

**Submission
No 115**

INQUIRY INTO ANIMAL CRUELTY LAWS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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I would like to suggest that non-government charitable organisations should be allowed to reasonably investigate commercial premises and farm operations involving large number of animals. When viewed only as economic profit-making assets, animals suffer the dilution of ethical concerns relating to their welfare. In many cases that have been brought to light in recent times, we have read with utter horror how hens have been cramped in free range facilities, how pigs have been brutalised on slaughter house floors prior to being killed, etc. These cases (numerous in number) question the efficacy and application of our animal welfare laws. They also indicate why it is important that organisations outside the government (i.e. charities) are able to investigate cruelty on farms and commercial premises. As otherwise, the public is totally not aware about how animals are treated in farms and commercial establishments. The perception is that Australia has high standards of welfare for farmed animals, which however is challenged when faced with contrasting evidence presented by concerned animal welfare charities. Any society that allows economic interests to take precedence over ethical concerns, eventually suffers a negative fall out. Ethics administration in farms and commercial establishments must not be a government-only responsibility. There is need to establish a strong and broad based public-private partnership model, whereby independent non-government agencies can help the Government monitor and administer animal welfare standards. This could be a relationship of cooperation and support, rather than being one of antagonism as it is today. Thank you.