



Animal Care Australia Inc
PO Box 536
CAMDEN NSW 2570
animalcareaustralia.org.au
ABN 36 438 686 995
Tax File No 508 268 553

18/07/2019

The Honourable Councillor Kevin Greene
Mayor of Georges River Council - Councillor for Peakhurst Ward
Georges River Civic Centre
MacMahon Street
Hurstville NSW 2220

Dear Mr Greene

Subject: ENV011-Draft Keeping of Animals Policy

I am writing to you on behalf of Animal Care Australia (ACA) the peak body advocating higher welfare standards for keeping animals in Australia as pets and companions. In my role as the Small Mammals Representative, I speak on behalf of the Rodent Fanciers Society, Rabbit Breeders Association NSW, Australian Rabbit Show Council and Blue Mountains Rabbit Club – all member organisations of ACA.

These are clubs and associations that have been active for many decades and are very active animal hobbyists and show-goers, striving to educate their members and the general public, to encourage and promote higher welfare standards for the breeding and keeping of their animals.

ACA would like to bring your attention to sections 12 and 13 of the **ENV011-Draft Keeping of Animals Policy** that impose limits on the permitted number of rats, mice, ferrets, guinea pigs, and rabbits which may be kept by an individual on their property. It is our stance these limits are unrealistic. Many of these animals are colony animals and it is important for their health and well-being to be kept in numbers larger than the draft policy imposes.

In addition, rodents, rabbits, caviars, ferrets, rats and mice are primarily indoor pets and invariably kept in small enclosures. These animals do not exhibit extreme noise; are not intrusive; are also free of the diseases and pathogens that often plague their wild counter parts, in fact they pose no health problem to their owners and are renowned for keeping themselves well groomed. Due to their short life-spans it is vital several adult pairs be kept at any given time to ensure quality of the gene-pool is maintained – without this many breeds would not be able to be maintained and we as a community would see these species disappear.

Breeders of these smaller pets work to improve the quality of the animal in health and temperament and the clubs and associations mentioned above have policies for registered breeders who are bound by their published Code of Ethics and Code of Practice, along with the provisions provided with the current Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.

Animal Care Australia urges you to re-consider your proposal on behalf of the animal hobbyists, who are registered active members of their clubs and associations and the impact such laws will have on their hobby, and their lifestyle if your policy is to be implemented.

We would request the opportunity to meet with you to discuss a more suitable outcome that would benefit both the hobbyists within your LGA and Council.

Kind regards,

Rachel

Rachel Sydenham
Small Mammals Representative - Animal Care Australia Inc.
smmammals@animalcareaustralia.org.au



Animal Care Australia

“Animal welfare by the experts—those who keep, care for and breed animals”

Mission Statement

Animal Care Australia (ACA) is the peak body advocating higher welfare standards for keeping animals in Australia as pets and companions.

ACA provides continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Ethics for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species. This is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with animals in our care.

ACA also provides education to our members, the general public and government to encourage responsible pet ownership, and the respectful treatment of all animals in our community.

Objects

- To represent animal groups as the peak animal welfare body.
- To engage Government on all levels of animal welfare issues.
- To provide expert animal welfare advice to legislators.
- To clarify the difference between animal rights and animal welfare.
- To promote higher animal welfare outcomes.
- To support grass roots hobbyists/animal keepers.
- To develop strategies and educate the general public in the best care for all animals.