Animal Care Australia

2026

2nd November 2026

The Hon Julie Collins MP
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Email: julie.collins.mp@aph.gov.au

Re: Renewing the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy

Minister Collins,

Animal Care Australia is a national incorporated association established to consult with government in advocating for real animal welfare by those who keep, breed and care for animals. Our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care.

Animal Care Australia 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, including pets, companion animals, animals used for educational or entertainment purposes or kept for conservation.

Animal Care Australia is contacting you to voice our opposition to the restrictions being placed on consultation for the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy Review.

Animal Care Australia has been involved in the ongoing consultation process since they re-commenced under the current Federal Government.

During our initial consultations, Animal Care Australia sought assurances that we would be included in all levels of consultation for the varying Chapters that fell within our purview. To be clear, those primary Chapters are:

- **Companion Animals**
- **Aquatic Animals**
- **Animals used for work, sport and recreation**
- **Animals in the wild**

Animal Care Australia's purview also includes:

- **Livestock**. We acknowledge the change and inclusion of livestock within hobby farms being place into the Companion Animal Chapter – leaving the Livestock Chapter to the commercial use only. That said, companion animals do make their way into the commercial chapter, for example: animals sent to abattoirs from hobby farms, and horses used in work, sport and recreation; and.
- **Animals in Research & Teaching.** Within this Chapter. Our purview includes animals rehomed following their involvement in research and training.

Animal Care Australia is baffled how the claim *'The chapter 'snapshot' draws on a desk-top environmental scan and engagement with subject matter experts'* can be true, when all key stakeholders HAVE NOT been consulted?

This claim also contradicts the assurances received by Animal Care Australia in 2024 and in 2025. To be clear, **Animal Care Australia is questioning WHO these 'subject matter experts' are?**

It is also our strong belief that by simply providing feedback at the end of this process, (current RESTRICTED consultation) on the final draft completely contradicts the following: (Pg 9 of the AAWS Chapter presentation)

> *Overarching principles guiding participation:*
>
> *• Inclusive: Activities provide opportunities for a diverse range of stakeholders, respectful and culturally appropriate participation*

Again, who are the subject matter experts ALREADY consulted?

> *• Outcome-focussed: (sic) Engagement should be relevant and within the scope of the AAWS to achieve meaningful and effective outcomes*

Animal Care Australia is THE KEY STAKEHOLDER representing companion animals in all aspects, and yet our participation in the engagement process is being limited!

• Collaborative: To inform decision making, participants engage constructively and equally to share diverse expertise and perspectives

Why is there a 1500 word limit on this final consultation? Our organisation has to respond to the over-arching statement and 5 of the 6 Chapters a document that is over 15,000 words. Yet 1500 words is all the feedback wanted? That is simply insufficient.

This feels like Government are trying to restrict feedback in fear that it will be too critical of the Strategy? Especially given that as an organisation we did not and have not been provided an opportunity to contribute to the development of each of the 6 Chapters (until now) and were constantly told throughout the past three years, we would get the opportunity to comment in the final consultation. Only to now find our feedback is really not wanted - and is restricted.

As you would be aware consultations are required to be conducted in line with the Australian Public Service Charter of Partnerships and Engagement and to supporting evidence- and science-based decision-making. The Charter's principles include genuine opportunities to contribute, fit-for-purpose engagement and informed decision-making

It is our position that by excluding Animal Care Australia from contributing to more than one Chapter throughout the initial phases and then restricting our feedback to just 1500 words, that is difficult to reconcile with those commitments, especially where a stakeholder represents several affected sectors.

Major organisations should not be restricted in their feedback of such an important national strategy.

Should you require further details please do not hesitate to reach out as we would be happy to meet with you, and further discuss this matter.

Kind regards,



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About Animal Care Australia

As a nationally recognised animal welfare organisation and Australian Registered Charity, Animal Care Australia 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, including pets, animals used for educational or entertainment purposes or kept for conservation, and in particular native birds, reptiles, and mammals.

Animal Care Australia was founded in early 2018 to establish an organisation run solely by volunteers to lobby for real 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.

By uniting the broad spectrum of animal groups, collectively we offer an experienced, sensible approach to animal welfare.

By educating our members and the public about the importance of treating animals with kindness and respect for their needs and promoting the humane treatment of animals to improve animal welfare outcomes, Animal Care Australia is in the unique position of lobbying and advocating for all animals within our care.

Animal Care Australia provides priority to the following:

- advocating for stronger welfare outcomes
- advocating to increase education of the public in animal welfare and best care techniques
- educate the public on handling their animals with kindness & respect and the importance of their needs
- educate the public in the differences between animal welfare and animal rights