



The Animal Care Expert

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





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“Animal Care Australia acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we reside, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.”

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Watch out for our next
issue in June 2022.

Click to read our [previous issues](#)



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President's Report

By Michael Donnelly

A new year and more challenges.

As 2021 was closing many of us were hoping 2022 would bring about a change, sadly that is not to be the case, at least not yet.

Already ACA has needed to respond to new Inquiries into an animal welfare act, proposed puppy farm legislation and the effectiveness of the charitable organisations in enforcing animal welfare legislation in NSW. There is also one looking into animals used in medical research that we will be responding to.

Those are the least of our concerns as we progress into the year.

Elections are abounding. The South Australian State Election has seen the opposition (Labor) brought into power. This is not good for our dog and cat breeders as we are hearing the Animal Justice Party (AJP) has done a deal with Labor for the introduction of legislation similar to that in Victoria and Western Australia. Touted to stop puppy farms we all know it does nothing to stop them and instead reduces

ethical breeders and increases unethical breeders.

The Federal Election will be next (likely mid to end of May) and again the AJP are running candidates in different states in a bid to infiltrate at a federal level even further.

That will followed by Victoria's State Election later this year and NSW's election early in 2023. It is looking extremely likely in both of these elections that again the opposition will gain power. A daunting position for ACA has both parties are not revealing their positions when it comes to animal welfare.

With all this change will likely come more Inquiries, so ACA will be watching the other States closely and we will need you to let us know if things are announced. It's simply getting too difficult to keep up.

Sadly the AJP are going from strength to strength with many announcements that appear so publicly appealing until you look at the fine print.

It also seems zoos will again come under their microscope with the recent accidental death of a Red Panda in NSW. Emma Hurst was very quick to condemn the keeping of wild animals in cages and calling for investigations into the death and practices of zoos.

Of course, we all know, the animals are not wild animals (rather they are bred in zoo care) and the cages are actually elaborate enclosures. But Ms Hurst never lets the facts get in the way of an opportunistic headline and moment.

In December ACA held it's Annual General Meeting with all of the current Species Representatives being returned. ACA also adopted an updated constitution and we implemented a 'term of service' for our representatives. The term of service will be three years, and we each agreed to return for staggered periods of time to get things kick started.

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The full Committee terms of service are listed in this edition, and our Committee can be seen on the previous page.

If you are, or you know of, someone who is keenly involved in and has a good knowledge of keeping aquatic species, we would love to hear from them. Contact us for more information.

We are sorry this is a smaller edition than usual. Our next edition will return to normal.

I do hope you enjoy this edition of the *Animal Care Expert*.

Happy reading!



ACA Terms of Office

Office Bearers

- **President:** Michael Donnelly – elected until 2024 AGM
- **Vice President:** Sam Davis – elected until 2023 AGM
- **Secretary:** Michelle Grayson – elected until 2022 AGM
- **Treasurer/Public Officer:** Sue Kowalczyk

Committee

- **Birds:** Sam Davis – elected until 2023 AGM
- **Cats:** Michelle Grayson – elected until 2022 AGM
- **Dogs:** Kylie Gilbert – elected until 2022 AGM
- **Exhibited Animals:** vacant position
- **Fish:** vacant position
- **Horses & Livestock:** Karri Nadazdy – elected until 2024 AGM
- **Native Mammals:** Michael Donnelly – elected until 2024 AGM
- **Reptiles:** Joanne Payne – elected until 2022 AGM
- **Small Mammals:** Rachel Sydenham – elected until 2023 AGM



ACA Submissions, Correspondence & Meeting Reports



ACA responds to Proposed NSW Dog & Cat Breeders Licensing Scheme.

31/12/21 — ACA has responded to the Consultation Paper.

ACA does not believe a licensing scheme will be of any benefit to animal welfare, however ACA made the following recommendations:

1. ACA does not recommend any exemptions from a fit for purpose Code of Practice (COP).
 - a. A new 'fit for purpose' Code of Practice is required to ensure appropriate compliance standards are provided that are situation and breed specific.
 - b. ACA does not support the current exemptions for working dogs. Working dogs are being bred and sold as companion animals, therefore should not be exempt.
2. Should a licensing scheme be required, the existing Register of Companion Animals should be utilised as the licensing system.

ACA sees no reason to duplicate what is predominantly already in existence. Or,

a. Should a licensing scheme ONLY be required for large-scale breeders, ACA recommends the following definition:

- i. commercial breeder means a breeder who derives the majority of their income from the breeding and sale of dogs and/or cats, and/or
- ii. who holds 26 or more fertile dogs and/or cats. And,

b. Implement in Sch 1 of the Regs:

Replace

Animal breeding establishment (that is, a business in the course of which dogs or cats are bred for fee or reward)

With...

Animal breeding establishment (that is, where the owner derives the majority of their income or maintains 26 or more fertile dogs/cats).

To read our submission click on the pdf icon:



ACA responds to Macedon Ranges Shire Council's Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025

4/1/22 —ACA responds to Council's draft plan.

ACA has previously opposed the majority of Council's restrictions on species numbers.

ACA applauded Council's education initiatives.

ACA continues to highlight issues with the issuing of Excess Animal Permits. This is an issue that must be resolved.

ACA opposed the restriction of numbers on livestock— it is still clear the numbers are not based on animal welfare or neighbourhood amenity.

ACA requested to meet with Council to outline ways to improve the DAMP 2021-2025.

To read our submission click on the pdf icon:



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ACA responds to Inquiry into Animal Welfare Policy NSW 2022

28th February 2022—An overview of the Draft Animal Welfare Act 2022 reflects an act that is predominantly focused on regulation rather than on animal welfare. There are no elements of educating the public built into the act.

ACA recommended:

1. The release of draft Regulations must accompany the draft Act as it enters Parliament, to ensure and confirm the intent and direction of the Act.
2. Prosecutorial powers of the RSPCA NSW to be removed within the Act.
3. An additional section MUST BE inserted into the Act that includes a process for any person charged with an offence the right to a second unbiased professional opinion prior to the finality of euthanasia or surgery on an animal seized.
4. The creation of a Companion Animals Welfare Panel
5. The removal of ‘psychological suffering’ from the definition of ‘harm’.
6. Standards & Guidelines must be developed with key stakeholders and cannot be altered

without consultation.

7. Further measures of accountability and transparency must be included in the Act, including implementation of the ‘independent external complaints mechanism’ implied within the Animal Welfare Discussion Paper – missing in the Act.

8. The State to be responsible for all costs associated with the seizure & shelter of animals & prosecution of offences.

9. Address inconsistencies including overlap with the Companion Animals Act

10. Powers of the Courts be reviewed to ensure the innocent receive full opportunity to defend themselves without Courts being used by authorised officers — impeding the right to a fair trial.

To read our submission click on the pdf icon:



ACA responds to NSW Inquiry into Charitable Organisations

28th February 2022—ACA welcomes the introduction of this annual Inquiry.

ACA’s responses included:

- * ACA fully supports the activities, and outcomes of the Animal Welfare League
- * ACA supports the continuation of the RSPCA NSW and Animal Welfare League Inspectorates – BUT answerable to the Department of Primary Industries.
- * Proposed measures of accountability and transparency within the draft Animal Welfare Act are still insufficient and require further enhancement.
- * ACA recommends the introduction of a Companion Animals Welfare Panel to oversee welfare concerns.
- * Implementation of the proposed ‘Independent Appeals Panel’ is required.
- * ACA supports the continuation of the shelter and rescue aspects of both the RSPCA NSW and Animal Welfare League.
- * ACA recommends prosecutions should be conducted via the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).
- * Prosecutions conducted via the DPP would negate any conflict of interest involved in both investigating and prosecuting individuals, commercial or farming ‘offenders’.
- * If the DPP option is not possible then, ACA strongly recommends the prosecutorial

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powers be removed from the RSPCA NSW (as it has in other States) and subsequently the AWL.

* Approved organisations tasked with enforcing Government Legislation must meet the same court required burden of proof as the NSW Police Force when enforcing any government legislation.

To read our submission click on the pdf icon:



ACA responds to NSW Inquiry into Puppy Farms

6th March 2022—ACA remains unsure as to how the Inquiry defines a ‘puppy farm’.

If poor welfare defines a puppy farm then ACA is totally opposed to such operations.

However if the number of animals alone defines a puppy farm, which AJP’s Bill states then we have strong concerns & reservations.

ACA’s submission includes:

- * An outcome of this Inquiry MUST BE a recognised definition of a ‘puppy farm’
- * ACA does not support any facet of the

Animal Justice Party’s Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farm) Bill 2021. This amendment does not belong in the Companion Animals Act.

* Reducing the numbers of animals (through restrictions) incentivises unethical breeders who are determined to cash-in on the greater demand that less availability of animals creates. This is actually the main outcome of Puppy Farming Legislation - more unethical breeders.

* Education will help many to avoid situations of being scammed, misguided or making bad decisions when buying online or through some pet shops.

* The effectiveness of the legislative framework and the code of practice will continue to be diminished while any government adopts a ‘One size fit all’ approach.

* Overall, ACA finds the Puppy Farm Taskforce was a complete misuse of public funds.

* The Victorian Domestic Animals Amendment Act 2017 was and is a failure. It has not achieved its stated goal of **stopping puppy farms**.

* ACA’s core logic is **EDUCATION OVER REGULATION**.

The government must start legislating the

requirement for inclusion of education and it’s funding into all aspects of improving animal welfare.

To read our submission click on the pdf icon:





A Statement from the ACA President.

A meme posted on the ACA Facebook page on 7th February 2022 was removed following feedback claiming it implied ALL breeders of brachycephalic animals were to blame for the health issues highlighted by the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) and a ban in Norway of certain breeds. Others felt ACA was supporting the ban in Norway.

That was not the intention of the meme and post.

ACA's goal is to ensure the long-term future of the brachycephalic breeds named by the AVA.

To be clear – ACA exists to protect BOTH the animals we keep AND the owners/breeders – BUT the welfare of the animals MUST come first, if the animals are lost then so too are all owners and breeders.

ACA represents ALL dog breeders not just those within registered organisations, as such we call on everyone to take notice and responsibility for the welfare of their dogs and cats.

Some facts...

FACT 1: Brachycephalic breeds are extremely popular – and rightly so – they have some wonderful traits and personalities. It would be a shame to lose them.

FACT 2: There is scientific and veterinary research supporting the fact SOME brachycephalic breeds do suffer more from unnecessary breathing, brain-related and some spinal (vertebrae) medical conditions. These CAN BE reduced and potentially eradicated through responsible breeding.

FACT 3: All breeders are responsible for the health and well-being of their animals – regardless of any standards that may be suggested, or lack of standards.

For the continuation of these breeds in Australia, ACA encourages all breeders to improve their breeds by utilising up to date advances in technology to health check their breed through regular relevant health testing to improve the welfare, health and well-being of your dogs. Higher welfare outcomes must always be paramount.

Extinction or banning of these breeds in Australia must be resisted at all costs – “it is not my problem” is no longer a viable response – we must all do our part. Continue to improve where you can and set the bar for others to follow.

Sadly the animal rights movement was successful in Norway. It's only a matter of time for it to happen in other countries and then Australia.

Australia now has the AVA, RSPCA Aust (and all states) and the Australian airlines all pushing for bans/restrictions of some form or another - if the animal rights groups jump on that bandwagon then the reality is a ban could easily be achieved here, which will ultimately affect registered and responsible breeders and not the unethical breeders.

Ultimately - the gate (precedent) has now been opened for a full ban on these breeds and that includes within Australia - we can't allow that to happen. Such a ban will open the floodgates to the Animal Rights extremists who look to ban all dog, cat and other species

Cont'd next page...

breeds.

As breeders, owners and buyers we must all take ownership of our responsibilities or else these breeds WILL be banned and become extinct in Australia.

We want to thank and applaud those breeders and organisations who are already reviewing their standards to ensure animal welfare is never compromised.

Michael Donnelly

President.



West Nile virus has been detected in a small number of horses across NSW.

Warning Issued by NSW Department of Primary Industries

West Nile virus is a mosquito-borne virus which can affect horses, people and other animals. Only mosquitoes can spread the disease.

The early stages of disease may be mistaken for colic. Initially horses may appear depressed and reluctant to move but these signs are soon followed by neurological signs.

Horse owners are encouraged to take extra precautions to reduce exposure to mosquitoes through rugging, insecticides and restricting grazing times when mosquitoes are most active.

West Nile virus is a notifiable disease in NSW. If you suspect a horse is showing signs of the disease, call the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

More information on West Nile Virus can be found on the DPI website at:

<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/horses/health-and-disease/west-nile-virus?>



ALERT

Take extra precautions to protect your horses from mosquito bites and acquiring a mosquito-borne disease





SERIOUS NEW DOG DISEASE IN QUEENSLAND

Warning Issued by Biosecurity Queensland

The tick-borne dog disease ehrlichiosis (err-lick-ee-o-sis) has been recently confirmed in a Queensland dog. It is reported that this dog had not travelled outside of Queensland, meaning the disease has likely found its way into our local tick population.

Ehrlichiosis can make dogs very sick – and without treatment can kill them.

Dogs that are sick with this disease get a fever, look very tired, do not want to eat and lose weight. Their eyes can also go blue and mucky, and they can get nose bleeds. It is important you use anti tick products on your dogs to stop the ticks from biting them and spreading the disease.

If your dog is sick, make sure you take it to a vet.

Dog owners should have their dogs on regular tick products, always check their dogs for ticks, and look for signs of the disease. Talk to your vet about the best tick products to use.

If you think your dog has ehrlichiosis – speak to your vet, community Animal Management or Environmental Health Worker straight away.

You can also call us on 13 25 23 or get more info from our partners at [AMRRIC - Animal Management in Rural & Remote Indigenous Communities](#)





ACA appears at Inquiry into Welfare Policy in NSW.

Animal Care Australia's (ACA) President, Michael Donnelly & Vice President, Sam Davis provided evidence at today's parliamentary Inquiry into Animal Welfare Policy in New South Wales .

Opening Statement

Good afternoon,

Chair – I ask that this statement be tabled.

I am Michael Donnelly – President of Animal Care Australia or ACA, and I am joined today by Sam Davis – Vice President. ACA represents keepers and breeders of animals nationally, our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care.

Firstly, a new Animal Welfare Act with no definition of animal welfare?

ACA has detailed recommendations in our submission, but some key points we'd like to highlight are:

- ⇒ **Education to measurably improve animal welfare outcomes must be enshrined in the Act.**
- ⇒ **The implementation of a Companion Animals Welfare Panel similar to that of the Stock Welfare Panel.**
- ⇒ **Enforcement activities must be subject to strict accountability and transparency provisions – which are missing from this draft.**

These matters must be resolved, particularly given we

have no draft Regulations. We recommend this Committee insists both the final Bill and Regulations are provided together for the consideration of the NSW Parliament.

ACA encourages animal welfare education over restrictive regulation. Education must be legislated to measurably improve animal welfare outcomes which in our opinion the draft Bill does not do.

Education includes the continued promotion of animal welfare Standards and Codes of Practice. ACA is disappointed there is no requirement within the Bill for key stakeholder collaboration or inclusion in the development, management and promotion of Standards or Codes of Practice. This must be included in the Act. History tells us, it should not just be presumed that we would be invited to collaborate. As key stakeholders, we haven't been included on the Animal Welfare Advisory Council either.

A Companion Animals Welfare Panel will provide an opportunity to alleviate the intimidation experienced by pet owners and to educate and improve animal welfare.

ACA is astonished the draft Bill – despite its title - is predominantly void of strategies for improving animal welfare outcomes. A minimum standard of care, although supported, does little to improve animal welfare!

In fairness, the opportunity for this may exist within the Regulations – but how would we know that when we have no draft regulations? For example, as has been stated by previous witnesses, what will be

exempt from, or included as, exhibited animals?

This draft Bill removes liability of the authorised officers and their organisations, whilst making very little effort to improve their accountability and transparency. How can the NSW Government or DPI claim the enforcers will be held accountable if they are not being held liable for their actions?

Charitable organisations should not have the power to act as the police, prosecution, judge, jury and media all at

once. This is wildly out of step with all other legal structures in our society.

For this reason, ACA is calling for the prosecutorial powers to be removed from the charitable organisations. This should not come as a surprise to this Committee as several States have or intend on removing the RSPCA as prosecutors of cruelty cases for a range of reasons.

Additionally, we do not support previous suggestions of allowing third parties to prosecute. We also call your attention to the submission from the Australian Privacy Foundation which we fully support.

The ambiguity of Section 66 (2) allows for the breeding of companion animals to be classed as a commercial activity and therefore voids the requirements of entry outlined in Section 67 for residential premises. This is of great concern potentially allowing the chaos of the recent dog audits to be repeated on a broader scale.

We would like to thank the Chair and the Committee for inviting us to appear today and welcome questions.

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Closing statement:

ACA appreciates the opportunity to be here today and a consulting stakeholder with the DPI, and we look forward to further collaboration as the Bill is refined and regulations developed.

ACA supports the full extent of the law being handed down on persons guilty of willfully breaching the Act. However - guilty or not - all Australians should be entitled to a fair trial, which is not currently the case here.

We are scheduled to appear at the Inquiry into the charitable organisations with more to say on the effectiveness of those organisations. ACA recommends this Inquiry considers the testimony and recommendations of that Inquiry before finalising its report as we believe it is all pertinent to this Bill.

Before any member here today signs off on this Bill – please ensure you review our detailed recommendations in our submission with the view of implementing them to ensure animal welfare outcomes are improved.

To misquote our Premier: “This is a one in a fifty year chance to get it right!”



2022 SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW
FROG & REPTILE SHOW

Pythons, Frogs & Geckos - Monday 18 April
Lizards, Frogs & Geckos - Tuesday 19 April





Reptile Expos are back

By Joanne Payne—ACA Reptile Representative

For the past few years, thanks to covid, there has been a lack of society shows. Reptile societies generally hold one or two expos or shows per year. These are a way for many like minded individuals to get together to enjoy their hobby and to encourage members of the public to join in on this very popular pastime.

If you have ever been to an expo, you will find more than just a group of people that are fascinated by these beautiful animals. You will find they are more about educating the public on topics such as animal welfare and the environment.

Some shows have animals that are in a competition. These ribboned events are generally judged by experts in their field, and these include veterinary scientists, herpetologists and keepers. The animals are assessed on their health, colour and general wellbeing. These events are popular with the public as the animals remain on display after the judging to be looked at by the public on a wide variety of species that the public generally wouldn't have seen.

The animals for the shows range from dragons, geckos, turtles, snakes, monitors and skinks. Very often, the public will get to talk to the owners of those animals and find out vital information on how best to keep them .

The owners and vendors also treat these events as a social gathering but also to swap information on improved animal welfare issues creating the best environments on which to keep and breed their animals.

These events are attended by government departments so you can get

information from them plus other education providers, such as live venomous shows, can show the public that these captivating animals deserve our respect and not our hate and fear.

So, get on it!

The Royal Sydney Show has a reptile show on the 18th and 19th of April and the Illawarra Reptile Society Show will be held on the 8th May.— see our back cover for more information.

An educational day out not to be missed. Its so good to see them

Illawarra REPTILE SOCIETY Inc.

REPTILE SHOW

8th May 2022
10 AM - 3 PM
ILLAWARRA SPORTS STADIUM
Hooka Creek Rd, Berkeley

ADMISSION

ADULTS	\$10
CHILDREN (Under 10)	\$5
FAMILY (2 Adults, 2 kids)	\$25

ATTRACTIONS

- ✦ RETAIL & REPTILE MARKETPLACE
- ✦ SYMBIO ZOO
- ✦ SHOALHAVEN ZOO
- ✦ REPTILE SHOW
- ✦ FOOD & DRINKS
- ✦ ATM ONSITE

SPONSORS

Gold Sponsor: Symbio wildlife park

Gold Sponsor: ABSOLUTE

Enquiries to Jo on 0433 064 460
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PHOTO CREDIT: Turtle image by John Cain | Bearded Dragon images by pixaboo.com

FOLLOW US ON **FACEBOOK**
Illawarra Reptile Society

www.illawarrareptilesociety.com.au



MISSION STATEMENT

“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 ACA continues to promote welfare education over regulation



OBJECTIVES

- 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



ACA GENERAL MEETINGS IN 2022

7.30 to 8.30pm

MARCH 14th

MAY 9th

JULY 11th

SEPTEMBER 12th

NOVEMBER 14th — AGM

Meetings in 2022 will continue via Zoom to ensure members nation-wide can attend..

Any member wishing to join a meeting will need to RSVP by no later than 5pm on that Monday via email: aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au with your details. A link for the meeting will be emailed to you.



