



Katrina Hodgkinson MP

Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Small Business

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT STRENGTHENS ANIMAL WELFARE LAWS

NSW Parliament has passed new animal welfare laws which improve the health and welfare of livestock through early expert intervention and animal husbandry advice.

The Minister for Primary Industries Katrina Hodgkinson introduced the Bill into Parliament and said the amendments to the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979* will significantly benefit livestock, their owners and managers.

“During the last drought we saw several animal welfare prosecutions which, with the changes adopted in this Bill, may have resulted in the owners being supported to rehabilitate their livestock,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“The changes enable a new Stock Welfare Panel to provide expert care and advice to stockowners so they can address animal welfare concerns.

“Under the changes, authorities retain the option to remove and dispose of livestock where animal cruelty offences have been identified, but only after the owner or person responsible has failed to take action to improve the welfare of the animals.”

The key amendments to the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979* are:

- the establishment of a panel of experts (Stock Welfare Panel) to investigate and report on the state of and appropriate care for the animal(s)
- the Director General to issue a notice to the owner, or person in charge of the livestock, informing them of an intention to seize and sell the stock if actions specified in the notice to improve welfare are not taken within a time specified
- the Panel to monitor compliance with the notice and provide recommendations on actions following the expiry of the notice

“The NSW Liberals and Nationals introduced these changes to the NSW Parliament to help prevent cases where the condition of livestock deteriorates to such an extent that it is cruel to continue their suffering and the only humane option is destruction,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“These amendments encourage education and the opportunity to improve husbandry to restore the animals’ health before action is taken.”

NSW RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League and NSW Police are enforcement agencies for the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*.