

**Submission  
No 4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE RSPCA RAID ON THE WATERWAYS  
WILDLIFE PARK**

**Name:** Mrs Shirley George

**Date received:** 11/06/2010

---

Mrs Shirley George

9<sup>th</sup> June 2010

Submission regarding an incident which occurred at the Waterways Wildlife Park, Gunnedah during an inspection by the RSPCA on February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010.

My husband Allan and I have been working volunteer members of the Friends of Waterways Wildlife Park for the past 15 years, and I wish to relate an event which occurred during this raid.

We arrived at the Park after lunch for weekly roster duty and when we saw a number of official vehicles in the Park we realised that an unannounced RSPCA inspection was taking place, accompanied by a T.V. camera crew.

At approximately 2.30 p.m. two visitors from the Netherlands arrived. They were touring this area and the Gunnedah Visitor Information Centre suggested a visit to the Park as they were very keen to see Koalas and other wildlife. I explained that an inspection was taking place, but I would supervise a visit to the Koala enclosure.

They were entranced by 2 Koalas eating leaves, one was on the ground and the others were sleeping.

As we were leaving, RSPCA Inspector Prowse approached us saying "you are not allowed in that enclosure, the area is out of bounds and the gate should be locked. The Koalas are stressed and I'm removing them today".

I was embarrassed and humiliated by this aggressive manner, but kept my emotions in check and suggested they see the other wildlife in the Park.

I then returned to the kiosk, but was visibly upset as I was telling other volunteers what had occurred.

As the visitors were leaving they wrote a very nice comment about the Park in the visitor's book.

It appears they called back to the Visitor Information Centre to report the incident, as a photographer from the Namoi Valley Independent Newspaper arrived soon after.

My reason for this submission is not so much about the actual raid on the Park but about my experience with the intolerable attitude of a female RSPCA Inspector in the presence of visitors from overseas.

In addition, I wrote to the C.E.O. of the RSPCA at Yagoona on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010, informing him of this incident but to date have received no reply.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Shirley George