



1 September 2009

Anna Bligh
Premier of Queensland
Parliament House
Brisbane Qld. 4000

Dear Premier,

I write to draw your attention to a misleading statement contained in your standard response to parties concerned at your government's intended promotion of kangaroo meat to Australians.

It is strongly implied in this letter that Animals Australia - through its mere involvement with the review of the National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes 2008 (the Code) – endorses the practices permitted by that Code. This could not be further from the truth and misrepresents Animals Australia's position and I ask you to address this misleading statement as a matter of urgency.

The National Resource Management Ministerial Council was advised at the time it considered the draft Code in late 2008 that there was disagreement on the Working Group related to key issues.

I am also concerned about the assertions that the kangaroo killing industry is sustainable and that is it carried out in a humane manner.

In regard to animal welfare; the existence of, or even the unlikely full adherence to the Code will not ensure that the commercial killing of kangaroos is humane. The Code allows commercial killing practices that inherently cause suffering to wounded kangaroos, to dependent joeys when their mothers are shot, and unacceptable distress and disturbance to entire targeted mobs each night in remote areas.

The new Code (as did the old Code) allows the brutal killing of joeys – through decapitation or a blow to the head. Perhaps worse – young 'at foot' joeys are often left or escape to die of starvation, exposure or predation when their mothers are killed. Despite representations by Animals Australia, RSPCA Australia and others during the review, the Code fails to require that females not be targeted for the commercial kill to avoid the need to kill joeys. Further, even conservative estimates of the numbers of kangaroos which are not head shot (some 4%) mean that at least 100,000 kangaroos suffer prior to death due to wounding by commercial shooters.

Further, the second (new) code, for non-commercial shooting, was also controversial within the Working Group and shamefully still allows the use of shotguns to shoot moving wallabies and does not require shooters to undergo any skills testing. These Codes are primarily written to suit shooters and farmers and to allow current practices rather than to protect the welfare of animals.

In regard to sustainability; the affects of the long drought over much of the major kangaroo species' range has put their populations at risk. Government figures for the commercial shooting areas of SA, WA, NSW and Queensland show that since the commencement of the drought kangaroo numbers have fallen some 55% - from over 57 million (2001) to an estimated 25.9 million in 2008 (based on aerial surveys of the killing zones, reported on the Australian Dept. of Environment website).

In Queensland the reduction in kangaroo numbers is even greater i.e. a 61% reduction from 37.6 million in 2001 to just 14.6 million (estimated) in 2008. Given the dramatic fall in kangaroo population numbers since 2001, and the continuing drought, the killing of kangaroos for commercial gain cannot be permitted to continue; it is not sustainable.

Animals Australia totally opposes the killing of kangaroos as it is unnecessary, unsustainable and inhumane. I ask that you consider the information contained in this letter towards reassessing your government's position on this matter. I ask too, that your staff act immediately to correct the content of your standard letter so that Animals Australia's position on this matter does not continue to be misrepresented.

Yours sincerely,



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Executive Director

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