



**Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee
Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture**

Public Hearing 23 September 2019 - Response to question taken on notice

Question:

What proportion of animal theft occurs due to animal activist activity?

Response:

It is not possible to determine with certainty the proportion of animal theft incidents that are due to animal activist activity.

Victoria Police records data about all reported incidents of animal theft; however, animal theft incidents are not consistently recorded by police as being due to a given 'activity', including animal rights activist activity. This information is recorded when it is detected by police or reported to police.

Victoria Police is aware of the following factors that may reduce the quality of information available on incidents of animal theft:

- animal theft from agricultural properties is underreported to police
- animal theft may not be immediately detected due to factors including the isolation of some agricultural properties and intervals between stock counting. This can lead to a delayed reporting of animal theft to police
- in cases of delayed detection and reporting to police, the circumstances of animal theft incidents may be unknown.

While animal thefts due to animal activist activity, as a proportion of all animal theft incidents cannot be determined with certainty, Victoria Police can confirm it has responded to animal rights activism incidents, where animal theft has been identified and charges have been laid. The following examples are provided to the Committee:

- in November 2018, approximately 50 animal rights activists entered Luv-a-Duck, a processing facility in Nhill. During the demonstration activists removed 18 ducks. Police charged several activists with theft.
- in December 2018, approximately 40 animal rights activists entered the farm property where the Gippy Goat Café was located. During the protest three goats were removed from the property. Police charged several activists with theft.