

4th November 2024

Secretariat for Transport Canberra and City Services
E: tccs_gmsboards-committees@act.gov.au

RE: Inclusion of Animal Care Australia as core stakeholder

To whom it may concern,

I am contacting you seeking clarification and confirmation that Animal Care Australia has been included as a core stakeholder to any and all reviews and consultations carried out by the ACT Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC) and any other animal related matters.

Animal Care Australia recently received copies via a FOI request of Minutes and discussions relating to both the ACT AWAC and their development of Codes of Practice for the keeping of small mammals as well as horses.

Despite communications from Minister Cheyne in August 2024 providing assurances of Animal Care Australia’s inclusion to the core stakeholder list for engagement on all codes of practice, we note the Minutes only highlighted the recent inclusion of the Animal Defenders Office (an animal rights organisation) to the list.

Additionally, we were provided the same assurance by Minister Steel’s Office in early 2022 – long before the above-mentioned Codes of Practice were developed and yet no such consultation with our organisation occurred. In fact no small mammal keepers associations were even considered to be consulted.

This is extremely concerning for us as the FOI request highlighted the only organisation consulted for the Small Mammals COPs was a subsidiary member of the Australian Veterinary Association – who are key AWAC Members. In essence resulting in a set of COP’s that are predominantly out of touch with proper animal welfare for these species and clearly developed by cut’n’paste from completely inappropriate species and riddled with animal rights ideology.

Animal Care Australia was contacted and requested to reach out to be included in the more recent review of the COP for the Keeping of Poultry (Non-commercial) – however had that individual not reached out - we had not been made aware of the consultation occurring and we required an extension of time in order to provide feedback.

These actions – or lack thereof – imply there is a clear bias against any stakeholders who do not hold the same ideological positions as those heading up the ACT AWAC, while stakeholders who do are being sought out. To be clear, Animal Care Australia opposes animal rights ideology instead we support real animal welfare that is supported by animal welfare science.

Today, I am seeking assurances that Animal Care Australia has been added to the core stakeholder list for engagement and also request that we are contacted when the next available vacancy for the AWAC is to be filled so that we can apply and provide a balanced viewpoint to the decisions being perpetrated by a predominantly animal rights ideological AWAC membership.

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

Kind regards,



Michael Donnelly
President
0400 323 843

About Animal Care Australia

As a nationally recognised animal welfare organisation, 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