

## **Statement: Victorian government avoids meaningful changes for pigs**

For more than 10 years, Farm Transparency Project has been a leading force in the exposure of brutal, systemic cruelty in the Australian pig slaughter industry. Our [investigations](#) have spanned the entire process of these pigs' lives, from the filthy intensive farms where they are subjected to extreme and prolonged confinement, sexual abuse, surgical mutilations without pain relief, and for those too small or weak to be worth the trouble of raising, a violent end as their heads are smashed onto the concrete floor; to the slaughterhouses where they scream and thrash as they are slowly suffocated by painful carbon dioxide gas, or poorly 'stunned' by bolt guns, rifles or electric prongs, their throats cut while conscious, and their hanging bodies used as punching bags.

This industry has received countless millions in government subsidies over the last few decades, paid for by tax-payers, to support 'research and development' and 'welfare improvements'. Despite this, it has continued to torture pigs in the cruelest and most barbaric ways, making changes only so far as to improve their capacity to slaughter pigs at an even greater rate. Our work has demonstrated, time and time again, that this is an industry utterly dependent on abuse and secrecy; an industry that is beyond redemption and must be urgently phased out.

This year, in the wake of a parliamentary inquiry in which all of these issues were brought damningly to the fore, the Victorian government was provided an opportunity to make meaningful changes for pigs. Instead, [in its response handed down today](#), it has opted to ignore the overwhelming evidence presented to it, and the vast majority of more than 10,000 submissions calling for a better world for these sentient, intelligent animals, promising even further tax-payer funding, downplaying the need for independent regulation, and deferring the possibility of any concrete changes to the hypothetical future recommendations of a national taskforce utterly compromised by industry interests.

It's been almost 11 years since the horrific cruelty of carbon dioxide gas chambers, still touted as 'humane' and 'best practice' by industry and government, was first exposed. Last year, our investigations revealed that they are worse than ever. The time for 'research and development' into the marginal improvement of these archaic devices has long passed.

It's been almost 8 years since the industry's promised deadline to scrap sow stalls, a promise it has since quietly given up on. Waiting for national standards that may or may not ban these and other cruel methods of confinement, such as farrowing crates, mating stalls and boar stalls, when a ban could be legislated today, is unjustifiable and unacceptable.

Substituting one cruel method of slaughtering unwanted piglets for another is not progress. Promoting the sexual violation and abuse of mother pigs simply because it is the "standard" and "widely used" method of inducing pregnancy, when we've all seen the chilling consequences of such a normalisation in the rape of Olivia at Midland Bacon, is unconscionable.

Refusing requests to meet with animal advocacy groups, while making the time to extensively meet with industry representatives, further highlights the true nature of this government as nothing more than a pawn for industry lobbyists to manipulate in order to preserve the status quo.

It has never been clearer that if we want to see real change for animals, we cannot rely on our government to act. It is up to us.

As long as animals are bred, confined and killed for food, there will always be pain, fear and suffering. We will never stop fighting until every cage is empty and every slaughterhouse shut down.

### **Contact for interviews:**

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