Supply Chain Assurance System will deliver animal welfare.

Sheepmeat Council of Australia President, Ian McColl, returned this week from the Middle East confident that significant progress has been made in animal welfare.

Sheepmeat Council was part of the Government industry delegation led by Minister Ludwig, which visited the live export markets of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Mr McColl also visited Turkey, which is an important market for Australian livestock.

“Importers in all countries now have a much better understanding of the new arrangements, especially those that come into effect at the end of this month.” said Mr McColl.

He continues, “This visit was very timely and it was clear that all parties – the Australian Government, producers, exporters and importers – are committed to improving animal welfare through implementing the Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) and ensuring that Australian live sheep exports to the region have a strong future.”

Implementation of ESCAS will not only provide the industry with a long term future, it will also mean Australian livestock will continue to play an important part in meeting the food security needs of the countries of the region.

“Everyone we talked to was determined to make ESCAS work. It was also clear that there will need to be ongoing work to resolve some outstanding issues – mostly around contractual matters and auditing – but these can be overcome.” said Mr McColl, “There will be some supply chains that will not process Australian livestock because they do not meet the requirements of ESCAS.”

Australia’s efforts over a number of years in Middle East markets have led to welcome improvements in animal welfare for animals from all countries.

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