

## Victorian Animal Welfare Law Review

### CCBFA Meeting Synopsis

*Teleconference with Department staff 20/4/20 4pm*

[Dept] = Our understanding from Department Staff present.

[CCBFA] = Canary and Cage Bird Federation of Australia Inc. recommendations and comment to Dept staff.

1. A major review of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTAA). Does not include Domestic Animals Act 1994. [Dept]
2. Current timeline aims to have the new Bill passed by this parliament. That is prior to the November 2022 election. [Dept]
3. Consideration of the Animal Welfare definition as a scaffolding for the revised Act. [CCBFA]  
[Dept]
  - The need for a suitable environment.
  - The need for a suitable diet.
  - The need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns.
  - The need to be housed with, or apart from other animals.
  - The need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.
4. Consider including as an Object, or similar... [CCBFA]
  - a. The human value of animal keeping to the mental, physical and social health of the community.
  - b. Raising of animal welfare outcomes across the community through education and compliance/enforcement. That is, include education up front.
  - c. Specifically distinguish between animal welfare and animal rights, and exclude animal rights from the Act.
5. AWAC is Minister appointed. [Dept]
  - a. Therefore, AWAC political and perhaps not the most suitable forum for stakeholder consultation. [CCBFA]
  - b. Include an ongoing consultative committee system within the new Act. to enable ongoing feedback from stakeholders. Other states are looking at various structures. [CCBFA]
6. Care is needed to avoid overregulation, to avoid unintended consequences, such as creating a disincentive to keep animals. For birds, we perceive few significant animal welfare concerns compared to other species groups. [CCBFA]
7. We strongly recommend a bias towards education over regulation. Aim to raise animal welfare standards across Victoria. Inordinate resources are often spent on compliance which given funding limitations would achieve better outcomes if directed to education. Currently compliance is largely in response to complaints, although these cases must be investigated, there are an unknown number of other cases undetected. [CCBFA]
8. The current Victorian "Code of Practice for the Housing of Caged Birds" (Bird Code) will be rewritten as part of this process. This is some time in the future after the Act is finalised. [Dept]

9. It is unclear at this stage whether the “Bird Code” will be in a Standards and Guidelines form. That is, it is to be decided whether the new Bird Code will include enforceable Standards or as currently where the Bird Code can be used as a legal defence. [Dept]
10. With regard to the current Bird code, CCBFA advise... [CCBFA]
  - a. The current Bird Code is outdated and requires a complete rewrite.
  - b. Experience in other jurisdictions indicates a lack of bird welfare expertise in government.
  - c. Avicultural organisations already have a range of welfare codes in place that have been revised for many generations.

Therefore, we suggest Aviculture produces a draft rewrite of the code, which is reviewed initially by those agencies tasked with compliance. Department then releases for public consultation and final review.

11. Scope of a new Bird Code - Consider... [CCBFA] (Not discussed in the meeting – is fyi).
  - a) Private aviculturists
  - b) Pet or companion birds
  - c) Pet Shops
  - d) Bird sales code of conduct
  - e) Native birds - licensed
  - f) Rehab birds
  - g) Scientific research birds
  - h) Exhibited birds
  - i) Biosecurity
  - j) Others?



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