

**Submission  
No 185**

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

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## Casey Cainan Submission

As an exotic animal trainer for the majority of my life I am writing this submission to express my opposition to the:

- (a) proposed phase out of the use of exotic animals in circus.
- (b) proposed cessation of breeding of exotic animals for mobile exhibit in circus.

### Animal Welfare

Animals in the circus and in particular exotic animals in the circus is an extremely emotive topic with a small minority to tell you animals do belong in the circus, these people believe in animal rights. The animal rights movement is based on a belief that animals have similar rights to humans and therefore should not be owned or used and this includes farming and even pets. Animal rights organizations run emotionally exploitive campaigns aimed directly at eliminating human animal working relationship with a hidden agenda of eliminating all human animal interaction whilst profiting both politically and financially.

Currently any animal working a mobile exhibit in the circus in NSW is legislated by the Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986, the Exhibited Animals Protection Regulation 2010 and the Standards for Exhibiting Circus Animals in NSW 2019. Considering the recent update of the Standards specific to circus it remains relevant and sufficient.

In 1976 the Farm Animal Welfare Council in the UK created a framework for captive animals<sup>1</sup> that has since been updated and expanded. The basic framework is referred to as Brambels Five for animal welfare and is an adopted worldwide framework for captive animals and is currently used by animal welfare organizations in assessing an animal's welfare.

Leading animal behaviourist Dr Marte Kiley-Worthington's book was commissioned by the UK RSPCA and Universities Federation for Animal Welfare to conduct research into the welfare of circus animals. Her findings are published in her book *Animals in Circuses and Zoo: Chirons World*<sup>2</sup>. She found while there is always room for improvement the animal welfare standards for circus animals were sufficient based on the scientific data she collect from actual circus animals and compared to the Brambels Five. She also commented on the dignity of performing animals "In this way they [circuses] could have an important role to play in educating the public and heightening the respect for individual animals, their unique intelligences and amazing abilities."

Animal Welfare expert Professor Ted Friend now retired from Texas A & M University studied circus animals extensively <sup>3</sup> in conjunction with the US government. His scenario specific findings have been used in meta analysis reports produced by a Professor Stephen Harris formally of the University of Bristol. Professor Harris has since been discredited after close links to animal rights organizations emerged <sup>4</sup>. Prof Friend has publically accused Prof Harris of cherry picking his findings to support his agenda and the so called Harris reports to contain “blatant inaccuracies” a copy of his letter to Italian parliament addressing his concerns can be found here <sup>5</sup>.

The available data suggests that a ban on exotic animals in the circus is not based on welfare but on personal choice. There has been no incidence of animal abuse to justify an investigation and to hold an inquiry and spend copious amounts of tax payer’s dollar will not change the overwhelming positive evidence that the welfare of animals are met in a circus environment.

<sup>1</sup> <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121010012428/http://www.fawc.org.uk/pdf/fivefreedoms1979.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Animals in Circuses And Zoos: Chiron’s World?

<sup>3</sup>Friend, T. H. 1999. Behavior of picketed circus elephants. *Appl. Anim. Behav. Sci.* 62:73-88.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/08/11/foxhunting-prosecution-professor-misrepresented-science/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.sivelp.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/TED-FRIEND-PDF.pdf>