

**Submission
No 69**

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

Name: Mr Gary Cotchin

Date Received: 6 October 2023

For the attention of: Ms Emma Hurst MLC (Committee Chair)
The Animal Welfare Committee Inquiry.

Regarding: Current Brumby Management by Parks NSW in the
Kosciuszko National Park, and the *2021 Kosciuszko
National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan*.

Emailed to: animal.welfare@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam.

I hereby offer my contribution to this Committee's introspection of Animal Welfare issues as it applies to the *2021 Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan* and the resultant treatment (since and ongoing) of our Brumbies (Wild Horses) in the Kosciuszko National Park [or 'KNP'].

I will break my contribution to this Committee into five (5) relevant categories.

1) The Brumby Population Assessment & Dr Stuart Cairns Count(s).

Those of us that have rigorously inspected the manner in which the State Government in NSW (and Victoria) have pushed ridiculously exaggerated Brumby Population numbers via the media to a now ill-informed community, have found there to be a range of fundamental flaws in how these ridiculous numbers were arrived at.

I will allow the Submissions of Ms Claire Galea and Ms Joanne Canning to talk directly and specifically to the fundamental flaws in the data gathering of, and the resultant estimated Brumby population numbers provided by Dr Stuart Cairns.

But I will add that having been to the KNP Northern block/area, and having participated as one of the seventy two (72) people in the weekend long 'Community Count' that was conducted in the middle of this year (2023) I can say without question or any shadow of doubt that the alleged 12,774 Brumbies estimated to be in that broad, relatively flat, reasonably open area, is a complete (and often repeated by those keen to kill) Lie.

It was on that weekend in June this year that our large group broke up into 12 or so smaller groups, and following strict instruction while using cameras and telescopes, we proceeded into much of the Northern block area on foot, on horseback, and in cars. And after a thorough and methodical count process across the entire weekend, collectively we found just 653 Brumbies in that massive KNP Northern block area.

There have been at least nine Brumby population counts/surveys conducted in the Northern end of the KNP these past 4 years (2019 > 2023). The Northern end of the KNP being the large area/location where just about everyone (including Dr Cairns) agrees that around 85% of all the Australian Alps Brumbies exist/live.

Eight of these nine Brumby surveys/counts have been conducted by Helicopter using a variety of count methods, flight plans and elevations by Cairns (in 2019, 2020 and 2022) NSW National Parks [or 'Parks NSW'] (in 2019, 2020 and 2021) and the Snowy Brumby Management Sustainability Management Group (in 2021 and 2022).

These thorough counts all reported definitive numbers of Brumby/Horses actually 'seen'.

In **2019** Cairns only saw 1,298 Brumbies, Parks NSW said they saw 3,110 Brumbies.

In **2020** Cairns only saw 723 Brumbies, Parks NSW said they saw 2,468 Brumbies.

In **2021** the SMBSMG Helicopter only saw 863 Brumbies, Parks NSW said saw 3,699 Brumbies.

In **2022** Cairns only saw 1,255 Brumbies and the SMBSMG saw 992 Brumbies.

And in mid **2023** the SMBSMG Community Count only saw 653 Brumbies.

Northern End KNP ACTUAL Brumby head-counts 2019 > 2023.						
<u>Survey conducted by</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>Ave</u>
Cairns (Gov't)	1298	723		1255		1092
Parks NSW (Gov't)	3110	2468	3699			3116*
SMBSMG (Lanyon)			863			863
SMBSMG (Roberts/AJP etc)				992		992
SMBSMG Community Count					653	653

The overall average number of Brumbies 'seen' across all nine surveys listed above was just 1,673 Brumbies actually sighted.

And that is without taking into account the Brumbies that have been removed/slaughtered across this 4+ year period that numbers well over a thousand, with clear evidence of at least another 170 Brumbies disgustingly and cruelly shot and left to rot in the KNP Northern end just these past few weeks (Note: These horrific images of Brumby carcasses rotting away where they were obviously cruelly shot, some in water catchments that run directly into the Mosquito Creek en-route to the Murrumbidgee River can be made readily available to the Committee upon request).

Here is just one image (of many) of a Brumby recently shot and now left to rot in the aforementioned waterway....



So a reasonable person would logically assume that even though the terrain surveyed is, for the most part, wide, open, and relatively flat (i.e. Long Plain in the KNP being one of the survey areas that is open and flat as is evidenced in the image above) not all of the Brumbies in that area are seen in any of the aforementioned Helicopter and Ground surveys.

However I note that in six of the nine surveys (including Cairns three surveys, and excluding the three Parks NSW surveys – see below as to why) the Brumbies actually ‘seen’ ranged from 653 to 1,298 (an average of 964 across the period).

Interestingly, the Parks NSW ‘counts’ clearly differ substantially from all the other surveys conducted across the same area across the same period of time.

Perhaps because Parks NSW benefit by exaggerated count numbers that then gives justification to their disgusting Cull?

We do know that Parks NSW flew much closer to the Brumbies than the other conducted Helicopter surveys (including Cairns) and as such they were much more likely to have dispersed Brumby groups/mobs as they went.

So it is reasonable to suggest that the manner in which Parks NSW (who are in charge of this cruel Brumby Cull) flew its Helicopter much closer over the Brumby groups/mobs than all the other surveys, that almost certainly assured

a degree of double-counting. And it was interesting to note that Parks NSW did not take any imagery to support their assessed count.

Adding to these Brumby population estimates/considerations is the highly regarded work of Ms Joanne Canning (BSc Equine Sports Science, HND Equine Sports Coaching, BHSII) who has thoroughly researched the KNP Brumby numbers for many years now. And after taking into account broadly accepted population numbers across this same area based on numerous surveys, then adding likely births and subtracting known 'removals' (mainly to slaughterhouses) Ms Canning is of the view that this same area at the Northern end of the KNP likely only had approximately 1,381 Brumbies there at the start of 2023.

And with 2023 being the year of the Sharpe/Fleming mass-Brumby-slaughter, this number is likely reduced significantly now.

So after eight Helicopter Surveys and an extensive Ground Survey over a four+ year period, it would be reasonable to suggest that the number of Brumbies in this area earlier this year was somewhere around 1,500 Brumbies give or take.

Yet Cairns (who's flawed data continues to inform the slaughterers view, and justify in their mind this current unjustifiable Cull) said that in 2022 there were 12,774 Brumbies in this Northern end of the KNP.

Clearly it is unlikely that there are even 3,000 Brumbies left in the KNP right now. However Parks NSW (who through Atticus Fleming and the like, continue to perpetuate the Brumby population lie) keep cruelly slaughtering our Brumbies in their many hundreds each year (including a mass Brumby shooting/slaughter just these past few weeks). Hundreds of images taken and since distributed online show the Parks NSW shooters horrible and offensive and cruel kill methods, all this driven by the continued and ongoing pressure coming from those that care less about animal cruelty, namely many of the ALP MP's including of course the presiding Minister Ms Penny Sharpe, and a Mr Joe McGirr, as well as 'Green' pressure groups who of late are now demanding that Parks NSW continue its Brumby cull/slaughter by using shooters in Helicopters as the preferred method of slaughtering.

But if a shooter in a Helicopter can (they say) kill a horse humanely (see below just how unlikely that is) then how is it that eight Helicopters flying over this same area over a four-year period can only ever see about 12% of the Brumbies that Cairns and the Government and Parks NSW and the Slaughterers say are there?

Clearly there is a disconnect between the Governments rationale for this Brumby Theriocide, and the Truth. With clear evidence of flaws in the way in which data and 'the science' and the alleged environmental damage has been collected, used and disseminated by the Government and Parks NSW.

Clearly the Cairns estimated Brumby population numbers at 12,774 in the Northern end of the KNP are bewilderingly inaccurate. And the 'Distance Software' Cairns used to turn 1,255 Brumbies 'seen' into 12,774 Brumbies allegedly there is (and has been proven to be) fundamentally flawed.

Yet Ms Sharpe and Parks NSW via Mr Fleming continue to slaughter Brumbies, and in larger numbers than ever before right now as I write.

Ms Claire Galea, a highly regarded Independent Biostatistician, was a key witness in a 2021 NSW Inquiry into the Health and Wellbeing of Kangaroos.

Within this Inquiry Ms Galea raised serious concerns surrounding the methodology, statistical modelling and reliability of population estimates for kangaroos as produced by, you guessed it, Dr Stuart Cairns.

Ms Galea, in her most recent Report regarding Cairns Brumby Population Counts, and her review of Dr Cairns work to do with Kangaroos, led her to state in her Report that "The concerns surrounding implausible population increases are evident in both the kangaroos and wild horse population estimates provided by Cairns".

This was one of many 'serious concerns' raised/established by Ms Galea to do with the manner in which Cairns arrived at his Brumby population numbers within his numerous Reports to the NSW Government across a number of years.

All these lies, all this deception, by Academics, MP's and Government Agencies, have all been based on Dr Cairns flawed 'Distance Software' population numbers that known Brumby hater, Professor Don Driscoll (and the like) use as a baseline to then inflate even more offensively predicted Brumby population numbers moving forward that is then spread to a gullible media.

Here (see image below) is an overhead used publicly by Professor Don Driscoll back in 2019 to justify the need for ongoing, even 'ramped up' Brumby Slaughtering.

And I note that Professor Driscoll uses these offensively inflated Cairns numbers, and then adds even more ridiculous percentage increases to it (whilst completely ignoring ongoing removals and deaths) to arrive at a 2023 Brumby Population figure of 57,013 Brumbies in the Alps area.

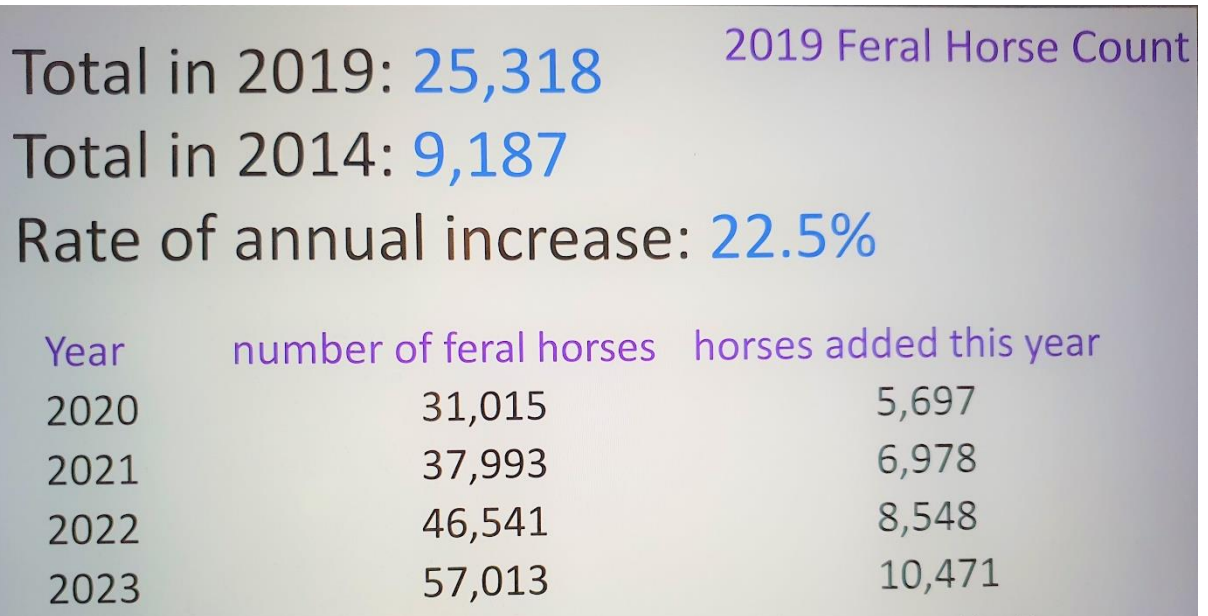
I mean you just can't make this stuff up, but of course he and they do, so as to support, justify, and perpetuate this ongoing and unjustifiable animal cruelty.

I would suggest that in hindsight, only four years on from Professor Driscoll's 2019 prediction of there being 57,013 Brumbies in the Alps by 2023 (see below) that he was in-error by many tens of thousands of Brumbies.

That is disgraceful conduct by a 'so-called' man of science. And I'd suggest that this prediction of his (that was then used by many of his fellow 'radical green ideologues' as they spread this data into the media) was either

intentionally and/or shamefully inflated so as to justify this illegitimate Brumby Slaughter.

Or, perhaps this was simply data offered up by someone well known and well proven to have a clear and obvious Brumby bias (research of his U-Tube clips and media articles online being the evidence of this clear bias) who at the end of the day was clearly and obviously incompetent when it came to accurately predicting Brumby populations in the Alps region?



Either way, the Brumby Population data provided by those that seek to slaughter needs to be seen for what is, and that is as A Despicable Lie.

So the numbers do not, and have not ever stacked up. And it is this Population Lie that all subsequent 'Horse Management' methods/practices and decisions have since attached themselves to.

So the Lie that is the Brumby Population Numbers, must be dispelled immediately, and truth/accuracy (regarding the Brumby numbers) ascertained prior to any further 'management' (i.e. cruel slaughter) of our KNP Brumbies.

Furthermore, so compelling is the case for an urgent re-count of Brumbies in the KNP via an alternate and more accurate method of counting, that a Moratorium on all Brumby Management should have been put in place until such time as a far more accurate population count of Brumbies was known.

But this plea to the Minister (Ms Penny Sharpe) of recent weeks was ignored, instead she ramped up her slaughter of the Brumbies as has been evidenced by the 170+ rotting carcasses found on the KNP grounds just these past weeks.

So this current and ongoing slaughter of Brumbies in the KNP by Minister Sharpe and Parks NSW boss Atticus Fleming in light of the serious questions still to be answered to do with the real numbers of Brumbies currently in the KNP **is now just repeated acts of serious animal cruelty.**

And when accurate numbers of Brumbies in the KNP are ascertained (as must surely now occur) and if there are already less than the 3,000 Brumbies there as is obliged to be the case in the aforementioned *2021 Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan*, then these people must be made accountable at law for this gross level of unnecessary animal cruelty.

2) **The alleged Environmental Damage caused by Brumbies, and the myth that the National Park is “Fragile and Pristine” in the areas where the Brumbies mainly exist.**

I am yet to have sighted any native species (Flora or Fauna) that have proven to be injured or killed or damaged by our KNP Brumbies.

This is yet another example of alarmist claims by those that are OK with causing animal cruelty to pursue their goal/agenda, in this case to kill off all or most of our Australian Brumbies.

It is of course possible that on the very odd occasion a Brumby may have accidentally stepped on a small ground-based animal or native plant.

Mind you Brumbies follow very definitive walkways/paths as a general rule (see image below taken at Long Plain KNP). So the extent to which Brumbies have likely caused Flora and/or Fauna damage is no doubt minimal, and not anywhere near as extensive or as damaging as is claimed to be the case by those that seek to justify this slaughter.



And it has been noteworthy that the rhetoric from those that are happy to slaughter our Brumbies will often include the phrase "Fragile and Pristine" to define what they say is (or should be) the KNP and surrounds.

It is true that in largely inaccessible areas, the KNP is relatively "Fragile and Pristine" as these areas are places where neither man/person nor horse can enter given the rugged nature of the terrain.

However, where most of our Brumbies are, it is hardly "Fragile and Pristine" (see picture below taken in June 2023 near Long Plain in the KNP – note that all the animals in this image are in fact Cows grazing).



This area in and around Long Plain and the broader KNP Northern block/area (where most of our Brumbies exist, or at least did until the latest disgusting

mass-shootings) is covered with man-made roads, camping grounds, man-made landscape scarring so as to set up and use Brumby Traps (see pic below) and kilometres of Power Lines and massive Power Towers with huge areas of land cleared underneath (see pic above).

This is where the Brumbies mainly are, and its not “Fragile and Pristine”. Never was nor ever will be I expect.



The simple FACT regarding the KNP environment issues is that the claims of alleged Flora and Fauna damage (supposedly inflicted by our Brumbies, but more likely by other hard-hoofed animals that thrive up there at the moment as they and other carnivorous animals feed off the hundreds of Brumby carcasses left on the ground by Parks NSW) pales into insignificance when one truly understands the magnitude of the actual loss of Native Flora and Fauna as a direct result of inevitable Bushfires/Wildfires in the KNP in the years ahead.

Bushfires/Wildfires have in the past, and are likely in the future, to be much less damaging (with the resultant reduction of damage to Native Flora and Fauna) if we simply allow our Wild Horse/Brumbies to continue to casually graze the Plains there in the KNP in the manner in which they do.

So the ‘environmental damage’ position of the ALP Government at the State and Federal level to justify this Brumby Cull as it applies to Native Flora and Fauna destruction in the KNP is completely illegitimate and absolutely short-sighted.

Brumbies (and their casual grazing habits in the large areas in which they roam) actually help save the majority of the lives of, and ensure the survival of, most of the Native Flora and Fauna species within the KNP by reducing the intensity of, and extent to which fires will burn in the KNP.

Yes there is a small risk of accidental/incidental 'species trampling' by Brumbies, but the damage inflicted by an out-of-control wild/bushfire, and the resultant massive loss of tens of thousands of native species/creature life (i.e. Native Flora and Fauna) as a result of an out-of-control wild/bushfire in the KNP would be devastating if our Brumbies grazing habits (and the resultant reduction in ground fuels and grass fires that spread fire from one heavily treed area to another in the KNP) were not allowed to continue within the KNP as a result of most or all of our Brumbies being slaughtered by the Minns/Sharpe Government.

3) The Management Methods. Trapping. Rehoming. Knackereries. Ground and Aerial Shooting. The Humane Treatment of Animals. Standard Operating Procedures [or SOP's].

Parks NSW, under the direction of Minister Penny Sharpe and her predecessors in Mr Kean and Mr Griffin, have been trapping Brumbies for years now. Some Brumbies being rehomed, most being cruelly sent off to Slaughter via Knackereries.

Trapping in the manner in which it currently is being done is cruel.

The luring of part of a mob of Brumbies into a large steel trap using the inducement of molasses is particularly cruel when one understands that often only a section of the mob are trapped, and at times some of those Brumbies held in the trap get injured as part of the trapping process.

And sometimes these injured Brumbies are held/contained within these traps in agony for hours and at times days (on account of inclement weather) until such time as the trap is eventually emptied by Parks NSW employees.

It is any wonder that there are signs all around the traps about not taking photography as the imagery would be just another example of the brutal animal cruelty that is being inflicted upon an innocent animal in and around these traps.

Equally cruel in terms of the trapping process is how the foals are separated from the mares and stallions separated from the mob, and so on, with Brumby mobs fragmented ever thereafter each time any number of the many traps within the KNP are used.

And lately they have been used often. Far too often give the rapidly declining population numbers of Brumbies in the KNP.

Trapping is random, injurious and can be cruel if not overseen by people that have regard for animal welfare (as appears not to be the case with Parks

NSW Staff and its campaign of cruelty against our Australian Brumbies of late).

Even more so cruel when one understands where those trapped Brumbies go next to be slaughtered most of the time.

However I completely understand that of all the Management Practices available to decision makers, trapping is the least-worst option (in terms of cruelty).

But the manner in which trapping is currently being conducted by Parks NSW, not unlike the manner in which ground-shooting has been conducted by Parks NSW of late, shows clear and obvious regular breaches of the obliged Standard Operating Procedures [or 'SOP'] that are in place (supposedly) to protect against Animal Cruelty. And this must surely bring into question the manner in which Parks NSW go about their 'Brumby Management Practices' more broadly, and as such be a serious matter to be discussed and resolved within your Committee I'd have thought/hoped.

Surely Parks NSW must be obliged to adhere to more acceptable and more humane animal management standards and practices in the conduct of their Brumby Management work? At very least they should be forced to adhere to the earlier established SOP's. Currently they are not, and that is disgraceful.

To this end I would suggest that if it is proven that there are more than 3,000 Brumbies in the Park at the moment, then the trapping of Brumbies be continued so as to adequately manage the Brumby population numbers in accordance with the *2021 Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan*.

But I would add that a 'Best Practice' model should be followed by Parks NSW whereby trapping is done in accordance with, and in conjunction with learned pro-Brumby people who can identify the 'target group' of Brumbies to be trapped so as to ascertain which Brumbies should be sent to Rehomers and which Brumbies should be released back into the Park.

For example, a 'Best Practice' trapping model would see identified outliers of a Brumby mob (such as colts that have been rejected/excluded from the mob) targeted for trapping/capture. Or smaller mobs of 4 or 5 Brumbies that are trapped in their entirety and transported together and ideally rehomed together.

And that Lead or Alpha Stallions, Pregnant Mares, and Mares with Foals 'at-foot' that are trapped, be released back into the Park in every instance.

Another horrible example of the level of animal cruelty currently being inflicted upon our Brumbies by Parks NSW is the aforementioned (disgustingly cruel) ground-shooting of Brumbies. whereby most of the Brumbies shot these past months, even years, were not shot in accordance with the obliged 'Standard Operating Procedures' [SOPs] that at least ensures a reasonably high degree of humane treatment of the target animal.

A recently received GIPA Application response now shows the extent to which the cruel ground killing has been done, with 527 Brumbies cruelly shot dead when they were born and lived in just the last nine (9) months in the Northern Block/Area of the KNP (see image). And of recent weeks a further 170+ Brumbies have (clearly, as evidenced in images collected) also now been cruelly shot.

GIPAA – DPE – 24 – 3043

Record #1

Information between 10/11/2022 and 17/08/2023

Total number of wild horses trapped and removed from NORTHERN BLOCK, Kosciuszko National Park by National Parks and Wildlife Service (NSW), or its agents or contractors.	765
Total number of horses destroyed by ground shooting in the NORTHERN BLOCK, Kosciuszko National Park by National Parks and Wildlife Service (NSW) or its agents or contractors.	527

Which of course again begs the question about the Brumby population numbers in the KNP given we now know that earlier Brumby population averages from the surveys conducted (including those done by Parks NSW themselves) would now suggest that there are less than 3,000 Brumbies remaining in the area now.

And yet they continue to Slaughter and Kill under the auspices of an Act that obliges 3,000 Brumbies to remain. Surely each Brumby shot that is proven to be a Brumby that was one of LESS than 3,000 is a matter of Animal Cruelty **and should be prosecuted accordingly.**

This matter of the obviously cruel ground shooting of Brumbies by Parks NSW engaged shooters, that is not being conducted in accordance with the obliged Standard Operating Procedures, must surely be addressed urgently by this Committee. Because the blatant disregard for the humane treatment of

animals has not been adhered to (as obliged) by Parks NSW and Parks NSW shooters.

And this arrogant, cruel and disgraceful conduct on the part of those responsible (including the decision makers at Parks NSW in Atticus Fleming and ultimately the presiding Minister Ms Penny Sharpe) must surely be stopped immediately and those responsible held to account.

And may I add that the recent stated intentions of Ms Penny Sharpe and the NSW ALP Government to now want to use Aerial Shooting to Slaughter our Brumbies is an absolute disgrace.

Anyone with any understanding of the cruelty that is always inflicted upon the target animal of any aerial shooting campaign, will know just how barbaric this method of killing is.

Imagery, and the stories/experiences/recollections of those there at the time and soon thereafter at past aerial shootings at the Singleton Army Barracks and at Guy Fawkes National Park, evidenced the extent to which this Animal Management method is completely cruel.

As such, Aerial Shooting cannot ever be entertained or conducted when looking to manage our Brumby population in the KNP, particularly when (as distinct from other actual feral animals in the Park) rehoming options continue to exist for our Brumbies, and where the numbers of Brumbies retained within the KNP are now almost certainly less than 3,000.

Re Aerial Shooting, Professor Don Driscoll (yes him again) stated on the ABC News in Feb 2019 that 'Aerial Culling had (compared to the alternatives) fewer animal welfare concerns, because it is fast, cheap, and minimised horse stress.'

Seriously ?

Prof Driscoll even justifies this method of slaughter by citing the following figures in his aforementioned PowerPoint presentation titled "Feral Horses in the Australian Alps" (dated 5th October 2020) wherein Driscoll says that 63% of horses shot from a Helicopter will die relatively instantaneously.

However, this 63% figure quoted (based on observations within much easier shooting terrain than the Australian Alps it appears) also means that about one in every three Brumbies shot from a Helicopter (after a 'Çhase Time' that he says ranged from between 2 seconds and 11 minutes) suffered, and that suffering took between 3 seconds to 4 minutes to end.

In some cases, as was evidenced in the aforementioned Aerial Culls at Singleton and Guy Fawkes, this type of culling resulted in excessive agony for the Brumbies, with images of aborted Foals from slowly dying Mares, and

horses with their jaw shot off littered amongst a range of horribly cruel images from those particular Aerial Culls.

From Prof Driscoll's perspective, this is all apparently an acceptable level of animal cruelty.

It is common knowledge that the only way a horse can be humanely shot and killed is via a direct shot to the small section of a horses forehead.

In fact the RSPCA (who's inaction with regard to the clear and obvious current cruelty inflicted upon our Brumbies by the State Government is a disgrace) have stated more recently to the NSW Inquiry that if a shot to this area of a horses anatomy cannot be made, then the shot should not taken.

However imagery taken and viewed online from ground shooting outcomes recently in NSW and also in Victoria by supposedly professional shooters engaged by the NSW and Victorian ALP Governments, shows clear and unambiguous evidence of the SOP's NOT being followed more often than not.

In fact Brumby carcasses recently left to rot where they were shot in Parks in NSW and Victoria has shown definitive proof (we have all the images) of a totally inhumane method of shooting being conducted by Government engaged shooter in both States, with gut shots and leg shots and back shots and neck shots (all of which ensure animal suffering) more common than head shots in most instances.

In Victoria 20 Brumby carcasses were found littered across the Barmah Forest just a few weeks ago, and reportedly not one of these now deceased animals was shot anywhere in or near the head.

A similar complete disregard for humane Animal Welfare Practices has been evidenced in the KNP just this past week as well.

So this is just blatant animal cruelty now that again is cloaked in the Lies told by Minister Penny Sharpe, and by people such as Mr Atticus Fleming of Parks NSW who use the media to state that the 'Management Plan' and associated killings are being conducted under a 'Best Practice' model.

This is just another Lie told by those that seek to justify the unjustifiable when it comes to the animal cruelty they are inflicting at the moment and over the past many years.

And there is no sign of the RSPCA around this issue of the SOP's being breached I notice, and no sign of accountability placed by any of those directing this Cull back upon the shooters in question to be humane in their killing method.

And perhaps worst of all, there appears to be no attempt to even hide this disgusting kill method and clear and obvious breeches of the SOP's from the public eye given carcasses are left in public domains (and in and near waterways and public walkways) to rot and/or be devoured by other carnivorous animals in the Park.

4) **The Propaganda and use of the Media by the Government and entities such as the Invasive Species Council and Reclaim Kosi etc including Professor Don Driscoll and his claims that Brumbies are Cannibals (i.e. they eat each other).**

Professor Don Driscoll, and his use/abuse of the flawed Cairns population data to declare that this year there would be 57,013 Brumbies in the Alps is just one example of alarmist claims designed to coerce the community into thinking that a Brumby Cull is/was necessary (see one of three images below collected online).

Prof Driscoll has also published items online that suggest that Brumbies are Cannibalistic in nature i.e. they eat each other.


These untruthful and deceptive figures and claims are produced and disseminated by MP's and Pressure Groups so as to demonise the animal in question, and to make it easier for those that are OK with animal cruelty to slaughter without proper oversight and/or accountability. This campaign of lies and deceit is conducted so as to avoid community uproar and/or angst about a barbaric and cruel intent and practice that the broader community would be alarmed about were the truth to be known.

		
<p>In 2019 Prof Don Driscoll said there will be 57,013 Brumbies in the Australian Alps by <u>2023</u>.</p>	<p>But in <u>2023</u> Mr Fleming said there were somewhere between 14,501 > 23,535 Brumbies in the Alps using the same flawed data <u>that only ever actually saw 1,255 Brumbies.</u></p> <p>Note: Driscoll's 'scientific' prediction was out by about 38,199 Brumbies.</p>	<p>In July <u>2023</u> Ms Penny Sharpe NSW ALP MP (obliged to keep 3,000 Brumbies but being told that Independent Counts would suggest there are less than 3,000 there NOW) continues to cruelly slaughter our Brumbies, relying on flawed population numbers that she knows are terribly inaccurate and horribly exaggerated.</p> <p><u>STOP YOUR CRUEL BRUMBY SLAUGHTER NOW !!!!!</u></p>
		

Another example of the Lies and Deceptions used by those seeking to slaughter is what the current NSW Minister for the Environment Ms Penny Sharpe said within the NSW Parliament this year, when she tried to paint pro-Brumby people as essentially being unhinged or unstable, and, in her words (see the Hansard quote below within the image collected online) when she claimed they/we had 'firebombed' the Jindabyne Visitor Centre in 2023.

A claim she later, under sufferance, withdrew (see below). She withdrew this claim because it was a complete Lie.

Would I Lie to you ??



Ms Penny Sharpe ALP MP.
aka 'The Brumby Slaughterer'.

*NSW PARLIAMENT HANSARD 22nd June 2023. The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage) (11:35): "I thank the honourable member [Rod Roberts] for his question. It is a really serious issue that has been occurring both towards staff and others in relation to the ongoing discussion of horses within the Kosciuszko National Park. There have been some very serious activities that have taken place, **including a fire bombing**. I cannot tell the member precisely when that was, but it was within the past 18 months or so at the Jindabyne Visitor Centre."*

*NSW PARLIAMENT HANSARD 2nd August 2023 The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage) (15:42): "It is the case that I gave an answer about the issues that have been impacting on Kosciuszko. It is the case that at the time I said that there had been incidents, including a firebombing. **That is not the case**, but a litany of other issues have impacted on the security and safety of National Parks staff in relation to these matters. As we know, it is a very emotionally charged issue. There has been some pretty bad behaviour towards and treatment of National Parks and Wildlife Services staff."*

*"On this occasion, the answer clearly was not as accurate as it should have been. I believed that I had corrected the record when we provided a detailed response to the Hon. Rod Roberts' supplementary question. I thought we had put on record that **it was a threat, rather than an actual firebombing**, and that that was the end of the matter."*

A third example of the Lies and Deceptions used by those that seek to kill non-native animals can be found within a recent television interview conducted with Mr Jack Gough of the Invasive Species Council on the popular television show called 'The Project' (see a collected image online below).



Who else saw J.Gough from The Invasive Species Council (ISC) on 'The Project' last night (7/9/23) present their latest data garbage and ongoing cruel approach to animal management ? This time Cats not Brumbies !

Quote #1 – “In the next 24 hours, 8,000,000 [Million] Native Animals will be killed by feral Cats across Australia. That’s a serious number, its something that should alarm us.”

Quote #2 – “In the Greater Sydney basin over the next 4 years, we will see 250,000,000 [Million] . . . so a quarter of a Billion of our Native Animals killed by domestic Cats.”

Animal Cruelty (Brumbies/Cats etc) using Alarmist Lies & Gross Exaggerations.

WAKE UP AUSTRALIA. You are being lied too by people (The ALP/Yorta Yorta/ISC etc) that are quite happy to inflict animal cruelty to pursue a ‘Cancel Culture’ agenda that is cruel and illegitimate.

One would think that these sorts of wild and ludicrous claims (like those above) to demonise an animal would be challenged by a responsible media. Sadly this is often NOT the case, and these ongoing and repeated lies to do with Brumby Population Numbers or Environmental Damage or even pro-Brumby Advocate conduct are allowed to be spread into the broader community by a lazy and gullible media.

This strategic method, and social media approach (to lie & deceive) by those that seek to slaughter Brumbies has been frequently used (and abused) by numerous anti-Brumby individuals and groups to their advantage so as to get the outcome they want these past years.

Clearly the truth becomes secondary, or in some cases completely irrelevant it seems to these ‘Radical Green Idealogues’ who just want all (or most) of our Brumbies killed, with zero regard for the humane treatment of the animal they seek to slaughter/eradicate.

5) **The Indigenous/Traditional Owners of the Land.**

This is a sensitive issue no doubt.

In Victoria, and also in NSW, it is clear that there is quite some argument over which Indigenous Peoples are in fact the Traditional Owners of any particular area of land.

Debate has been had as to the Ngarigo people in NSW and its standing in the KNP, as well as the Bpangerang people and its standing in Victoria (Barmah region) where Yorta Yorta seem to rule/preside over.

What has become clear this year is that some of our Indigenous people clearly embrace all creatures of Mother Nature, and some (i.e. Ms Monica Morgan at the Yorta Yorta Corporation) do not.

Case in point being within the Barmah National Forrest/Park in Victoria earlier this year following the devastating Murray River Floods.

As a result of this Flood, a group of Brumbies, perhaps 150 or so in number, were essentially trapped with other marooned animals by the flooded river waters on a large island in Barmah.

Over time the food sources there ran out, and it was clear that animal starvation was beginning to occur there.

Money was raised by a pro-Brumby group nearby and a Helicopter drop of hay occurred, much to the anger of the Yorta Yorta Leader Ms Monica Morgan who made it very clear that this humane approach to a matter of unfolding animal cruelty should not have ever been allowed.

This issue has created a very disturbing awareness now for many of us now as to the complexity of the Indigenous issues in terms of Land and Animal Management by those that seek or demand to have input, such as is the case in Barmah with the influences of the Yorta Yorta Corporation and its lack of humane treatment of particular animals there, in that case Brumbies.

I am of the view that all creatures should be valued, be they great or small, native or non-native. It is, or at least was my understanding that our Indigenous people felt much the same way.

And whilst Animal Management is a serious matter and an important role for Governments to address, this cruel approach by what appears to be an overarching indigenous entity (i.e. Yorta Yorta in this instance) remains disturbing in terms of its clear and obvious intent to inflict animal cruelty at times to an innocent animal. And in how many more instances moving forward will this sort of scenario play out perhaps to any number of animal species in any number of places?

In conclusion, I thank this Committee for it stated objectives in seeking to shine a light into the darkness that is the current cruel and illegitimate treatment of our Brumbies in the KNP.

And I welcome your collective attempts (I expect) to expose the lies constantly told by those that seek to treat animals cruelly and without a legitimate reason. And that any Management of any animal always be pursued after truthful conversation as to

actual population numbers. And that proven environmental damage is offered up by those that seek a solution to an actual (not made-up) problem.

And when Animal Management is required, that there be a strong adherence to proper humane animal management practices and procedures to ensure a lack of, or at worst, minimise the level of animal cruelty that is inflicted upon any animal, in this case upon our beautiful, sentient, non-carnivorous, non-predatory Brumbies.

Kind regards

Gary Cotchin.