

Ms Lauren Mesiti,  
Committee Clerk,  
Standing Committee on Public Administration,  
Legislative Council,  
Parliament House,  
Perth WA 6000



28 March 2014

## **SUBMISSION ON PUBLIC LAND LICENSED HUNTING**

1. I am a licensed firearm owner since 1975, a member of the Perth Muzzle Loading Club, the Sporting Shooters Association (WA), and the Shooters and Fishers Party. My dominant interest in shooting is historic and collecting. I come from a farm at Kendenup WA, and regularly hunt rabbits and foxes on that property.
2. Allowing for licensed, recreational hunting on WA State Forest, unused Crown land and lesser forms of protected parks would be valuable for the following reasons:
  - a. Pest control of feral animals, helping to keep populations under control, would be carried out for little cost to the Government, which presently has to pay to manage pest populations and can only do a few percent of the problem economically.
  - b. Individuals would contribute to the economy via paying the costs of this recreation, probably to the tune of several million dollars a year spent, a considerable part of it in regional areas.
  - c. Licensed individuals would be highly motivated to support neighbours and the State in controlling poaching, fuel theft, freshwater crustacean poaching, vandalism, and stock shooting.
  - d. Associations and clubs would become part of the system, developing strong social capital.
  - e. Individuals would build wonderful memories and bring their families into sharing this excellent activity.
  - f. Individuals in this State share many public resources – fishing, National Parks, the roads, the airspace, the ocean and rivers, sports complexes – and in every case the benefits to individuals and families and groups is huge, far outweighing the costs as is shown by people paying large personal expenses to participate in appropriate recreation. The benefits to freedom and to social connection are enormous.
3. Some people object on several grounds. Their objections are usually based on moral superiority arguments, in some cases disguised as concern over harms.
  - a. Animal cruelty – all activities are managed to minimise cruelty as is already the public standard and the law, for hunting on private property in WA and on public land in NSW, QLD and VIC.
  - b. Protected animals may be shot – this is already illegal, and licensed hunters very rarely make mistakes.

- c. Public safety will be endangered – The record in all States is very very good. In my own family we have lost people to recreational fishing accidents, to flying accidents and old age. The very small risks are far outweighed by the good of allowing people freedom and responsibility, instead of locking them up like children or criminals.

I ask the Committee to find that recreational hunting is a normal human activity, and the situation in Western Australia where we are over-regulating by banning good activities is un-natural and unusual in western nations. Hunting should be licensed in WA as in other countries and States.

Christopher Allen