



13 September 2015

Hon Rick Mazza MLC  
Chairman, Select Committee into the Operations of RSPCA WA  
Parliament House  
GPO Box A11  
PERTH WA 6837

By email: [selra@parliament.wa.gov.au](mailto:selra@parliament.wa.gov.au)

Dear Mr Mazza

**Select Committee - Hearing 7 September 2015**

RSPCA WA attended a hearing before the Select Committee into the Operations of the RSPCA WA ("Committee") on 7 September 2015, represented by President Lynne Bradshaw, me as Chief Executive Officer and Chief Inspector, Amanda Swift.

I write to raise concerns regarding the nature and manner of some of the Committee's questioning which prevented RSPCA WA representatives from providing to the Committee the best evidence on key issues.

In a separate letter to you, I have provided supplementary information to address allegations which, in my view, RSPCA WA representatives were not given a reasonable opportunity to respond to. It is unfortunate this evidence could not be provided in the same public forum in which the questions were asked, but I hope it will provide a more accurate account that will assist the Committee's inquiry.

My specific concerns regarding process relate to Standing Order 181(e) of the *Legislative Council Standing Orders*, which provides that witnesses should have a reasonable opportunity to rebut allegations of criminal, improper or unethical conduct.

Another issue for RSPCA WA representatives was that they were not afforded the benefit of Standing Order 181(a), which contemplates witnesses having access to relevant documents during an examination.

RSPCA WA representatives also were uncomfortable with the framing of a specific line of questioning. Hon Sally Talbot MLC noted the "leading way of framing the question" and the apparent discomfort of the witnesses. RSPCA WA representatives were concerned that the questions may have been directed to a specific case which is the subject of legal proceedings.

RSPCA WA has sought to assist the Committee's inquiry by providing a comprehensive Submission. It is also facilitating a site visit to the Malaga Animal Care Centre. RSPCA WA has dedicated substantial time and resources to examining the wide range of issues canvassed in submissions to the inquiry and sought to provide the best possible evidence at the hearing. It is unfortunate that, in some respects, this was not able to occur.

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In the event a further hearing is scheduled or there are other opportunities to assist, RSPCA WA welcomes the opportunity to provide the most valuable evidence to inform the Committee's inquiry.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. van Ooran', with a stylized, flowing script.

**David van Ooran**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Cc: Hon Barry House, MLC, President of the Legislative Council  
Cc: Mr Nigel Pratt, Clerk of the Legislative Council