



Animal Care Australia

2023

Animal Industries



Animal Welfare Policy & Position Statement

Version 3 — July 2023

Animal Welfare is Animal Care

Animal Welfare Policy & Position Statement

This document sets out the policies and position statements of Animal Care Australia Incorporated. It is intended that this document will operate as a living document, which will be improved upon as policy is updated.

We encourage all members to suggest edits and additions, with a view to clarifying policy and to improve the administration of the organisation.

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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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Definitions

For the purpose of this document, Animal Care Australia utilises the following definitions:

Animal welfare means the physical and mental state of an animal in relation to the conditions in which it lives and dies.

An animal experiences good welfare if the animal is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear and distress, and is able to express behaviours that are important for its physical and mental state.

Animal Rights means humans should not make use of, own or benefit from animals in any manner, and the immediate abolition of animal ownership in any form.

Historically this has taken the form of animal rights, animal liberation, animal justice and animal protection.

Animal Rights Extremists/activists are political parties, associations/organisations, and individuals that will go to any length to manipulate societal understanding and legislative reform to achieve the abolition of animal ownership. Throughout this document referred to as ARE's.

Commercial Pet Industry means businesses or other services where the aim is to make a profit from selling animals, products or services directly relating to the keeping of pets and animals.

This includes entities such as pet shops, grooming services, agistment providers, etc

Commercial Shelter Industry means the commercialisation of shelter/rescue services that are operated under a profit-driven model and/or placing the existence of the service as a priority over the welfare of the animals. The Shelter industry has existed for years. The commercialised shelter industry is relatively new and is a concept driven by animal rights ideologies and a lack of government commitment to resolving the issue of abandoned animals.

'personhood' rights means the legislated removal of the property status of animals from being owned by a person/s resulting in the animal acquiring its own 'rights'.

Pet and Companion Animal Community means the collective of community-based associations, groups, and individuals (both keepers and breeders) who share the common interest of the caring for and keeping of pets and companion animals.

Pet Factory, Puppy Factory/Farm is any unethical operator/breeder is any person/entity who is breeding an animal with poor welfare outcomes in defiance of the animal welfare standards.

(Animal) Sporting Industry means the collective of events and activities in which people, business/enterprises, and organisations are involved in the producing, facilitating, promoting, or organising of activities involving the inclusion of animals in a sporting capacity (such as racing).

Introduction

Animal Care Australia was founded in early 2018 to represent the interests of animal keepers and breeders throughout Australia. Animal Care Australia was established as an organisation where the real animal welfare experts, those who keep, care for and breed animals would advocate for real and improved animal welfare.

With extreme animal rights and animal liberationist ideologies influencing government legislation, regulation and policy at our expense and to the detriment of our animals and pets, it has become necessary to provide government with a balancing voice.

Just over 60% of Australian households own pets. It is estimated more than 24 million pets are kept in the care of our community. Pet/animal ownership provides companionship for many within our society including, the elderly, the lonely, and our young generations.

The keeping of pets and animals teaches a sense of responsibility, an awareness of the importance of animals to exist and to co-exist with us. Animals provide us with an understanding of life, love, loss, and a sense of belonging. The continued keeping of animals as we grow from youngsters into adults allows us to improve our skills in animal husbandry, and leads to advancements in animal welfare.

Originally founded to speak on behalf of owners of pet and companion animals, Animal Care Australia quickly recognised there is a need to expand our purview to include all animals held in 'captive' care with the exception of commercial livestock and it's directly associated activities, such as live export etc.

The Association has a strong committee composed of representatives for each major animal group – dogs, cats, birds, horses, fish, insects, reptiles, hobby farm animals, small mammals, (pet) native mammals and exhibited animals.

Animal Care Australia's membership base is comprised of animal keeping associations (members) and individual pet owners (supporters). We recognise the role played by animal keeping organisations in educating their members, and we call upon government to fund educational initiatives for the general public.



Animal Care Australia's position is to promote welfare education over regulation. 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.

We support and consult in the continued development of animal welfare law at all levels of government, including federal, state and local government. ACA will consult on all relevant legislation to protect your rights as an animal owner. We will continue to defend against changes that could impair your ability to keep, show, compete or work with, and to engage in all lawful activities with your animals and pets.

Animal Care Australia acknowledges the requirement under legislation to ensure minimum animal care standards can be enforced. We support mandatory minimum standards and codes of practice designed to encourage the improvement of higher animal welfare. Animal Care Australia recognises animal keeping organisations are well placed as experts in their specific species and we strongly encourage their inclusion in the development and review of both minimum standards and codes of practice.

As a society we have a responsibility to provide 'whole of life' welfare and protection for all animals living within our care, and accordingly Animal Care Australia will continue to advocate for the rights to ethically breed animals, and promote responsible breeding activities that are designed to ensure the highest welfare outcomes, thereby protecting the continued existence of each species and breed. Animal Care Australia does not discriminate against species or breeds where the appropriate care for the health and welfare, in compliance with all state/territory laws that govern the keeping of those animals, is being met.

For the purpose of this document all legislated Acts of federal and state parliament, associated regulations, policies, standards and guidelines, codes of practice, local government laws, etc. that influence or deal directly with matters of animal care and welfare will be referred to hereafter as "animal welfare laws".





Animals in the Sporting Industry

Animals in the Sporting Industry

Animals in the Sporting Industry are generally referred to by Animal Rights Extremists (ARE's) as '**Animals in Entertainment**'. ARE's utilise that term to detrimentally describe activities where animals are used to act, perform, fight and/or kill for the enjoyment of humans.

Animal Care Australia does not recognise the misuse of the '**animals in entertainment**' term as it potentially encompasses a multitude of different activities that go beyond their aim to demean the involvement of the animals.

The actual entertainment industry utilise animals in the production of television and movies and this is monitored and overseen under strict regulations, and as such, these animals generally do not fall within Animal Care Australia's purview.

ARE's and some Australian Government departments (particularly Animal Welfare Victoria) now include recreational activities, such as horse carriage driving, dog showing and championships and more as animals in entertainment. This is clearly an attempt to restrict in the first instance, and then ultimately ban these activities by changing societal perception. Government departments that adopt this terminology have clearly been infiltrated by the ARE movement, and this needs to be halted where ever possible, as these changes are not based on improving animal welfare outcomes.

Animals in the Sporting Industry include, but are not limited to:

- Rodeos
- Horse racing
- Jumps racing
- Greyhound racing



Animal Care Australia does not directly represent these sports as part of our purview, as these industries are already well funded, are widely supported and have dedicated representation to government.

Animal Care Australia would like to see these industries continue to review, update and implement greater animal welfare standards. They need to respond to new information quicker ensuring the animals' best interests are prioritised over any monetary gain.

Continually striving to improve animal welfare is not unreasonable. If animal welfare standards can not be met or improved within a reasonable time frame then Animal Care Australia cannot support it.

This is true of all interactions involving animals and not just these industries.

Whether we like it or not, animal keeping communities, networks and industries rely on the wider animal

sporting industry. Racing is where a lot of veterinary advancements originate. Feed development comes from the research in zoos and in racing.

We really do need them and should support them, while holding them accountable in the continual improvement to animal welfare. Therefore:

- ⇒ Animal Care Australia acknowledges the divided opinions of the general public and of our own members on the continuance of the Greyhound and Horse Racing industries.
- ⇒ Animal Care Australia is in support of continual improvement to animal welfare conditions and outcomes in these industries.
- ⇒ Animal Care Australia supports and encourages the ongoing initiatives that racing organisations are putting into place to ensure the correct and successful **re-training and rehabilitation of animals** after they have finished their racing careers, leading to the successful rehoming of these animals into their senior years.

Animal Care Australia conditionally supports the continuance of animals in the sporting industry



Commercial Pet Industry



Commercial Pet Industry

Commercial/Intensive Breeding Facilities

Animal Care Australia recognises the difference between 'commercial/intensive breeding' and 'pet factories'.

Animal Care Australia supports breeders who continue to meet welfare standards of the animals being bred in accordance with or above the animal welfare laws within their States and Territories.

It is our position that discouraging over-breeding and ensuring genetic integrity takes higher precedence over demanding restrictions on numbers able to be bred.

When referring to the breeding of dogs and cats, Animal Care Australia supports the need for assistant (staff/ volunteer) ratios, particularly in larger breeding facilities, but this should be aligned with world recognised recommendations – that currently being one assistant per six pregnant or lactating females or per 26 dogs and/or cats, in addition to themselves as the owner. Assistant ratios must also be considered to ensure appropriate socialisation and behaviour training.



Animal Care Australia supports limiting the number of times a female animal can be bred within each season, and within appropriate age brackets. Maintaining the health of female animals is paramount to ensuring healthy young.

Breeding facilities for other species should also consider assistant (staff/volunteer) ratios in order to meet the husbandry, feeding, cleaning requirements as set out in animal welfare standards.

Under-staffing is a contributing factor to poor welfare outcomes, however Animal Care Australia recognises that circumstances and support networks can vary greatly across different breeders, such as all of the family (including older children) may help with the animals even though they are not a recognised workforce. These breeders should not be forced to operate as a pet shop, as this type of over-restriction within legislation makes it too cumbersome for these breeders to responsibly function. This is where poorer animal welfare develops.

Animal Care Australia supports breeders who operate under the welfare standards that meet all the animals' needs.

Pet-factories/farms and unethical breeding

Animal Care Australia does not support irresponsible/unethical breeding or individuals who commit acts of cruelty against animals. It is generally agreed no-one likes 'puppy farms'.

Animal Care Australia's concern is the lack of a clear legal definition that is not skewed by the social environment a person participates within. This has resulted in different groups who all support improved welfare but speaking past each other due to the lack of clarity in terminology

There appears to be a common and agreeable factor within all the definitions and that is 'inadequate or poor welfare conditions'. Accordingly, Animal Care Australia's position revolves around our definition:

"An unethical operator/breeder is any person/entity who is breeding an animal with poor welfare outcomes in defiance of the animal welfare standards."



Predominantly the focus is on puppies/dog breeding, Animal Care Australia has adopted a broader definition to include all breeders, as we acknowledge poor breeding and poor animal welfare outcomes can be found across the species.

Animal Care Australia DOES NOT support unethical breeders operating in substandard conditions where animals needs are not met.

Educating the public to reduce unethical breeders abilities to exist.

Animal Care Australia strongly advocates more focus should be aimed at changing the perspective to educating the public about responsible breeding, buying and pet ownership.

Animal Care Australia implores government to provide more adequate funding for educating the public on their responsibilities as pet owners including supporting & promoting animal keeper associations & clubs.

Educating the public is a key step into changing behaviour. Education needs to be themed with the aim of making pet owners more aware of their responsibilities. In general, most people are unaware that there are Codes of Practice that must be followed. They know that animal cruelty laws exist, but do

they know what is written in those laws?

Education needs to start in our schools (primary and high school). Our children are usually the ones seeking to own a pet and they are also the keepers and breeders for the decades that follow. Introducing basic pet care and the responsibility of pet ownership skills to children will enhance the understanding of pet ownership within the community and more specifically will help overcome many barriers within multi-cultural communities, where often pet welfare and ownership has been inherited from different societies with a vastly different understanding of how animals should be kept.

Teaching children throughout their primary and higher education levels about responsible buying and the need to ensure you buy from a reputable breeder is crucial in this era of technology where not-so-credible sellers are attracting the new generations that live in the technological space. Once upon a time if you wanted an animal you read an advertisement, you phoned, you visited the home of the breeder, and you came back when it was old enough to take it to its forever home with you. Today, pictures of animals are posted, money is transferred and quite often animals are exchanged without having seen where they were born, the parents or the standards they'd been living in. In an increasing trend no animals are exchanged at all — and the buyer is scammed .

Animal Care Australia advocates for further government funding to increase public education initiatives.

Animals in pet shops

In general Animal Care Australia does not oppose animals being sold in pet shops, reliant upon the pet shop following existing animal welfare legislation and codes of practice as legislated in each state/territory.

However, Animal Care Australia believe pet shops are not the most suitable environment for the sale of dogs and cats, for the same reasons we do not support the sale of shelter animals from pet shops as we see no difference between the two.

If given an option between the sale at pet shops or online, Animal Care Australia believes pet shops are more easily regulated than online or car boot sales. Many regulated pet shops have a requirement to accept a returned animal within a stated period of time — this is vital in reducing animal abandonment.



Some concerns for the sale of pet animals in pet shops include:

Puppies:

- Puppies go through a fear period between 8-16 weeks and a pet shop environment is not ideal to ensure that they are not placed in situations which could lead to ongoing behavioural problems such as high anxiety.
- Puppies need around the clock care. Leaving puppies overnight in a shop environment is not suitable.
- Puppies need to be in a home environment at an early age so they can become desensitised to new environments and form routines.
- In a pet shop environment, there is not the equivalent ability for puppies to be exercised compared to what they receive with responsible breeders.
- In a pet shop environment, there is not the appropriate space to ensure there are separate spaces for eating, toileting and sleeping. This leads to toileting and sleeping issues once they are sold and are settled into a home environment.
- They don't receive the required environmental enrichment.
- There are no facilities that the puppies can retreat to get away from the noise and attempted interactions by the public (tapping on glass etc).



Kittens:

- The concerns listed for puppies also apply to kittens, including separate eating facilities, establishing toileting habits, etc, which are important for kittens to ensure they feel safe and are able to be enriched.
- Most pet shops do not have the facilities to house kittens in a safe manner where they can climb, explore, or hide away.

Birds:

- Birds kept in pet shops for extended periods of time lose condition, resulting in poor feather appearance and nutritional condition. The latter is often over-compensated with supplements, that are ceased upon purchase leading to a quicker deterioration once at their new home.
- Birds kept in pet shops for a long period of time lose the ability to easily adapt to outside weather conditions and are more likely to die when purchased and placed in an outdoor enclosure.



It should be noted these concerns can be easily rectified and avoided if the pet shops rotate their birds out to external aviaries/cages for a few weeks, returning them to the shop for another couple of weeks.

- Over-crowding of birds in pet shops leads to numerous health concerns, including feather condition, dietary requirements, and injuries following fighting.
- Some pet shop owners are not educated on the requirements of the different species and may house aggressive species together or not provide the appropriate diet or enrichment for the birds.

Small mammals—mice, rats, guinea pigs and ferrets

Most people would believe the sale of small domesticated mammals would be the easiest for pet shops. Sadly, experience tells us differently.

There are some common issues that apply with all small mammals that have been purchased from pet shops:

- High stressed environment for the animals with no relief from public until the store is closed
- Sexes mixed together
- Incorrectly sexed
- Leaving males together to fight
- Injured/sick animals not removed from enclosures
- Lack of knowledge about the species and their needs, in particular appropriate housing, dietary requirements, and husbandry, which leads to improper education and advice to the customer on care
- Sold as live feed for other animals (knowingly sold is illegal)
- Animals often falling ill and/or dying shortly after purchase, due to inadequate diet provided, and inadequate housing within the shop
- No follow-up support for buyers/new owners
- Animals sold with poor health and temperament, parasite infestations, sold under the (legislated) age requirement for the species
- Animal sourced from unethical breeders — leading to the issues listed here
- A severe lack of handling and socialisation



In addition to all of the above, some species specific concerns are:

Rats & Mice:

- Selling pregnant rats and mice

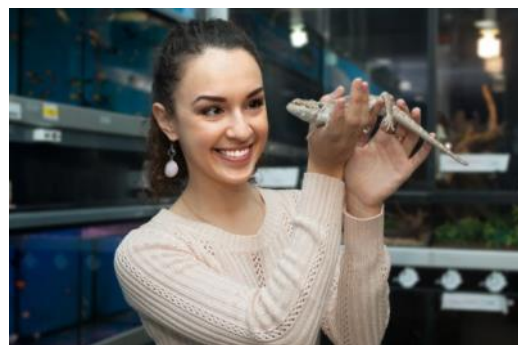
- Leaving males together to fight, (mice)
- Sold as a single animal (these are a communal species')

Rabbits and Guinea Pigs

- Improper education and advice to the customer on care and long-term commitment
- Rabbits not vaccinated— buyers not advised of the importance of being vaccinated

Ferrets

- Lack of knowledge and improper education and advice to the customer on care and long-term commitment
- Constant exposure to public causing stress
- Inadequate environmental enrichment and mental stimulation.
- Lack of handling and socialisation



Reptiles and amphibians

- Some pet shop owners are not educated on the requirements of the different species and may house reptiles in the wrong environmental conditions or not provide the appropriate diet or enrichment requirements.
- This also leads to the buyer following the same inappropriate information, including purchasing unnecessary equipment that can often lead to fatalities.
- Hatchling reptiles require varied conditions and diets that change or a vastly different to the requirements of adult species, again often leading to higher mortality rates.
- Reptiles kept in pet shops for extended periods of time lose condition, resulting in poor appearance and nutritional condition. It should be noted this can be easily rectified and avoided if the pet shops rotate their reptiles off display for a few weeks, returning them to the shop for another couple of weeks.

Many pet shops are more than capable of addressing the concerns listed above, however some find it to be too cumbersome and accordingly Animal Care Australia does not support animals being sold by those individuals. Where a pet shop can implement ways to address the considerations outlined above, and continues to meet the standards required by legislation, Animal Care Australia does not oppose the sale of animals from that pet shop.

**Animal Care Australia conditionally supports
animals sold in pet shops**

Animal grooming, clipping and groomers

Grooming and clipping includes trimming fur, hair, feathers (wings), and maintaining healthy nails or hooves.



Animal Care Australia recognises grooming as a vital component of animal welfare. Animal Care Australia supports educating the public on the essential need for animals to be groomed, and encourages the public to seek out qualified or experienced groomers, where possible.

Animal Care Australia encourages groomers to seek out appropriate training or learning opportunities, where available, to ensure a quality professional service can be provided.

Animal Care Australia supports responsible pet grooming



A photograph of two women standing in front of a row of metal cages in a dog shelter. The woman on the left has blonde hair and wears a red and white plaid shirt over a white t-shirt and dark jeans. The woman on the right has dark hair and wears a mustard yellow sweater and blue jeans. They are both smiling and holding a small, scruffy brown dog. In the background, several other dogs are visible: one white and black dog is standing on its hind legs inside a cage, and several other dogs of various breeds are on the ground in the foreground. The text "Commercialised Shelter Industry" is overlaid in the center of the image.

Commercialised Shelter Industry

Commercialised Shelter Industry

Commercial Shelter Industry

Australia is in the grips of an animal rights push to create a commercialised animal shelter industry. With objectives to see shelters and rescues government funded and thereby covering the running costs and resulting in profit-driven initiatives, as well as slogans such as “Adopt – don’t shop” that directly drive the business of purchasing a pet towards shelters and away from pet shops and private breeders. This places our pets in a dangerous scenario where responsible breeders are being phased down and restricted, pet shops are being legislated to only sell shelter animals and ‘feel-good’ individuals are setting up and running unregulated, minimally legislated rescue businesses.

This ideological approach is not driven by the need to help the animals, instead it enacts the objectives of the animal rights movement to stop the breeding of companion animals by private breeders until all shelters are empty.

The commercialisation of shelters is already reflected in the change of the models utilised by larger shelters such as the RSPCA. While this shelter does receive some government funding, the majority of its profit-driven decision making has also seen it as having the highest kill ratios among Australian shelters, and most recently the policy change of reducing holding times of dogs and cats within their shelters to just three days, whereafter the animal is either moved to a private shelter or if the animal is deemed unable to re-homed quickly it is euthanised.



At the opposite end of this industry with totally opposite policies, are the privately-run shelters and rescues.

Private Animal Rescue Shelters

Private animal rescue shelters are currently unregulated, with no accountability or transparency and growing in number. They are being encouraged by the animal rights movement with a strong emphasis on running with a ‘no kill ideology’. This is particularly true in NSW and Victoria where continual calls for them to be government funded are heeding a response due to the ongoing claim of over-crowding.

The need to have a no kill ideology is seriously affecting our capacity to focus on the real issues. Animal rights policies are structured around moving animals from one source to another in order to ensure it doesn’t get killed – which in theory is a great thing – save all the animals!

The reality is while the governments attention is being distracted no one is actually concentrating on the real problem – a lack of education and understanding when obtaining a pet.

Behavioural issues in animals develop through a lack of understanding your animal, a lack of time spent with your animal. Animals have not been socialised, or trained to equip them with confidence and security. Animals who have had a bad experience from an accident or a scare are not adequately assessed and treated. The problem is many pet owners inadvertently create or exacerbate behavioural problems and do not know how to remedy them. This is where our focus should be aimed.

Instead, we have services solely focused on saving an animal, finding it a new home and moving it on as quickly as possible to make room for the next animal. With the exception of a select few rescues and shelters, most animals are not correctly assessed and their issues become the issues for their new owners, who again fall into the same routine of not being able to cope and so the animals are sent back into the cycle.

Animal Care Australia does not oppose the existence of private shelters but we do have major animal welfare concerns. These include:

- Currently no compliance regime is in place to regulate rescues
- Minimal application and vetting processes are required to be approved by a Local Council
- No mandated limit on how many animals a rescue can have
- No mandated staff to animal ratio
- No legislated Code of Practice that a rescue is required to abide by to ensure maximise positive welfare outcomes for the animals (and humans) involved.



Many of these concerns are ironically the very same as those now legislated for dog and cat breeders in order to prevent animal cruelty.

Animal Care Australia also makes the following points for governments to consider:

- Is growing and funding an ever increasing rescue industry the most sustainable solution?
- Wouldn't it make sense to improve conditions and rehoming rates at Council pounds and shelters which are already funded and are spread evenly throughout the state?
- Maybe the rescue volunteers would achieve more at a council facility where they can directly improve conditions and rehoming rates?

Reducing the need for rehoming through education is the most critical, however a balance of reforms/solutions, is required.

People should not be pressured in to taking on an animal that they do not have the time, knowledge, resources or patience to retrain or manage. There is nothing wrong with people wanting a pet for their family, without unknown histories, or emotional baggage, as pets are for everyone, and this is part of

choosing the right pet. As the potential adopter/new owner, this part of knowing your own skill level, and choosing a pet or companion that matches where you feel comfortable at the time of adoption (right now), not what you hope they can be in the future. People should not be guilted into taking on more than they can handle. This continues to occur and is not in the animals best welfare.

Animal rights activists and even some breeding associations will tell you that it is irresponsible breeding that creates the problem – and it partly is – but it's not solely the problem. If an animal that was irresponsibly bred was then given the opportunity of being assessed, trained and provided with the time and care it needed – the shelters' enclosures would be far less occupied. We are all to blame.

Our governments need to stop funding quick fix solutions and start funding real solutions:

- EDUCATION - Encourage responsible pet ownership via accessible online education and incentives
- Provide rebated training and desexing initiatives and clinics
- Pet Daycare services with qualified animal behaviourists
- Encourage responsible breeding
- Encourage responsible buying & selling, including having a checklist of criteria for new owners.
- Encourage re-homing through breeding associations and clubs for those who cannot take the time to spend with their animals



Most importantly—governments need to legislate regulations for ALL shelters and rescues, that include full and transparent reporting of all functions within a shelter/rescue.

Animal Care Australia does not support the expansion of a commercialised shelter industry

Council Shelters & Pounds

Local Council pounds provide temporary care and protection for animals requiring housing or to be returned to their homes or, if unclaimed and where appropriate, efforts are made to re-home animals.

Shelters and pounds often struggle to cope with large numbers of abandoned animals. To assist in reducing the numbers Animal Care Australia strongly encourages Local Councils to educate the

community to encourage better outcomes.

Far greater emphasis and consideration should be provided on holding periods, and on the waiving of fees in order to encourage and promote their reclaiming.

High fees, fines and other such persecutory methods only serve to punish the animals, particularly when surrendered or where a financial hardship environment is created within their homes due to owners' desperation to secure their return.

Animals assessed as suitable for rehoming should be microchipped, vaccinated and de-sexed before release from the facilities.

Animal Care Australia would like to see more data recorded and released providing information such as ages, breeds, and origin of animals within the care of shelters, pounds and not-for-profit organisations in the hope of gaining a better understanding of abandoned animals' origins and developing and improving education programs to combat this issue.



Shelter/rescue animals sold via pet shops

The Animal Justice Party's requirement for pet shops to only have shelter/rescue dogs or cats for sale is fraught with issues. A significant proportion of animals in shelters are those abandoned due to behavioural issues. Many shelters do not have the experience or necessary training to accurately identify behavioural issues — often misdiagnosing issues, and resorting to the misuse of medications. They also do not have the available time or skills sets to alleviate those issues with appropriate training. Shelters desperate to save the animals (from being euthanised) medically treat the animals with sedatives etc, informing their new owners to continue with the medications until they expire. Once expired, the new owners find themselves with unruly animals and unable to deal, the animals are re-surrendered, often to a different shelter, and the cycle re-commences. The inclusion of pet shops in this scenario will prove to be disastrous.

This is not to say all animals from shelters/rescues fall into this scenario it is simply an issue that will be exacerbated by the constant shuffling of animals from one shelter to another or onto a pet shop. Many regulated pet shops have a requirement to accept a returned animal within a stated period of time. This in itself will ultimately lead to animals being shunted around, legal concerns under Fair Trading laws could eventuate, and animals will be more likely to be euthanised.

**Animal Care Australia supports all shelters
being regulated, transparent and accountable**

Photo: Shoalhaven Zoo

Exhibited Animals



Exhibited Animals

The Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Exhibited Animals have been endorsed (April 2019) by the Agriculture Ministers (AGMIN) and are regulated into law by State and Territory governments. These outline strict requirements that ensure the animals' welfare requirements are met by licensed exhibitors.

Animal Care Australia recognises the need for separation of exhibited animals and animals used for entertainment purposes.

Examples of exhibited animals include:

- Zoos and wildlife parks
- Marine parks
- Mobile education displays
- Circus

Animal Care Australia will strive to ensure we are included in all consultation processes during reviews.

Zoos and Wildlife Parks

Australian zoos and wildlife parks have evolved quite rapidly from the days of small concrete and steel cages to enclosures that replicate natural environments. Husbandry and enrichment have kept pace and been the driving force behind this evolution.

Today zoos and wildlife parks predominantly include:

- education
- breeding of threatened species,
- rescue and rehabilitation programs and
- serve as a permanent home for animals where release has been deemed impossible.



They are vital for education, research for conservation purposes, and accordingly must adhere to strict guidelines and legislation regarding all animal behaviours, enclosures and most importantly the welfare of the animals.

Animal Care Australia supports zoos and wildlife parks



Marine Parks & Aquariums

Australian marine parks & aquariums have a multitude of different animals including penguins, seal/sea-lion, aquatic animals and in certain cases polar bear and cetaceans (dolphin). A number of these animals are rescued species and the remaining are considered 'domesticated' and captive-bred and are no longer taken from the wild (apart from those rescued) and all are deemed unsuitable to be released into the wild.

Marine parks & aquariums are vital for education, research for conservational purposes and act as homes for animals who would otherwise be euthanised. So-called 'Shows' are a vital and necessary aspect of the animal's daily routines, they provide enrichment and are designed to replicate natural behaviours. They are designed to ensure complete muscle exercise and hence maintain body strength and physical well-being.

Animal Care Australia supports marine parks and aquariums

Circus

Australian circus have a multitude of different animals including dogs, ponies, horses, goats, pigs, water buffalo and camels.

Animal Care Australia takes particular note that:

- all of these animals are multi-generational born within the circus
- by definition within animal welfare Acts, these animals are all 'domesticated' animals
- none of the so-called 'wild or exotic' have been taken from the wild, and
- on welfare grounds should never be released back into the wild as suggested by Animal Rights Extremists
- circus animals should remain with their carers where welfare conditions are being maintained.



Animal Care Australia notes the recent removal of rhesus monkeys and lions from the Australian circus

(Stardust) due to the inability to obtain/renew public liability insurance while the circus maintained keeping those animals. The monkeys and lions have now been retired to a privately owned zoo.

This is a direct influence of the animal rights movement who were unsuccessful in Parliamentary Inquiries to have these animals removed from the circus – despite their claims of success.

Animal Care Australia supports animals in circus

Mobile Educators and Petting Zoos

Mobile educators and petting zoos are required to meet strict guidelines, within each State and Territory especially designed to protect the welfare of animals, particularly during transport. These services are vital to our community for education and to promote conservation. Bringing the 'farm' or the 'bush' to children, and isolated communities, as well as those who otherwise would never see or understand the nature of how animals exist is important to the very future of animals continuing to exist. To see, touch, and experience an animal in real life far out rates a picture on a computer or television screen.



Animal Care Australia will continue to monitor and consult in ongoing reviews of the 'animal welfare laws' which govern these services to ensure welfare needs and standards for the animals are maintained and in doing so, support the continuance of these services.

Animal Care Australia supports mobile educators and petting zoos



Animal Care Australia