

## **NSW Inquiry – Exhibition of exotic animals in circuses and exhibited cetaceans in New South Wales.**

### **Questions on Notice, Hearing 14<sup>th</sup> August 2020 – Dr Di Evans**

#### **Question 1: McCrindle survey**

**The CHAIR:** Can you provide the results of that survey. I looked for it after I read your submission but could only find reference to it in your submission and on your website. I could not find a direct link to the results.

**Dr EVANS:** Yes, we can certainly provide that.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** For further clarification, is it possible to also provide the raw data from that survey, that is, the questions that were asked and the responses and the demographics? Sometimes questions asked can be quite instructive as to how the responses are formed. If you have got the background data as well as the report, it would be instructive for the Committee.

**Dr EVANS:** Yes, we will follow that up for you.

#### **Response:**

The RSPCA has commissioned McCrindle (<https://mccrindle.com.au/>), an independent consultancy company, to conduct research to better understand how the Australian public perceives and engages with the organisation, and to gauge current levels of awareness regarding their communication and service delivery. The survey also measures Australians' perceptions and sentiment towards issues concerning animal welfare, pet ownership, and animal-based food products.

At the time of our submission, we only had access to the 2015 survey results. However, 2018 results are available which may be of more interest to the committee. The methodology used in the 2018 survey builds on an existing longitudinal tracking tool which was developed in 2009 and deployed every three years since (2009, 2012, and 2015). The survey is conducted through the use of an online quantitative survey which was in field for approximately one week. The survey respondents feature a gender and age representative sample of the Australian public (18+) with approximately 2,000 full surveys being collected.

#### **2018 RSPCA Brand Awareness and Perception Study (McCrindle)**

##### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The survey was in field from the 30th November to the 5th December 2018 and yielded 2,030 completes, representative by age, gender and state. The survey was conducted in two phases.

**Phase one:** the online survey was completed by a panel of 1,810 Australians nationally representative by age, gender, and state (see Table 1). Graphs in this report have been collated based on data from phase one.

**Phase two:** following phase one, the survey was relaunched to gather an additional 220 responses from Tasmania, Northern Territory, and the ACT.

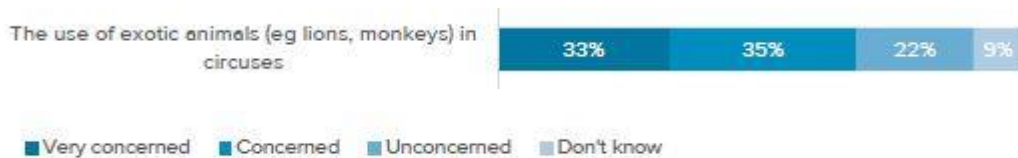
**Table 1: Respondent totals**

State	Respondents
NSW	559
VIC	470
QLD	375
TAS	103
NT	99
SA	128
WA	190
ACT	107

\* The respondent totals for Tasmania, Northern Territory, South Australia, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory allow for comparisons with a 95% confidence interval and a 10% margin of error. For this reason, only differences of 10% or larger have been highlighted in this report.

Respondents were asked how they felt about a number of different animal welfare issues including whips in racing, duck hunting, jumps racing, rodeos etc.

**2018 Survey - How do you feel about the following animal welfare issues? (n=1810)**



In 2018, more than 3 in 4 (78%) respondents were concerned or very concerned about the use of exotic animals in circuses. There was a 1% shift from the number of respondents being concerned to very concerned compared to the 2015 survey. This is interesting as the question was changed slightly in 2018 to not include tigers and elephants, which could arguably be of more concern, as no circuses in Australia included performing tigers or elephants, only lions and monkeys, as exotic species.

**2015 Survey - How do you feel about the following animal welfare issues? (n=2011)**



In 2015, more than 3 in 4 (78%) respondents were concerned or very concerned about the use of exotic animals in circuses.

**Question 2 – Definition of exotic animals**

**The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE:** I direct this question to all witnesses and probably most appropriately to the Animal Defenders Office. Yesterday the Committee heard considerable evidence, particularly from Animal Care Australia relating to definitions in the legislation. It included the definitions being used in the terms of reference for this inquiry. In particular they queried the term "exotic animals" which, according to our terms of reference, is defined to mean any animal other than a stock animal

or a companion animal. They continued on basically arguing that the term "exotic animals" was meaningless. For instance, they quoted that lions and rhesus monkeys that have been born, bred and raised in the care of Stardust over many generations are by government departmental definitions all domestic animals and this negates the purpose of any restrictions or further legislation on the keeping of exotic animals in circuses in New South Wales. My question simply to you is in terms of any case law, has there been a dispute about this term? What were the findings? Please feel free to take it on notice if you wish.

**Mr SEYEDI:** I am from the Animals Defenders Office. In terms of case law specifically, we can certainly take that on notice and see what we can find about that.

**The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE:** I think the Committee and I would request any general case law on this, plus a list of those alternative definitions that we can look at with any commentaries and any recommendations that you may wish to make. That would be of value. Do any of the other witnesses have any comments on that?

**Response: The question was not taken on notice by RSPCA Australia.**

### **Question 3: RSPCA Inspectors**

**The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:** The suggestion from witnesses yesterday was that they have an excellent working relationship the RSPCA inspectors who come, that they appreciate the efforts that they take, that their feedback has been positive and that they were quite shocked by this submission from the RSPCA. Is there a difference of view within the organisation?

**Dr ARNOTT:** I am not surprised if there is a diversity of views on circuses in general, as there is in the community. I guess that has given rise to this inquiry. I have not spoken to any of the individual inspectors on their specific views, but it would not surprise me if there is, as I say, a diversity of views among the organisation.

**The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:** How is it possible for us as a Committee to get the feedback from the inspectors who have actually been doing that work, who have actually been out there doing the inspections?

**Dr ARNOTT:** We can provide you with the information as to what they found when they investigated the complaints.

**The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK:** That would be really helpful if you could.

**Response:** RSPCA Australia has no jurisdiction over the inspectorate activities of RSPCA NSW. The inspector responsibility is to enforce the minimum standards under the legislation. RSPCA Australia does not have an enforcement role but does advocate for legal reform to improve welfare standards on many different issues, particularly where legal standards are not consistent with contemporary animal welfare science nor community expectations. Meeting minimum legal standards is not equivalent to achieving acceptable or high level of animal welfare where all animal needs are met. RSPCA Inspectors have a regulatory role where their obligation is to enforce the law and not to promote RSPCA policy or position on different issues. The state/territory based inspectorate operates completely independently of the advocacy arm of the organisation.

Dr Arnott to provide details of complaints made to RSPCA NSW.