

## Pro forma D- 525 responses received

Dear Mr Banasiak, and the Committee,

I am writing today to make a submission to the NSW Parliament's Inquiry into the exhibition of exotic animals in circuses and exhibition of cetaceans in New South Wales.

I agree with the RSPCA that the exhibition of exotic animals in circuses, and the exhibition of cetaceans in captivity pose serious animal welfare concerns.

I have summarised my key concerns below:

### Exotic animals in circuses

i. Non-domesticated or exotic species, even those bred in captivity, will not have all physical, mental and behavioural needs met due to the inherent nature of a travelling circus. Welfare risks include;

- Being contained in relatively small enclosures whilst travelling for prolonged periods which limit opportunity to freely exercise
- Limited social interaction with other animals of the same species
- Travelling enclosures that lack stimulation thereby leading to boredom and frustration
- Inability to express normal behaviours including hunting and foraging

ii. It is not necessary to use exotic animals in circuses as many circuses operate without exotic animals with success

iii. Exotic species have a long lifespan and so allowing breeding to continue results in new generations of animals to be subjected to conditions which pose welfare risks for decades

### Captive cetaceans

i. Due to the intelligence of marine mammals, their natural travelling behaviours and complex social structures, a marine park is unable to meet their physical, mental and behavioural needs. Welfare risks include;

- Severe space limitations preventing expression of normal behaviours including the restriction to travel long distances as experienced in the wild
- Relatively barren and static artificial environment limiting exploration and mental stimulation leading to boredom and frustration
- Small group numbers restricting expression of normal complex social behaviours
- Health risks include eye problems due to excessive UV exposure caused by extended time above the surface of the water;

ii. It is not necessary to keep cetaceans at marine parks as alternative entertainments can be offered which do not pose welfare risks to these species.

iii. Cetaceans have a long lifespan and so allowing breeding to continue results in new generations of animals to be subjected to conditions which pose welfare risks for decades

The community expects Australia to be leading the way when it comes to animal welfare, and the use of exotic animals in circuses or the keeping of captive cetaceans are unnecessary practices that must end.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my concerns on this matter, and I look forward to hearing the outcomes of this Inquiry.