

P-04-433 CCTV in Slaughterhouses, 31.10.18

Dear Mr Rowlands and Members of the Petitions Committee

I have been pleased to see the response of the Petitions Committee to date in pressing the Cabinet Secretary for compulsory installation of CCTV in all Welsh slaughterhouses. I have followed up with Ms Griffiths to ask a number of questions around the issue and the Government's current approach which relies on a voluntary grant scheme. The results of the FOI (attached) are not encouraging, and I hope will be of interest to Petition Committee Members in considering the issue further.

Briefly,

- 14 of the 26 slaughterhouses in Wales do not have CCTV installed
- the Government has no idea for those slaughterhouses where it is installed, where it is provided or how comprehensive the coverage is. The industry 'Task and Finish Group' which reported last year to WG on CCTV with a highly self-serving report, failed even to establish where and how CCTV was being used (!). There are no regulations or requirements in Wales currently specifying how CCTV should be used/sited etc.
- the Government says it has no idea how many animals in Wales are currently slaughtered without pre-stunning – it should have.
- for the Government funding now being made available on application to slaughterhouses for a range of purposes (including potentially update/installation of CCTV) there are no specifications or requirements about how/where CCTV is to be used, or regarding access (eg by Official Veterinarians to footage). This grant scheme is entirely voluntary and may be used for a range of purposes other than CCTV/animal welfare.

You will note also that the Welsh Government, which appeals to current official controls as a basis for not requiring compulsory installation of CCTV, has signally and consistently failed to properly fund the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to enable them to properly apply such controls. Providing only c.£30,000 over the last three years, and £20,000 currently (for 26 slaughterhouses). Along with DEFRA the current total funding for these

controls in both England and Wales is a paltry £170,000 – ie to effect animal welfare controls for the c.250 slaughterhouses. The FSA (in its recent Board Minutes) has stated it needs a minimum of £1 million Government funding p.a. in England and Wales to properly execute these functions.

In short, while the Welsh Government pays lip service to animal welfare at the time of slaughter, in practice it appears to care hardly a jot, and has not taken anything like sufficient action to protect the welfare of animals at slaughter.

Thank you for your attention.

I should be most grateful for an acknowledgement of receipt of this email. Perhaps the Clerk to the Committee would do so.

Thank you for your attention.

David Grimsell

Constituent

Ceredigion