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From: Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture
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Sent: Saturday, 20 July 2019 11:00 AM
To: aglawsinquiry
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture

Mr Paul Murray
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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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FARM ANIMALS' RIGHTS

Having enthusiastically moved to this country in 2014 from South Africa I fully expected to embrace a culture of civilised equanimity where laws are fair, ethical and protect the community, individuals, the environment and, not least Australia's animals - all of them.

Imagine my surprise and dismay where the "fair go" (whether in Victoria or elsewhere) ethos is oftentimes little more than a governmental marketing mantra and certainly doesn't extend to Australia's animals.

This inevitably leads one to examine the laws of the land - laws that should be protecting all of Australia's animals, an area where this is failing. Great tracts of forested Australia are being cut down unnecessarily to make way for the fossil-fuel mines and coal-fired power plant polluters when taxpayer dollars could be more effectively employed in the development of sustainable and renewable energy plants.

So natural fauna habitat is diminished and ecosystems are placed under threat while we pursue these hopelessly shortsighted and unsustainable "goals".

Strike 1 - failing to protect our wild fauna.

The only degree of ethical empathy we seem to harbour is toward our pets -cats, dogs etc. all lovingly cared for and protected through the Prevention Of Cruelty To Animals Act (the Act) but the animals Australians love to consume, incredibly do not enjoy the same legal protection that should extend to all animals. Again, surely modern Australia cannot morally condone the known abuse and trauma that is rife within the livestock industry, this having been revealed time and again by concerned animal rights whistleblowers?

A somewhat lame effort has been implemented to try and curtail "live" export of animals, which, by rights, if Australia had any moral conscience at all, should never have been a thing in the first place.

And if one asks, as Australia has already done in a 2019 report commissioned by the federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources entitled: Australia's Shifting Mindset on Animal Welfare

<https://tinyurl.com/y5csnoo5>, it finds that the majority of Australians do care about animal welfare. The report found 95% of respondents viewed farm animal welfare with concern and 91% wanted reform to address it. In other words, current legislation is, in the opinion of Australia's citizens, failing as well.

Similarly, in 2016, a Productivity Commission report (<https://tinyurl.com/y5lptp3d>) indicated the current process used to set standards for farm animal welfare is entirely inadequate, concluding that greater improvement would be realisable through the creation of a statutory agency mandated to utilise rigorous science and evidence-based community values to achieve this.

Coupled with this, it should be mandatory for the Act to be extended to protect farm animals as they enjoy the same and oftentimes (certainly in the case of pigs) a higher degree of sentience (evidence-based studies support this: <https://tinyurl.com/y28513c6> and many countries now legally recognise this fact: New Zealand, the European Union, Canada, to name a few) and as such, they experience enormous trauma as a result of the current Australian farming practices. In simple terms, one would not subject one's dog to the abuse and cruelty experienced daily by pigs (or other animals) in the industry regardless of their "roles" in our lives and the studies done support this sentiment yet the government, despite public feelings, refuse to enact legislation to even marginally improve the short lives of these animals. The treatment under current law, of your affectionately dubbed "chooks" also does not permit them to get anything near a fair-go - they are treated atrociously. Visit any contemporary chicken farm and you'll see this for yourself - better yet: At the very least, CCTV cameras should be mandatory in all modern farms of a certain size and with changes in legislation, the lot of the farm animal could be vastly improved as is the desire of the ordinary Australian consumer and our legislation in this area is unarguably behind the global curve recognising holistic animal sentience and all that implies.

It simply isn't good enough and certainly doesn't speak to the modern, fair, ethical, conscientious and civilised Australia I thought I had immigrated to.

I thus beseech you to reconsider these issues and enact legislation that extends rights to animals across the board. It is the correct and ethical thing to do and more to the point, it's what the Australian people want and have a right to demand. Sadly, the animals cannot ask for themselves and the current laws disavow anyone asking for these rights on their behalf.

Do the right thing.

Please.

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File1:

File2:

File3: