

**Submission
No 150**

**INQUIRY INTO EXHIBITION OF EXOTIC ANIMALS IN
CIRCUSES AND EXHIBITION OF CETACEANS IN NEW
SOUTH WALES**

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To the committee regarding the Inquiry into the use of exotic animals in circuses and the exhibition of cetaceans in New South Wales.

All animals, including exotic and cetaceans covered by this inquiry, have natural instincts and behaviors that in their natural environment they are free to exhibit. Taking these animals out of their natural environment, or breeding them into the circus business is a very similar analogy to what our society does to criminals. We lock people into prisons to fundamentally punish them by denying them access to their freedom and limiting their ability to undertake their natural behaviors. So it begs the question that I would like to pose to the committee: "Why are we punishing these animals when they have done nothing wrong?"

Science has clearly proven that animals suffer pain, fear and anxiety when they are threatened or confined. Surely the committee would appreciate that for an exotic animal to be trained to undertake unnatural acts that we have all seen them do in the circus ring, that would initially require a significant "battle of wills" between the animal and their handler. We all know that even house training a domesticated animal such as puppy can be stressful on both parties. I propose that taming a wild/exotic animal would typically be even more stressful, particularly on the animal.

Evidence obtained by organisations such as PETA have shown significant cruelty and abuse by handlers of exotic animals in circuses in an attempt to finally break the will of these animals to undertake the "acts" they are being trained to do. In many instances, animal have literally been beaten into submission. I provide the following URL for your reference on this issue:

<https://www.peta.org/issues/animals-in-entertainment/animals-used-entertainment-factsheets/circuses-three-rings-abuse/>

In summary, I would like to reiterate that I believe having exotic animals in circuses and exhibiting cetaceans is tantamount to incarcerating humans as a punishment, by denying them access to their natural environment or behaviors. I believe this is totally unacceptable as unlike criminals they have done nothing wrong and they should be given the chance to be re-homed to enjoy what ever life they have left. I request the committee decide to phase out the use of exotic animals in circuses and cease the exhibition of cetaceans immediately.

Thank you for reading my submission.