

Submission  
No 242

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

**Name:** Gail Grix

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Q.1. Should Exotics still be used in Marine Parks and Circuses?

A. Yes. There has been no evidence to support otherwise. Marine Park and Circus animals live longer more interesting and rewarding lives, and are healthier than those in the “wild”.

Q.2 Should the breeding of animals still continue in Circuses and Marine Parks?

A. Yes. Breeding of animals by Circuses and Marine Parks help with education and saving species from possible extinction.

Q.3 Does the current Legislation/Acts adequately protect the welfare of animals?

A. Yes. The current Legislation is more than adequate. In fact, Australian Circuses exceed in providing food, care, housing and conditions for their animals.

My name is Gail Grix, I am the niece of Phyllis Ashton, wife of Douglas Ashton, owners of the legendary Ashtons Circus, who toured the length and breadth of Australia, bringing joy and animals to the people in remote areas of the country, for well over 100 years.

I grew up travelling and performing with Ashtons Circus along with all of my large and extended family. We all grew up surrounded by lions, tigers, elephants, monkeys, horses, dogs and more. It was from my early childhood with them, watching and learning from the adults, seeing their care, love and devotion, interacting with their animals, that I gained the understanding, love and respect that I myself, have for all animals today.

The animals led long happy, enriched lives and many of them were bred and hand raised in the circus. Some of them were taught to perform their natural movements on command, with a simple reward method, as many domestic pet owners do today.

Australian Marine Parks and Australian Circuses, should be rewarded and recognised for their own high standards of animal care, and not judged on the dramatic stories and footage taken from overseas.

With respect, I ask that the committee note, that the Australian Circus Industry is already of the highest standard, and that the use of exotic and domestic animals in circuses, (and Marine Parks) should continue and remain unchanged, as they are already protected by their Compulsory Code of Conduct.

Yours sincerely,

Gail Grix.