

**Submission
No 14**

INQUIRY INTO THE RSPCA RAID ON THE WATERWAYS WILDLIFE PARK

Organisation: Gunnedah Veterinary Hospital
Name: Mr David Amos
Position: Vet
Date received: 21/06/2010

1. My name is David Amos.
2. I am a registered veterinary surgeon.
3. I conduct my practice through Gunnedah Veterinary Hospital in Gunnedah, NSW, where I have practiced since 1978.
4. During that time, I have attended various wildlife cases, presented by members of the public & on very many occasions at the request of Mrs Nancy Small of Waterways Wildlife Park.
5. Many of the animals brought to me by Mrs Small were in turn brought to her by members of the public.
6. I do not regularly visit the park.
7. In addition, I have at times been requested by the RSPCA to attend, with inspectors, various cases of alleged cruelty or neglect & have always been willing to assist. None of those cases have involved the Waterways Wildlife Park.
8. I was astounded therefore to hear, late on 4 February 2010, that a raid in which eight koala & some lizards were seized on 3rd February 2010 had occurred & that there had been a crew from Channel Seven's "Animal Rescue" program involved.
9. I believe that normal protocol was not followed.
10. There had been an unannounced inspection some nine days earlier, at the conclusion of which, the inspector had indicated that there were no problems & that she would return when Mrs Small [who was in hospital at the time] was home.
11. It is quite obvious that, from that moment, planning of the subsequent raid began.
12. If and I say IF, the koala & lizards were in such a state that they required subsequent removal & treatment, why was nothing done for nine days?
13. In view of my previous dealings with the RSPCA, I might reasonably have expected to have been asked to examine &, if necessary, treat said animals.

14. Furthermore, Mrs. Small was apparently told during the raid that the koala were being taken to my practice to be examined & so did not contact me for assistance.
15. There was no contact to my practice by the RSPCA or any others involved in the raid, nor were the koala presented.
16. As a result, Mrs Small had no opportunity to seek an alternative opinion on the health or otherwise of the koala, either then or in the months that followed, such was the shroud of secrecy.
17. Mrs Small has acquired a huge amount of knowledge & experience in the care & husbandry of native animals & has dedicated most of her life to it.
18. Any perceived shortcomings should be dealt with in a constructive fashion, not a carefully planned raid, carried out in a rude and overbearing fashion.
19. I believe that this incident has little to do with animal welfare & much to do with enhancing the reputation & coffers of the RSPCA & perhaps others.
20. Waterways Wildlife Park was seen as a soft target for a slanted "warm & fuzzy" TV show.

Dated: 18 June 2010

Signed: 