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RSPCA NSW – Meeting Synopsis

Friday February 8th 2019 2pm

Attendees: Sam Davis, Michael Donnelly, Steve Coleman, Brendan Neilly

A productive meeting aiming to find a way forward whereby RSPCA NSW and CCBFA will continue working collaboratively and with other representative hobbyist bodies in the future.

It is acknowledged by all present that RSPCA NSW has expertise in the compliance and enforcement space but limited expertise in specific species welfare of avian, reptile and native mammal species. Hobbyist groups do have welfare expertise for avian, reptile and native mammal species.

A range of recent concerns discussed...

1. NSW OEH wildlife licensing proposal and related OEH matters – RSPCA ongoing policy opposition.
 - a. S. Coleman and B. Neilly made the point this is largely due to RSPCA national policy which by default RSPCA NSW is bound to support.
 - b. S. Coleman explained that RSPCA NSW board can resolve to implement policy different and/or in addition to national policy.

2. NSW DPI over regulation proposal in 2018 to make all hobbyists comply with the pet shop code under POCTA.
 - a. S. Davis and M. Donnelly made the point it was this “pet shop” matter that resulted in the appointment of Kim Filmer as Chief Animal Welfare Officer DPI. Was also highly significant in the formation of Animal Care Australia (ACA).
 - b. Noted by all present that the review of POCTA will include development of a range of codes of practice that will include enforceable standards together with guidelines. General agreement that such codes should be developed by those with the expertise (hobbyist representative bodies and RSPCA NSW) with final approval by government (not vice versa).
 - c. S. Davis made clear that the code for birds, will be drafted, in the first instance, by CCBFA. We desire collaboration with RSPCA NSW during this process. The aim being to present to DPI a draft code supported by both CCBFA and RSPCA NSW. RSPCA NSW (S. Coleman, B. Neilly) agree with this code development process.
 - d. All present agree that consensus on all matters may not be realistic, nevertheless ongoing collaboration between our organisations is supported by all present.

3. WIRES current campaign opposing native animal keeping - RSPCA supporting WIRES, why?
 - a. Steve Coleman was unaware he had been quoted on the Wild4life website - <https://www.wild4life.org.au/in-their-own-words.html>
 - b. Without seeing the specific quote S. Coleman made the point this is likely due to RSPCA national policy which does not support the addition of any new species to private keeper lists. Note 1a and 1b above.

c. B. Neilly noted mammal inclusion could have possibly been better received had a small number of species been suggested. M. Donnelly corrected stating only 10 species in addition to the two currently on license, were submitted for consideration and not the 37 being claimed by the WIRES website.

d. B. Neilly acknowledged it is inevitable that more native mammals will be added, however, under that scenario RSPCA would want to see concise and clearly enforceable standards of care and welfare. M. Donnelly agreed in principle and expressed the invitation for Mammal Society & RSPCA to consult on the Standards within any Code of Practice.

A way forward...

1. RSPCA NSW is open to further consultative meetings on specific matters including the development of codes of practice under POCTA.
2. All present agree that hobbyists and their representative groups such as CCBFA should be RSPCA natural allies and vice versa.
3. An overview of this meeting will be presented to Animal Care Australia (ACA) by S. Davis and M. Donnelly as many of these matters apply to all captive/domesticated animals represented by ACA.

This synopsis approved for distribution by all present.

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