

Wednesday 21 July 2010

PR/152/10

RSPCA controls needed

The NSW Farmers' Association will lobby the NSW Government to exercise more control over the RSPCA to ensure that its officer's primary interest is on the welfare of the animals concerned.

Chairman of the NSW Farmers' Association Animal Welfare Committee Peter Roberson says a number of recent cases have raised questions on the operations of the RSPCA in respect to actions under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979*.

"Farmers would like to see a greater degree of accountability. We need to ensure that actions of inspectors are taken in the best interest of the livestock, with solutions developed in consultation with livestock owners," Mr Roberson said.

The RSPCA provides officers and inspectors under the Act. This position allows employees of the RSPCA to have powers to enter land, take possession of livestock and destroy livestock as well as several other enforcement actions.

The Association and I&I NSW are currently working together to create an equitable, fair and transparent mechanism that better deals with animal welfare cases involving livestock.

"We are giving consideration to whether there should be a mandatory referral process back to I&I NSW. The Association's Animal Welfare Committee will continue to work with I&I NSW to develop a document that is acceptable to the Association," he said.

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