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Protesters plan disruption at Cressy slaughterhouse after release of “shocking” hidden camera footage

- Animal rights campaigners are holding a 'vigil' tomorrow at Tasmanian Quality Meats slaughterhouse, in a protest against "Tasmania's brutal and systemically broken animal slaughter system"
- TQM was one of five slaughterhouses exposed by investigators from Farm Transparency Project in December, with the group revealing routine animal abuse and illegal activity, including dozens of calves being brutally killed while fully conscious.
- The campaigners say that they are taking action tomorrow to protest “the government's woefully inadequate response to evidence of profound suffering and a complete disregard for the wellbeing of the thousands of animals killed at TQM every day.”

Protest details: <https://fb.me/e/17pbvD0U9>

Campaigners from Animal Liberation Tasmania and Farm Transparency Project are planning on disrupting animal transport trucks at Tasmanian Quality Meats slaughterhouse, in a protest against “systemic animal cruelty in Tasmanian slaughterhouses.”

An event on Facebook announces the groups' intention to hold a vigil outside the gates of the facility, where they will "hold space and bring public attention to the plight of the sheep, lambs and calves who were tortured to death here, and to the animals whose lives will continue to be taken into the future." Those involved say they plan to ask for five minutes with the animals, to document their condition and offer words of comfort before they are taken into the slaughterhouse.

TQM was one of five slaughterhouses exposed by Farm Transparency Project in December 2023. The footage revealed workers routinely kicking, beating and throwing sheep and week-old calves, as well as slitting the throats of dozens of calves while fully conscious. In response to the footage, the state government has formed a new taskforce and launched an investigation into the facilities, while the federal government opted to allow TQM to continue operating, but banned it from killing calves until they update their stunning machinery (TQM had already stopped killing calves due to the end of the dairy calving season, so the restriction has not affected their operations). Campaigners say these responses are completely inadequate.

Harley McDonald-Eckersall, Strategy & Campaigns Director of Farm Transparency Project, who will be present at the vigil tomorrow, said that the response from the state government has been a classic case of elected officials avoiding taking responsibility for serious animal welfare issues. McDonald-Eckersall is demanding immediate changes to Tasmanian slaughterhouse licensing, as well as harsher penalties for the slaughterhouses her group exposed for severe animal abuse and illegal activity.

“These week-old calves are discarded as waste from Tasmania's dairy farms, generally because they are born male and are therefore unable to produce milk. Our footage shows dozens of them being brutally slaughtered while fully conscious, either because they weren't stunned at all or because they woke up while their throat was being slit. This happened in full view of multiple workers, on multiple occasions. This isn't an issue with machinery, this is an issue with the culture of violence and abuse that is entrenched in Tasmania's animal slaughter industry.”

“This facility should have been suspended as soon as regulators saw the footage. The fact that it hasn't shows an absolute disregard for the wellbeing of the animals being killed behind these walls. We are demanding the suspension of all five facilities we have exposed, to send a clear message that violating the rights of animals in Tasmania will be swiftly punished. We are also calling on the government to legislate mandatory, publicly-accessible CCTV in all Tasmanian slaughterhouses, to allow for complete transparency across the animal slaughter industry, and to enable groups such as us to do our job without having to risk our safety and liberty.”

“If real change doesn't happen soon, we will definitely consider returning and exposing more examples of the horror happening inside Tasmanian slaughterhouses.”

President of Animal Liberation Tasmania, Kristy Alger, says that actions like the one they have organised tomorrow, are important to keep pressure on the government to make real, lasting change.

“All too often we see major issues, such as what was uncovered at TQM and the other four slaughterhouses exposed, brushed under the rug, or responsibility palmed off to yet another taskforce or committee, who have no real power to change anything. It's about time that our government steps up and takes action to show that animal welfare is a priority in this state, and that they will not let themselves be bullied by these powerful industries, which profit from the violent treatment of animals.”