



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

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## **SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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

When whistleblowers enter animal production facilities they are not entering farmers yards or homes. These facilities are most commonly located in rural areas that are not anywhere near residential addresses or yards. Farmers expressing concerns/fears of 'animal activists' invading their homes is nothing more than fear mongering to further discriminate against people trying to expose the truth. Whistleblowers entering animal production facilities is not a regular occurrence and they will only go in to obtain documentation or to assist animals who are in dire straights and are in immediate need of veterinary attention who would otherwise die if left in their condition. The evidence captured and shared to the general public by Whistleblowers has exposed the horrendous mistreatment and conditions that animals are subject to and have provided groundbreaking information into the cruelty that is a regular occurrence in the animal agricultural industry. There has also been no evidence obtained or reported regarding whistleblowers causing biosecurity events. The false information and accusations reported and presented to the public by media outlets and government bodies has a great affliction on people trying to do the right thing in a world of wrong. Spreading accusations and using dramatised words such as 'Green-collared criminals' and 'terrorists' is not only demoralising but insensitive and impertinent to actual victims of terrorism and acts of violence.

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.

There has been no evidence obtained reporting biosecurity events caused by whistleblowers. Biosecurity events have however been proved to be caused by the movement of animals from one facility to another, and from the movement and infestation of pests, rodents, insects and other disease spreading species that are in these facilities. Rodents like rats and mice that run free through animal production facilities cause

multitudes of disease and illness to the animals. Whistleblowers also ensure to take appropriate biosecurity precautions and abide to protocol to ensure there is no transfer of pathogens from one location to another by utilising protective wear such as gloves, boots and suits that are sterile and decontaminated before entering other facilities. The poor conditions that the animals are contained to in animal production facilities leads to the mass spreading of zoonotic diseases and illness such as Coccidia (Coccidiosis) that is not only communicable to all animals but to humans as well causing extensive biosecurity hazards that are a result of farmers and their practices with no relevance to whistleblowers. The accusations made against whistleblowers in regards to biosecurity risk can be considered disingenuous once all aspects are considered, as police presence, police dogs, rodents, disease and infection also enter these properties without taking any biosecurity precautions, so logically their presence is more likely to pose a biosecurity risk than the whistleblowers themselves.

Animal activist's compliance with the Livestock Disease Control Acts 1994, Livestock Management Act 2010, and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986

In regards to the 'Livestock Disease Control Act 1994' and the 'Livestock Management Act 2010' there is considerable reason to believe that the correlation and relevance between these acts and whistleblowers is questionable. The 'Livestock Management Act 2010' appears to have little relevance to whistleblowers except for section 50, however this section still places reasonable doubt into the prosecution and criminalisation of Whistleblowers.

Analyse the incidences and responses of other jurisdictions in Australia and Intentionally.

Upon research of the Ag-Gag law having been attempted of being implemented at a federal level appears to be unsuccessful. When referring to other countries like the United States where the Ag-Gag laws have been introduced in several states, there has been significant reprimand and failure in the passing of the law in others, as it contradicts the right to free-speech and the obtainment of knowledge and is considered to be unconstitutional. If the Ag-Gag law is to be passed and implemented in Australia there is reason and research to believe that there will be serious reprisal and challenges of legal action.

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.

In Australia there is a failure of current regulation to identify animal cruelty in the animal agriculture industry. When compared to other countries, Australia's management and performance in animal agriculture is considerably poorer and dysfunctional, and

whistleblowers have helped to provide evidence and insight into the mistreatment and cruelty these animals are exposed to. The lack of transparency into the standards of animal practice in Australia does not give the general public and consumers the opportunity to make informed decisions when purchasing animal products. Whistleblowers seek to provide evidence of the truth about these facilities that animal agriculture will not give to the public. If Farmers and people who work in animal agriculture are so quick and proud to assure us that their practice is sustainable and ethical then why are they so fearful of Whistleblowers exposing them? They have nothing to fear if they have nothing to hide. Criminalising whistleblowers without taking into consideration the evidence they have obtained is inequitable and unconditionally biased. Condemning whistleblowers for exposing an Industry that is inherently inhumane and cruel seems unjust and the ones who are causing the cruelty and torment should be the ones criminalised. For the rape, murder, torture, enslavement of animals in addition to the killing of new borns is unconscionable, and had these animals been humans there would be outrage and immediate action, but because we do not look like them or speak their language their life is inevitably of no importance to those in animal agriculture.

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File1:

File2:

File3: