

8th September 2020

Dear the honorable members,

RE: Dog Grooming Victoria

I write to you on behalf of Animal Care Australia. **“Animal Care Australia (ACA) is the Peak Animal Welfare Body representing the keepers and breeders of pet and companion animals in Australia”.**

ACA encourages continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species. Our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care. To encourage responsible pet ownership, and the respectful treatment of all animals in our community.

With the current restrictions in Victoria under stage 3 and stage 4 lockdowns we feel that the welfare of the animals in Victoria has been forgotten.

Dog Grooming was forced to close 5 weeks ago with the only sector component able to continue this service being Vets. For the majority of well-kept animals 5 weeks between grooming is not ideal. We now face an increase of animals who require regular grooming to be coming to a point in which their welfare is compromised. It states under the government’s own codes of practice for the private keeping of dogs that:

“Dogs should be groomed regularly especially breeds with long coat. Severe matting of the coat is not acceptable and may require a Vet or experienced groomer to deal with this. To avoid this matting of the dog’s coat, dogs require regular grooming, shampooing and routine clipping (this should be done by a Veterinarian or Experienced groomer). “

With the current COVID pandemic, the state of mind and welfare are already at risk- with a lot of the animals demonstrating behavioural problems such as anxiety, which is brought on by the change in household schedules. To then further expect an animal to attend a Veterinary clinic for grooming (which in general settings will only be a shave down) - is going to potentially lead to further behavioural and anxiety problems in our pets. It also needs to be said that the majority of animals that receive regular grooming do not require a shave down as their coats are maintained by experienced groomers. Groomers are trained to work with their clients and their individual needs, and they also build a relationship with these animals to decrease the anxiety that these animals feel. There is also a requirement of regular grooming and bathing for animals with conditions such as skin issues who require specialist attention including specialist shampoos and chemicals to ensure these conditions are controlled, and due to the ongoing restrictions, the welfare of these animals is now in grave danger, as once these conditions are allowed to get out of control and flair up it can be difficult to get them under control, leading to discomfort and pain and this that is not necessary and is avoidable by including groomers as an essential service provider.

We believe that the Groomers of Victoria can work under COVID safe plans, which includes physical distancing and infection control. We want to see the welfare of the animals of the state of Victoria considered as HIGH priority. For a government that has held a platform on Animal Welfare we would encourage you to follow through on your promises to have the highest welfare standards, as has been promoted by the Victorian Government in the past.

Kind Regards
Kylie Gilbert



Mission Statement

Animal Care Australia (ACA) is the Peak Animal Welfare Body representing the keepers and breeders of animals in Australia as pets and companions.

Objects

- To represent Animal Care Groups as the peak animal welfare body
- To engage and advise Government and legislators on welfare issues relating to pets and companion animals.
- To protect the rights of ethical hobbyists & animal keepers to breed and keep pets and companion animals.
- To clarify the difference between animal rights and animal welfare
- To promote higher Animal welfare outcomes