



WA ANIMAL WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL 2017

Mr Mark Warner
Committee Clerk
Standing Committee on Legislation
Parliament House, 4 Harvest Terrace
West Perth WA 6005

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Submitted via email: lccl@parliament.wa.gov.au

WA ANIMAL WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL 2017- SUBMISSIONS TO COMMITTEE

Dear Sir,

The opportunity to comment on the proposed Bill is appreciated, and, dare I say, an essential part of the process, if we, as a society, are to value the right of individuals to have a say in decision making, and be seen as transparent and accountable, in the public eye.

It seems to me that the proposed amendments, so very long overdue, will at least improve the lives of those who have no voice, and who are the subjects of ongoing exploitation, and suffering.

The proposed amendments do go some way to incorporating some level of transparency, and accountability, into the businesses thus linked.

Given that it is the year 2018, this step to improve legal protection for so called "stock and companion animals", is indeed a timely one.

Standards and Guidelines:

Code of Practice:

History has shown us time and time again that human nature is a fickle thing, and interpretation of what is and is not the "right" thing to do varies with individuals, especially when vested interests, such as profit making, override moral considerations. VOLUNTARY Livestock Transportation Codes of Practice leave the proverbial flood gates open. Having lived in Bullsbrook for over 20 years, and seen many a "stock transportation" truck, I often feel nothing but shame at some of the sights I have seen. Given the difficulty of prosecution in these cases it is little wonder that it is a recurring practice.

One would sincerely hope that the Standards and Guidelines can, and WILL be used for prosecution purposes where breaches, such as those I have seen, occur.

The fact that other states had adopted S&G's into legislation as far back as 2012 is seriously a matter for cultural cringe, and shame.

With the Amendment Bill the Land Transport Standards, including Sheep and Cattle Standards, and Salesyard Standards, can be adopted into law.

Public / Internet

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Inspections for Compliance:

Whilst our morally advanced European cousins permit routine, unannounced inspections as a way of ensuring that some degree of compliance takes place, the current WA Animal Welfare legislation does not allow this. This is socially unacceptable, and reflects badly on who and what sort of people we are.

The Amendment will allow inspectors (albeit way too small in number) to randomly and routinely conduct checks to ensure as best they can, that compliance is being adhered to. We only need look at the recent debacles on live export ships to see how absolutely necessary this is.

As stated earlier the time has well and truly come for change. The community has been demanding it for years, and public opinion is such that further delays are now intolerable and inexcusable.

Rather than lagging behind other states, and other countries, WA now needs to take a big step forward, to BE transparent and to BE accountable in its non human animals dealings and exploitive practices.

Strong, ENFORCEABLE, legislation is the very least we can provide for non human animals, at our mercy.

As Ghandi said :

*"The greatness of a **nation** and its **moral** progress **can** be judged by the way its animals are treated."*

Our current reputation as "a country of rednecks" is not far from the mark when we consider, as a state, how we currently treat other sentient beings.

Shame! Shame! Shame!

It is totally unacceptable that the industry wants the outdated, irrelevant, and ineffective voluntary Codes of Practice to remain. The fact that the industry has objections to unannounced visits on the spurious basis that it is an invasion of privacy, says it all.

Shame! Shame! Shame!

I therefore urge the committee, in the name of common decency, in the strongest way possible, to do everything in their power to satisfy community expectation, and give at least some sort of assurance that the pet and agricultural industries have to conform to a minimum set of compulsory standards.

In anticipation of your action, as called for in this letter, I thank you.

Peta Rakela