



**Hon Alannah MacTiernan**  
**Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food;**  
**Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development; Jobs and Trade**

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Our ref: 64-03796  
Your ref: Petition No. 13

Hon Matthew Swinbourn MLC  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Legislative Council Committee Office  
Parliament House  
4 Harvest Terrace  
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Mr Swinbourn

**PETITION NO. 13 – ANIMAL WELFARE ACT**

Thank you for your letter dated 17 August 2017 regarding the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs' (the Committee) preliminary inquiries into Petition Number 13: Animal Welfare Act and the opportunity to provide comments on the terms of petition and the submissions from the principal petitioner and tabling Member.

Western Australia (WA) has some of the toughest penalties in Australia for cruelty to animals (maximum fine \$50 000 and imprisonment for five years). However, I understand the frustration expressed in the petition regarding the perception that although tough penalties are available under the Act, they are not necessarily being applied in practice.

This government is aware of the community's views on the importance of animal welfare and the need to strengthen animal welfare regulation in this State. Since coming into office as Minister I have taken strong action to address these views.

As a priority, I will present to Parliament in the very near future amendments to the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* (the Act) that will allow WA to catch up with other jurisdictions in relation to the implementation of national Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines.

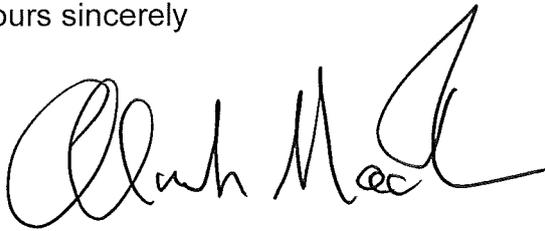
As part of the proposed amendments, the Minister responsible for the administration of the Act will have the power to designate a special class of inspector with powers to enter non-residential places for the purpose of verifying compliance with the Act and Regulations as well as legal Directions and Orders on animal welfare matters.

In 2015, an independent enquiry into the investment in and administration of the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* (Easton Review) made recommendations on strengthening animal welfare regulation. Amongst other recommendations in the Easton Review were the development of a WA strategy for animal welfare regulation and a comprehensive review of the Act. A considerable body of work to implement the recommendations of the Easton Review is in progress.

As part of the government's action on these matters, we will give due consideration to legislative and regulatory reforms, which may include a review of penalties if that is a consistent theme that emerges from our consultation with stakeholders and the community.

I look forward to hearing more from the Committee on its deliberations on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alannah Mactiernan', written in a cursive style.

**HON ALANNAH MACTIERNAN MLC  
MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT; AGRICULTURE AND FOOD;  
MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR STATE DEVELOPMENT,  
JOBS AND TRADE**

27 SEP 2017