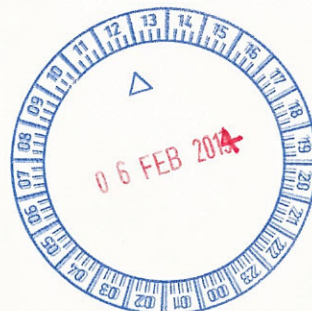


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Lauren Mesiti  
Committee Clerk  
Standing Committee on Public Administration  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Perth 6000



5/2/14

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am forwarding herewith a submission to the Standing Committee which is conducting an enquiry into recreational hunting in WA.

This enquiry may have been prompted by the Shooters & Fishers Party unwilling to accept that WA has for years banned the shooting of wildfowl (protected species anyway). In some of the Eastern States, there is a close season with no shooting, but outside the close season wildfowl (i.e. ducks and geese) may be shot in what is described as recreational sport. This shooting may even take place in nature reserves. This has been a constant source of friction between shooters and naturalists, environmentalists, and those who object to the needless killing of birds. It hardly makes sense to consider importing the same problems into WA for the sake of the few who enjoy killing birds. In the Eastern States, the trouble is not confined to paper. From frequent reports, it can be more violent on the ground, with protestors clashing with shooters. Where some shooters are disappointed by a small or non-existent bag, they tend to overcome their frustration by shooting at any bird in range without regard to species and regardless of whether the bird is left wounded and not killed outright. It may be next to impossible to stop this form of irresponsible shooting which by its nature takes place in distant countryside away from supervision.

As regards shooting feral animals (for example goats and pigs), this already takes place in WA, usually with the permission of the owners of private land where the animals roam. It is difficult therefore to understand what the proposed enquiry will consider, unless it relates to birds, and that should be turned down without further ado. Birds don't cause environmental problems, whereas feral animals such as goats and pigs do.

It can also be argued with some truth that the rest of Australia which bans the shooting of wildfowl regards itself as more in tune with modern feelings on the subject and that a change to allowing shooting is a reversion to a more uncivilised era, akin to re-introducing capital punishment.

In short, I submit to the committee that:

- (a) there can be no objection to the recreational shooting of listed feral animals by shooters with gun licences and game licences, on the grounds that the feral animals are an environmental nuisance;
- (b) no approval should be given for introducing so-called recreational shooting of wildfowl (ducks, geese, and suchlike). There is no practical reason for such shooting. WA should not follow the unfortunate example of some Eastern States.
- (c) no shooting of any sort should take place in or near national and state parks, nature reserves, or other designated areas. Since the public is allowed into these areas, it would be too dangerous to permit shooting there, apart from the nuisance to wildlife in those places.

Yours faithfully,

*B.D. Wilson*

(B.D. Wilson)

**PUBLIC**

upon tabling of Committee's Report

19/2/14

PS

I hope that the committee will see its way to call for submissions from environmental groups such as the WA Group of Bird Life Australia, The Naturalists Club, Wildflower Society of WA, ACF, WWF, Wilderness Society, Conservation Council etc.