



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

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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a. the type and prevalence of unauthorised activity on Victorian farms and related industries, and the application of existing legislation;

The subject and focus of undercover footage is and always will be the animals. Though there are sometimes houses on the same properties as factory farm sheds or slaughterhouses, is in an activists interests to stay as far away from humans as practicable to remain un-noticed for their own safety and for the sake of obtaining footage where the treatment and conditions of animals can be seen without the person being clued in to being made accountable for their action or inaction.

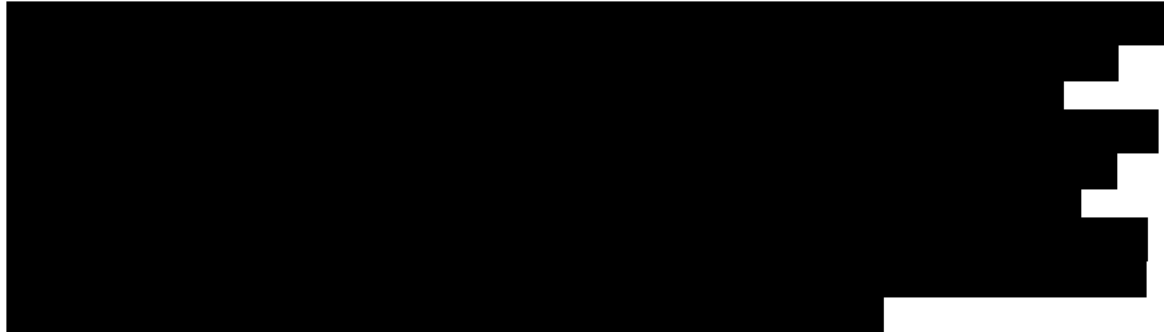
b. the workplace health and safety and biosecurity risks, and potential impacts of animal activist activity on Victorian farms, to Victoria's economy and international reputation;

Animals being confined in sheds in large numbers and stressful environments are the bio security risk, period. Antibiotic misuse to control diseases in these environments are the leading cause of antibiotic resistance. The concern is the disease that they are creating getting out of their sheds and off their farms and they make no attempt to contain it themselves. Activists make the effort to wear appropriate biosecurity PPE when we have never witnessed police or farmers use so much as a foot bath before entering a shed or property. Many farming contractors, unlike activists, travel from one like farm to the next with no measures to sanitise shoes, tyres or equipment. Milk tankers, Bobby calf trucks, knackery transport, AI techs, hoof trimmers, shearers, scanning contractors, electrical, plumbing and machinery maintenance etc are more likely to spread disease than an activist entering and exiting a single farm. Rodents, cats, and birds coming and going are also more likely carriers of disease.

c. animal activists' compliance with the Livestock Disease Control Act 1994, Livestock Management Act 2010, and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986;

Having grown up in a farming community, activists are the least concern to the biosecurity on Australian farms. Up until this year for example, a positive test for Johnes disease

would flag a cattle property for 12 months, and though any dairy farmer will tell you that every herd will have some cattle affected with Johnes disease (an incurable, chronic wasting disease), testing isn't mandatory so the possibility of being flagged discourages testing at all, and dairy animals are typically culled by the time they show symptoms at 5yo anyway. The culture is to ignore problems and cull when it affects their bottom line, not to prevent.



With regards to removal of NLIS tags, as a farmed animal rescue I have tagged more calves and lambs with post breeder tags myself that I have had surrendered from farmers than I have been received with relevant tags and documentation.

d. the civil or criminal liability of individuals and organisations who promote or organise participation in unauthorised animal activism activities;

Privacy isn't a protected right in Australia, in fact dairy farmers list the company they supply and the full names of the farmers on their front gates. You can find their details on google, through their ABN, if somebody intended to access a farm for the purposes of gaining footage, lack of access to a website like the Aussie farms map would not stop them. The map is only for public to gain perspective of scale and force transparency on an industry, not target individuals or as a tool to access farms.

e. analyse the incidences and responses of other jurisdictions in Australia and internationally; and

As long as the industry relies on misleading "ethical" labels for animal use like humane and RSPCA approved, the public deserve the freedom of information to make an educated decision on what they choose to support. The public deserve to see the reality behind the walls of factory farms and slaughterhouses. Ag gag laws seek to ignore the problem, not solve it.

f. provide recommendations on how the Victorian Government and industry could improve protections for farmers' privacy, businesses, and the integrity of our biosecurity system and animal welfare outcomes, whether through law reform or other measures.

There is a current failure of regulation to identify animal cruelty in animal use industries and the standing of Australia in regard to comparisons of other countries in animal welfare is poor. The fact that the majority of animal cruelty identified is done so by whistle blowers is reason enough not to further criminalise the actions of whistle blowers. The lack of transparency of standard animal agricultural practices resulting in the public/consumers being unable to make an informed choice when purchasing animal products. The inherent disconnect in seeking to further criminalise the actions of whistleblowers without seeking to address the animal cruelty that whistle blowers identify is heinous. Potential methods to decreasing the need for whistle blower activity may include increased animal protections under legislation, mandatory animal protection standards, an independent animal

protection agency to ensure compliance with animal protection standards and CCTV cameras in animal use and related industries.

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File1:

File2:

File3: