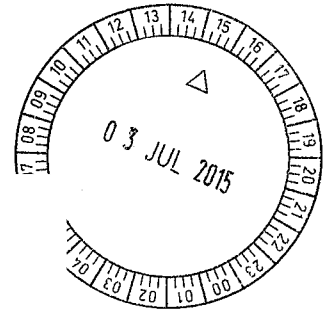


Deanne Vines



Ms Samantha Parsons  
Select Committee into the Operations of The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to  
Animals Western Australia (Inc)  
GPO: Box A11  
Perth WA 6837

3 July 2015

Dear Ms Parsons and the Select Committee

**Re: Submission to the Select Committee into the Operations of The Royal  
Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Western Australia (Inc)**

#### **Funding from the Government**

Due to an arrangement between the Western Australian (WA) Government and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Western Australia (Inc) (RSPCA WA), the RSPCA WA receives \$500 000 per annum to assist with their prosecutorial services and educational aims. I understand this Government funding contributes to approximately 15% of the entire inspectorate budget; a budget which is used to enforce the Animal Welfare Act 2002 throughout the **whole** of Western Australia.

Therefore, approximately 85% of the inspectorate budget is funded by the Western Australian public. The \$500 000 from Government is an insignificant amount in comparison to the huge costs of operating an Inspectorate. In my opinion, the questions relating to funding is a way of undermining confidence in an organisation that has the support of the majority of Western Australians.

#### **Objectives**

The objectives of the RSPCA WA are in line with the RSPCA National body and that of the RSPCA's in other States and Territories. The policies and objectives have been based on science and international accepted standards of welfare.

The Society/Charity, being a separate entity from the Inspectorate, is accountable only to its financial members. Clarification between the Society's roles and the Inspectorate's roles is an important factor in ensuring politicians understand that as long as the Society's constitution complies with the requirements of the Act that governs charitable organisations, the Government does not have a right to question the charity or its aims.

The RSPCA WA's aims reflect the high level of public concern for animal welfare. The public expect the services of the RSPCA WA to be carried out on an independent basis.

### **Use of its powers**

The RSPCA WA is a Charity, which is separate from the operation of the Inspectorate. The Inspectorate operates in a similar manner to the Police in that their behaviours and operational procedures must comply with the Animal Welfare Act 2002.

Can the Parliamentary Enquiry show that the Inspectorates' operations have not complied with the Animal Welfare Act 2002?

The enquiry appears to me to have been initiated through personal agendas in order to perhaps undermine the credibility of RSPCA WA with the intent being to have the responsibility of farm animal welfare handed over to the Department of Agriculture Western Australia (DAFWA). I strongly oppose the DAFWA having responsibility for farm animals for the following reasons:

- this would be a **major** conflict of interest given the policy of the DAFWA is to promote and assist agriculture , under the direction of the Minister of Agriculture;
- the ongoing reduction in funding to DAFWA's operations including the most recent major cutbacks will significantly decrease their already limited capacity to undertake their animal welfare responsibilities and;
- DAFWA has a non-prosecutorial policy, which means that a person who has acted cruelly to an animal is unlikely to be prosecuted.

The public expect animal welfare procedures to be enforced through the prosecution process.

The public expect a high level of independence in the enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act 2002; a level of independence which will be highly compromised if the responsibility for farmed animals is given to the DAFWA.

I have no confidence in the ability or 'will' of this current Government or DAFWA to appropriately enforce the Animal Welfare Act 2002.

Thank you for your time

Yours sincerely

Deanne Vines