

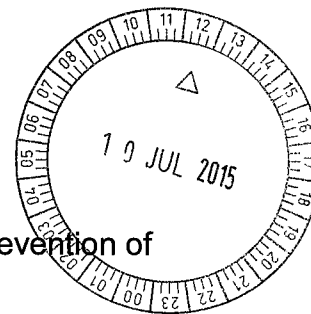
10 July, 2015

Secretary

Select Committee into the operations of The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Western Australia (Inc)

By Email:

selra@parliament.wa.gov.au



Dear Secretary,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this inquiry. I am making a submission as a member of the community.

Each of the terms of references has been addressed below.

**(a) Its funding from the government**

The RSPCA WA only receives 6% of its funding from the government whilst 94% of its funding comes from other initiatives involving the broader community. Clearly, RSPCA WA is not significantly reliant on the \$500,000 government grant it gives to the charity to pursue prosecutions and education. Despite the small grant from the government, RSPCA WA proactively raises funds to facilitate its prosecutorial role as well as community education.

It should also be recognised that RSPCA WA undertook 25 successful prosecutions last year therefore incurring significant legal costs. Acknowledging that each prosecution can cost several thousand dollars, it is not unimaginable that the majority of the government grant of \$500,000 was funnelled into legal costs.

**b) Its objectives**

The RSPCA WA is a private organisation that nonetheless has a unique prosecutorial role under the Animal Welfare ACT 2002. Given its private entity status, the Select Committee does not have the authority to examine its objectives unless a legal offence can be proven.

The Select Committee can examine the objectives of the Inspectorate under the Act but it has no jurisdiction to inquire into the objectives of a private organisation unless RSPCA WA has been shown to not acting in accordance with the law.

**c) The use of its powers**

This inquiry was established by Hon Rick Mazza MLC, the Shooters and Fishers Party member, who put forward the motion to appoint the Committee. It was supported by Hon. Paul John Brown MLC. Hon Rick Mazza is clearly in support of recreation hunting and fishing in State national parks in direct opposition to the policy of RSPCA WA who have recently publicly opposed this measure. Hon Paul John

Brown is a long time supporter of live exports, a welfare issue being actively campaigned against by RSPCA WA.

The Select Committee inquiry into the operations of RSPCA WA was brought into existence by MLC's with a serious conflict of interest to the objectives of RSPCA WA and therefore the community cannot have confidence that this inquiry will be objective.

Thank you.

Ruchita Saklani

On Wednesday, 13 May 2015, The Legislative Council ordered that a select committee be established to inquire into the operations of The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Western Australia (Inc), including an examination of —

- (a) its funding from the government;
- (b) its objectives; and
- (c) the use of its powers.

The select committee is to report to the Council by no later than Thursday, 3 December 2015.