

6th August 2014

The Hon Ian Hunter MLC
Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation
Minister for Water and the River Murray
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation
GPO Box 1047
Adelaide 5001

Dear Minister

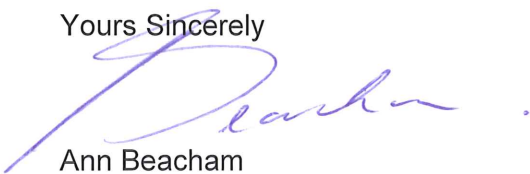
I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the TAFESA Animal Ethics Committee (AEC), to inform you of the views of this committee in relation to the review of State Government boards and committees.

The members of this committee strongly oppose any proposed changes to the requirement for the Government to licence anyone (individual, company or institution) who may need to use animals for teaching purposes – as is currently the case. The committee also strongly opposes the proposal to disband Animal Ethics Committees (AEC's) in South Australia as this would potentially have a number of extremely serious consequences. Primarily among those consequences is the risk of jeopardising the welfare of animals in South Australia that might be used in research or teaching, which is unacceptable. Approval from a properly constituted AEC is a strict requirement of all Australian research funding agencies, all reputable scientific journals world-wide and the conditions of licence under which we all operate. This would mean that biomedical research would essentially cease in South Australia if AEC's were disbanded.

Concern for animal welfare and the wellbeing of animals is increasingly gaining prominence in the public domain. Having an Animal Ethics Committee which has oversight of the use of animals in teaching and research, with members appointed by the Minister provides a level of assurance to the public that there is Government oversight and community accountability for the actions of the organisation. Should these committees and their functions cease, then there is potential for increased public suspicion and concern as to the appropriateness of activities in relation to the welfare of animals used in teaching and research.

The committee also strongly supports the work done by the Animal Welfare Unit within DEWNR to monitor the effective execution of the duties and responsibilities of all AEC's in South Australia and through them, to ensure that the welfare of all animals used for teaching and scientific purposes in this State continues to be adequately monitored and protected. Dr Kelly's unit has worked hard to ensure that all AEC's are meeting the requirement of the Code and the Animal Welfare Act and that they are working consistently and collaboratively at all times and this is greatly appreciated by the members of this committee.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ann Beacham".

Ann Beacham
Chair
TAFESA Animal Ethics Committee