

**Submission
No 31**

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED AERIAL SHOOTING OF
BRUMBIES IN KOSCIUSZKO NATIONAL PARK**

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The Labour government's proposal to reintroduce aerial killing has left me deeply dismayed due to its stark lack of compassion. Aerial shooting represents a ruthless and inhumane approach, devoid of empathy, and should never be considered as a viable option. What is imperative is having a strategy to protect Brumbies, including the call for a moratorium on all lethal measures.

For far too long, Brumbies have unjustly borne the blame for environmental damage in Kosciuszko National Park. It's essential to recognize that multiple factors contribute to this issue, such as Snowy 2, increased tourism development, 4-wheel driving, and agricultural runoff ie the human factor and the lack of human mitigation strategies. In fact the horses are there due to humans.

Recent incidents have tragically underscored the brutality that Brumbies endure. In September, the Liberal-National Government's action of shooting an entire Brumby herd in Kosciuszko National Park inflicted immense trauma upon our community. The suffering these majestic horses endured, including slow and agonizing deaths and the loss of pregnant mares' foals, is a blatant violation of humane treatment.

Similarly, in May of this year, 67 horses in Kosciuszko National Park met a similarly gruesome fate, being shot in their necks and left to bleed out. Pregnant mares and foals perished, exposing the government's labelling of its brumby shooting and trapping program as humane as a stark contradiction to the reality.

The true extent of these killings and the fate of these horses remain shrouded in uncertainty which is deeply concerning. Additionally, the lack of reliable data is further exacerbated by flawed counting methods and inflated population numbers. Renowned Independent Bio-statistician Claire Galea's recent report has highlighted significant flaws in the survey methodology for counting Brumbies. I can't emphasize enough how disappointed I am in learning that the adding up of horse counts from different years is inaccurate and which is ethically questionable.

The persistent concern over implausible population estimates resulting from flawed modelling techniques is something that animal advocacy groups have been voicing for many years on seemingly deaf ears. Therefore, this Inquiry must delve into the examination of current methodologies and call for transparency and accuracy when assessing the Brumby population. It's imperative that we make informed decisions based on reliable data to ensure the welfare of these magnificent animals and the preservation of our environment.

Finally, we are a developed nation with the capability and responsibility to set an example - this situation is a source of embarrassment for our country. Let's begin making decisions that instill pride in our actions.