Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2026

Frequently Asked Questions

1. About the Bill

What does the Animal Welfare Act do?

The *Animal Welfare Act 2002* (Act) is Western Australia's (WA) principal legislation for protecting and promoting animal welfare. It sets requirements for the treatment and care of animals, prohibits cruelty and gives inspectors powers to investigate and respond to animal welfare concerns. The Act applies across a wide range of circumstances in which people own, care for, use and interact with animals.

Why are WA's animal welfare laws changing?

It has been more than 20 years since the Act was enacted. In May 2019, the WA Government convened an Independent Panel to conduct a review of the operational effectiveness of the Act. The Review Report was finalised in 2020 and was followed by a Government Response. The review, together with further government policy analysis and research, informed reforms to modernise the Act and reflect contemporary animal welfare science and community expectations.

What are the main changes?

The Bill makes a number of changes to modernise WA's animal welfare laws. Key changes include:

- recognising the concept of animal sentience in the objects of the Act
- prohibiting certain scientific procedures
- introducing a minimum standard of care for animals
- introducing a new serious animal cruelty offence for the most egregious cases
- improving inspector's entry powers, including providing them with the ability to respond to animals at risk by entering a property in an emergency
- providing for the seizure and forfeiture of animals owned in contravention of a prohibition order
- introducing new prohibition orders that the courts can make to prohibit contact with animals
- giving effect to interstate prohibition orders so action can be taken if offenders relocate to WA to carry out activities that would be prohibited by the order in another Australian state or territory
- improving information sharing between inspectors and regulators
- creating an Animal Welfare Account to support animal welfare initiatives.

For more details see the Public Information Paper for the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill by visiting www.dpird.wa.gov.au/animalwelfarereform.

These changes are intended to improve animal welfare outcomes and strengthen the administration and enforcement of the Act.

When will the changes take effect?

Changes will come into effect once the Bill becomes an official law. The Bill will be passed in Parliament before presentation to the Governor for Royal Assent. The operative provisions are proposed to take effect in three stages over a three-year period:

- Stage 1: Main amendments (18 months after Royal Assent)
- Stage 2: Scientific use of animals (2 years after Royal Assent)
- Stage 3: Minimum level of care for animals (3 years after Royal Assent)

This staged approach allows time for owners, businesses, livestock producers, researchers, regulators and animal welfare organisations to understand and prepare for the changes.

Why will the minimum level of care requirement take 3 years before it applies?

The new minimum level of care requirement will apply alongside existing animal welfare standards and regulations that provide more detailed requirements for particular animals, industries or activities.

The three-year commencement period will provide time to review and update these standards and regulations where needed (for example, to remove duplication with the minimum level of care requirement), develop supporting guidance materials, and help animal owners, carers, industries and regulators understand the new framework.

This staged approach is intended to support a smooth transition to the new framework and promote consistent implementation across Western Australia.

Do the changes mean I need to do anything now?

The changes will commence in stages following Royal Assent. Until the relevant changes commence, the existing requirements of the Animal Welfare Act and regulations continue to apply. Information and guidance will be provided to help people understand the new requirements before they take effect.

Does the Bill stop lawful activities involving animals?

No. The law recognises that animals are owned, managed and used for many legitimate purposes, such as keeping pets, farming livestock, service animals, etc. The changes being made by the Bill do not prevent lawful activities involving animals but strengthen the animal welfare requirements that apply to their care and treatment.

2. Animals and good welfare

Does the Bill create legal rights for animals?

No. The Bill does not create legal rights for animals or change their legal status as property. The Bill strengthens protections for animal welfare by updating obligations relating to the care and treatment of animals and by improving enforcement and compliance mechanisms.

This means animals can continue to be lawfully owned, bred, kept, used and managed for lawful purposes, including companionship, agriculture, scientific research and other legitimate activities, subject to the requirements of the Act.

Does the Bill recognise animal sentience?

The Bill recognises that animals are able to feel and perceive their environment and have positive and negative experiences. It recognises that good animal welfare involves meeting animals' physiological and behavioural needs and providing opportunities for

positive experiences. These amendments reflect contemporary animal welfare science. They do not give animals legal rights or prevent animals from being lawfully owned or used.

What does good animal welfare mean?

Good animal welfare means meeting an animal's physical and behavioural needs and providing opportunities for positive experiences. What this involves will depend on the animal and the circumstances in which it is kept or cared for.

Which animals are covered?

The Act generally applies to vertebrate animals, such as mammals, birds and reptiles. The Bill also expands the animals covered by the scientific-use provisions to include vertebrate fish, prescribed invertebrates such as cephalopods (for example, octopus and squid), and animals during the last half of gestation (or incubation in the case of eggs).

Does the Bill apply to fish?

The Bill brings vertebrate fish, and prescribed invertebrates such as cephalopods (for example, octopus and squid), within the regulatory framework where they are used for scientific purposes. This means relevant scientific-use licensing and animal ethics requirements can apply to these animals. The change does not extend the general animal welfare offences in Part 3 of the Act to recreational fishing, commercial fishing, aquaculture or the keeping of fish as pets.

Who can be responsible for an animal under the Act?

The Bill clarifies the meaning of "person in charge" to fill a gap in the existing definition regarding a person with "control", but not physical custody, of an animal. A person who has control over an animal, including through a management or supervisory role (for example a farm manager), may also be responsible for its welfare. This change recognises that decisions affecting an animal's treatment and care may be made by people who do not have day-to-day physical contact with the animal.

3. Caring for animals

What happens if I already meet existing animal welfare requirements?

In most cases, people who already comply with existing animal welfare requirements won't need to make significant changes. However, the Bill introduces a new minimum level of care requirement and compliance will depend on the animals involved and the circumstances in which they are kept or managed. Existing animal welfare standards and regulations will continue to provide specific requirements for particular species, industries and activities where they apply. The new minimum level of care requirement establishes a broader obligation to take reasonable steps to provide animals with a basic level of care.

What is the minimum level of care requirement?

People in charge of animals will be required to take reasonable steps to ensure their animals receive a minimum level of care. This includes matters such as appropriate food and water, living conditions and shelter, opportunities to display normal behaviour, appropriate handling, and necessary treatment for injury, disease or suffering. A person is required to ensure an animal receives a basic level of care rather than the gold standard.

How is the minimum level of care requirement different from the existing cruelty offence?

The existing cruelty offence applies where a person causes, or is likely to cause, harm to an animal. The new minimum level of care requirement is intended to promote good animal welfare by requiring people responsible for animals to take reasonable steps to provide them with a basic level of care. This includes matters such as appropriate food, water, shelter, living conditions and treatment for injury or disease.

Importantly, the minimum level of care requirement will allow action to be taken where an animal's basic welfare needs are not being met before the situation develops into cruelty or causes harm.

Together, the minimum level of care requirement and the cruelty offences create a clearer spectrum of animal welfare protections, ranging from proactive duties to care for animals through to offences for conduct that causes harm, serious harm or death.

What does appropriate care mean?

What is appropriate will depend on the animal and the circumstances in which it is kept or managed. This includes factors such as the animal's species, stage of life and the environment in which it lives.

For example, the needs of a young animal may be different from those of an adult animal and animals kept in different environments may have different needs. The requirement is based on what is appropriate for the particular animal and circumstances rather than a one-size-fits-all standard.

Does an animal have to suffer before the minimum level of care offence applies?

No. One purpose of the minimum level of care requirement is to allow an inspector to take enforcement action where an animal's basic needs are not being met before the situation develops into cruelty or causes harm. Where an animal does suffer harm, stronger offences may apply depending on the circumstances.

How does the minimum level of care interact with animal welfare standards and regulations?

The minimum level of care requirement establishes a broad obligation that applies to people responsible for animals. Animal welfare standards and regulations can provide more specific requirements for particular animals, industries or activities. The requirements are intended to work together.

Compliance with a relevant standard or regulation may provide a defence to a minimum level of care offence or, if not a complete defence, will generally assist a person to demonstrate that they have met the minimum level of care required under the Act.

What happens if somebody else steps in and cares for my animal?

A person responsible for an animal cannot necessarily avoid responsibility simply because somebody else steps in to provide care. For example, if an owner leaves an animal without making appropriate arrangements and a neighbour or inspector intervenes to prevent the animal from suffering, the owner's original failure may still amount to an offence.

I own a pet. What will change for me?

If you already provide your animal with appropriate food, water, shelter, care and treatment, the new minimum level of care requirement does not require you to change the day-to-day way you care for your pet. The new requirement makes clear in law the basic

responsibility of a person in charge of an animal to take reasonable steps to meet its welfare needs.

I keep livestock. What will change for me?

The new minimum level of care requirement will apply to people responsible for livestock, but what is appropriate will depend on the species and the circumstances in which animals are kept and managed. Existing animal welfare standards and regulations will continue to provide more specific requirements where they apply.

Can farmers continue to use normal animal husbandry practices?

Yes. The normal animal husbandry defence will continue to apply where appropriate. Where a specific animal welfare standard or regulation applies to an activity, those more specific requirements must be followed. This ensures that applicable animal welfare standards and regulations are not displaced by the more general normal animal husbandry defence.

4. Cruelty offences and legal responsibilities

What is the new serious cruelty offence?

The Bill creates a new indictable offence for the most severe cases of animal cruelty. An indictable offence is a serious criminal offence that will be heard in the District or Supreme Court, where more significant penalties are available than in the Magistrates Court.

This offence applies where a person intentionally or recklessly causes severe pain or suffering to an animal and the conduct results in, or is capable of resulting in, serious harm or death of the animal.

Why is the definition of harm changing?

The Bill updates the definition of harm to better reflect current understanding of animal welfare. Under the current Act, distress is only recognised as harm if it is associated with severe and abnormal physiological or behavioural reactions. The Bill removes this requirement and recognises that animals may experience distress in different ways.

This change does not mean that people will be prosecuted whenever an animal experiences distress. It will still be necessary to prove that an animal experienced harm and that all elements of the relevant offence have been met. The Act recognises that it is acceptable for animals to suffer distress in some circumstances (for example, a dog may experience distress while ear drops are applied to treat an ear infection).

The Bill also expressly includes emaciation in the definition of harm, recognising it as an indicator of poor animal welfare in some circumstances.

How does serious harm differ from harm?

The Act currently includes offences that apply where a person causes, or is likely to cause, harm to an animal. The Bill introduces the concept of serious harm to distinguish the most severe cases of animal cruelty from other cruelty offences.

Serious harm includes life-threatening injury, permanent damage to an animal's health, prolonged suffering, loss of an organ or body part, or circumstances where an animal is so severely injured or diseased that euthanasia would be the humane outcome.

This distinction creates a clearer spectrum of offences under the Act, with the new serious animal cruelty offence reserved for the most egregrious conduct causing, or capable of causing, serious harm or death.

What is the maximum penalty for serious animal cruelty?

The maximum penalty for the new serious cruelty offence is seven years' imprisonment and a fine of $100,000.

Could a person be prosecuted simply because an animal becomes sick, injured or dies?

No. Animals can become sick, injured or die for a range of reasons, including age, disease, accident or circumstances beyond a person's control.

Whether an offence has occurred will depend on the facts of the case and whether all elements of the relevant offence can be established, including any applicable requirements relating to fault and responsibility.

Does the Bill change the defences available under the Act?

Yes. The Bill updates and clarifies a number of existing defences. Relevant defences continue to apply to the new aggravated cruelty offence and the minimum level of care requirement.

Why is the 'stock fending for itself' defence being removed?

The separate stock fending for itself defence is being removed because it overlaps with other defences, including normal animal husbandry and compliance with animal welfare standards. Those other defences will continue to apply where their requirements are met.

What changes are being made to laws about animal fighting and live baiting?

Animal fighting and live baiting are already prohibited. The Bill strengthens these laws by creating a new offence for possessing items used for animal fighting or live baiting. A person will commit an offence if they are present when animal fighting or live baiting is taking place.

The Bill includes protections so that people with a reasonable excuse for being present, or who legitimately possess certain items, are not inadvertently captured.

5. Changes for particular animal-related activities

What changes are being made for veterinarians?

The Bill allows a veterinarian to humanely euthanise an animal if the veterinarian reasonably believes the animal is suffering so severely that euthanasia is the most humane option.

A veterinarian should obtain the owner's consent where practicable. However, if an animal is suffering severely and the owner cannot be contacted within a reasonable time, or it is not practicable to contact the owner, the veterinarian may proceed if the requirements of the Act are met.

The power does not apply if the owner is known and has refused consent to the euthanasia. Veterinarians acting in good faith and with reasonable care and skill will be protected from civil and criminal liability when exercising this power.

Does the Bill change the rules for controlling pest animals?

The Bill does not prevent lawful pest control. It updates the existing defence so that it can also apply where a person uses a pest-control method that is more humane than methods generally in use.

Will the Bill stop medical or scientific research involving animals?

No. The Bill does not prohibit animal-based research generally. It modernises the scientific-use framework, updates licensing arrangements and strengthens animal welfare protections while continuing to allow lawful scientific activities.

What is changing for people who use animals for scientific purposes?

The Bill modernises the requirements for using animals for scientific purposes. Changes include:

- expanding the animals covered by the scientific-use framework
- updating the definition of scientific purposes
- and changing how the Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (Scientific Use Code) applies through scientific-use licences.

The Bill also prohibits certain scientific procedures, including forced swim tests and forced smoke inhalation experiments.

Will scientific research involving fish and cephalopods require a licence?

The Bill expands the scientific-use framework to include vertebrate fish and prescribed invertebrates, such as cephalopods (for example, octopus and squid). The use of vertebrate fish and prescribed invertebrates for scientific purposes will generally require licensing under the Act.

What happens to existing scientific-use licences?

Existing licences are addressed by transitional arrangements. When a licence that was in force before commencement is first renewed after commencement, the Minister may vary its conditions to impose a scientific-use-code condition. Existing requirements continue during the transition as provided by the Bill.

Are any scientific procedures being prohibited?

Yes. The Bill prohibits forced swim tests and forced smoke inhalation experiments involving animals. The Bill also allows other scientific procedures to be prohibited by regulations in the future.

Why are forced swim tests and forced smoke inhalation experiments being prohibited?

These procedures raise significant animal welfare concerns and have been identified as activities that should no longer be permitted under WA's animal welfare framework.

The Bill prohibits these procedures while continuing to allow legitimate scientific research and teaching activities undertaken in accordance with the Act and applicable licensing requirements.

Will every scientific-use licensee have to comply with the Scientific Use Code in exactly the same way?

Not necessarily. The Bill requires scientific-use licences to include a condition specifying how the Scientific Use Code applies to the licensee. This allows licence conditions to reflect the nature and scale of the scientific activities being undertaken while maintaining appropriate animal welfare protections.

Will normal farming practices continue to be allowed?

Yes. The Bill does not prohibit lawful livestock production or routine animal husbandry practices. Existing defences, animal welfare standards and industry-specific requirements continue to play an important role under the Act.

The reforms are intended to improve animal welfare outcomes while recognising the legitimate use and management of animals in agriculture.

Will farmers be required to make major changes to their operations?

Not necessarily. Many livestock producers who already comply with existing animal welfare requirements won't need to make changes. However, producers should familiarise themselves with the reforms and any updated standards, regulations or guidance that may be developed following commencement of the Bill in the future.

Does the Bill affect live export?

The Bill does not contain any amendments specific to the live export industry.

Live export remains primarily regulated under Commonwealth legislation and national regulatory frameworks. Animals located in WA continue to be subject to WA's animal welfare laws to the extent applicable under State legislation.

6. Inspectors and enforcement

What new powers will inspectors have?

The Bill updates and expands inspectors' powers to help them investigate:

- animal welfare concerns
- monitor compliance with the Act
- and respond where an animal is at risk.

The Bill introduces new powers to enter non-residential places to:

- monitor compliance with the Act or an animal welfare direction or order
- and a limited power to enter a residence without a warrant in urgent circumstances where immediate action is needed to protect an animal.

Inspectors also have expanded powers to seize animals, give directions to protect the welfare of animals, and require a person to provide them with information. For more details see the Public Information Paper for the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill by visiting www.dpird.wa.gov.au/animalwelfarereform.

The Act includes safeguards around when and how these powers can be used.

Are inspectors being given the same powers as police?

No. Inspectors perform a specialised animal welfare regulatory role and their powers are limited to those provided under the Act.

The Bill includes safeguards governing when and how powers may be exercised, including requirements relating to warrants, consent, notification, review rights and limitations on the use of particular powers.

What directions can an inspector give to protect an animal?

Inspectors can give directions requiring action to address animal welfare concerns, such as providing animals with appropriate food, water, shelter, care or treatment. The Bill expands these powers so that directions can apply to animals that an inspector reasonably believes are at a specified place or vehicle (rather than only animals the inspector has

personally sighted, which may not be practical for very large groups of animals or on very large properties) and can also address places, vehicles or objects that may pose a risk to animal welfare. This will allow inspectors to address welfare risks before animals are harmed.

Can an inspector stop or direct a vehicle transporting animals?

Yes. The Bill allows an inspector to direct a person apparently in charge of a vehicle to stop the vehicle or move it to a specified place for a specified period. This will allow inspectors to safely inspect animals being transported and the vehicles in which they are travelling. For example, an inspector may use this power to inspect livestock animals being transported on a truck.

Will inspectors be able to enter any property whenever they choose?

No. The Act limits when and how inspectors can enter property. Different requirements apply depending on whether a place is residential or non-residential and the purpose of the entry.

In most cases, inspectors must rely on consent, a warrant or a specific statutory power before entering property.

Can an inspector enter my home?

Only in limited emergency situations where an animal requires immediate assistance. Generally, an inspector will need consent or a warrant to enter a home. However, the Bill allows an inspector to enter without a warrant in limited emergency circumstances where immediate action is necessary to protect an animal and it is not practicable to obtain a warrant within a reasonable time because of the urgency.

For example, if an animal is drowning in a backyard swimming pool or an injured animal is inside a house and the owner is not home and not contactable. This emergency power is limited to helping an animal in urgent circumstances and cannot be used simply to investigate a suspected offence.

Can an inspector enter a farm or business?

The Bill allows an inspector to enter a non-residential place at a reasonable time where the inspector reasonably believes entry is required to monitor compliance with the Act, or with an animal welfare direction or order.

Do inspectors have to give notice before entering?

When using the new power to enter a non-residential place to monitor compliance, an inspector will generally need to take reasonable steps to notify the occupier or person in charge before entering.

There are exceptions, including:

- where notification could undermine the purpose of the inspection
- where the inspector is checking compliance with a direction or order
- or where the place is a public place.

How does the Bill ensure inspectors' powers are used appropriately and fairly?

The Bill includes a range of safeguards to ensure inspectors' powers are used appropriately and fairly. For example, an inspector will generally need consent or a warrant to enter a home, except in limited emergency circumstances where immediate action is needed to protect an animal.

For non-residential places, inspectors using the new compliance monitoring power will generally be required to take reasonable steps to notify the occupier before entering, unless specified exceptions apply. The Bill also includes limits on how powers may be exercised and provides review rights for certain decisions.

Can an inspector require me to provide information or documents?

In certain investigations, yes. The Bill allows inspectors to require a person to provide information, answer questions or produce documents when investigating a suspected offence committed in the course of carrying on a business or under a scientific-use licence. The privilege against self-incrimination will continue to apply, meaning a person may refuse to provide information or answer a question if doing so would incriminate them.

7. Protecting animals from ongoing harm

When can an inspector seize an animal?

The Bill expands and clarifies seizure powers. Relevant circumstances include:

- a suspected contravention of a prohibition order
- an imminent risk of death or injury
- and circumstances where an animal requires immediate veterinary care and seizure is necessary to enable that care to be provided.

Can inspectors seize animals simply because they disagree with how they are being managed?

No. Inspectors can only exercise seizure powers where the legal requirements under the Act are met. Decisions to seize animals must be based on the circumstances specified in the legislation and are subject to legal processes and oversight.

What happens to an animal after it is seized?

A seized animal will be cared for while it remains under seizure and the matter is dealt with under the Act. The Bill provides processes for returning or forfeiting seized animals.

What happens to dependent animals?

The Bill allows dependent animals, and animals on which a seized animal depends, to be seized where necessary. It also addresses offspring born or hatched while a parent animal is under seizure, helping the same protections and processes to apply to the related animals.

How long can a seized animal be retained if no-one has been charged?

Under the Bill, if no person has been charged with a relevant offence, a seized animal must generally be returned within six months, subject to the other processes and court orders provided for in the Act. The equivalent period for other seized property is two years.

Can a seized animal be forfeited before criminal proceedings finish?

Yes. The Bill allows a court to order that a seized animal be forfeited to the State before or while related criminal proceedings are on foot, including where it is unreasonable or impracticable for the animal to remain under seizure until relevant proceedings conclude. This allows the court to consider the practical circumstances and the animal's welfare while proceedings are ongoing.

What is a prohibition order?

A prohibition order is made by a court and restricts a person from owning, being in charge of, or having contact with animals, as specified in the order. The Bill strengthens the

prohibition order framework, including by introducing new interim, permanent and special prohibition orders and providing for the recognition of certain interstate prohibition orders in WA.

Can someone be prohibited from owning animals while cruelty charges are being heard?

Yes. The Bill allows a court to make an interim prohibition order while proceedings for cruelty or serious animal cruelty are underway. An interim order can restrict the person from owning, being in charge of, or having contact with animals as specified by the court while the proceedings are being determined.

Can someone convicted of serious animal cruelty be permanently prohibited from owning animals?

Generally, yes. Where a person is convicted of the new serious animal cruelty offence, the court must make a permanent prohibition order unless it is satisfied that the offender is unlikely to commit a cruelty or serious animal cruelty offence in the future and there are exceptional reasons for not making the order.

Can a prohibition order be made where a prosecution is not appropriate?

The Bill introduces special prohibition orders. In specified circumstances, an authorised person may apply to the Magistrates Court for an order where there are serious animal welfare concerns but it is not considered to be in the public interest to commence or continue prosecution proceedings (for example, where a person may not be mentally fit to stand trial). The court decides whether an order should be made.

Can a long-term prohibition order be changed or revoked?

Yes. A person subject to certain prohibition orders lasting more than five years may apply to the court to have the order varied or revoked after five years. In considering an application, the court must give primary importance to the welfare, safety and health of animals and consider matters including the person's conduct since the order was made and the likelihood of future offending.

Will interstate prohibition orders apply in WA?

The Bill provides for the recognition and enforcement in WA of interstate prohibition orders made under prescribed corresponding laws. This is intended to prevent a person from avoiding an animal welfare prohibition simply by moving jurisdictions.

Why are interstate prohibition orders being recognised?

Animal welfare concerns do not stop at state borders.

Recognition of qualifying interstate prohibition orders helps prevent a person who is prohibited from owning or being in charge of animals in one jurisdiction from avoiding those restrictions simply by moving to WA.

Does the Bill address animal hoarding?

The Bill does not create a specific offence of animal hoarding. However, a number of reforms strengthen the ability of regulators and courts to protect animals in serious or recurring cases involving large numbers of animals.

These include new prohibition orders and expanded arrangements for dealing with seized animals, including allowing a court, in appropriate circumstances, to permanently remove animals from a person's ownership before related court proceedings have concluded.

Animal hoarding can involve complex animal welfare and human welfare issues, so animal welfare legislation forms only part of the response.

8. How the new framework will operate

Can animal welfare agencies share information?

Yes. The Bill creates a framework for relevant information to be shared between inspectors and animal welfare enforcement agencies where it is needed for the administration or enforcement of the Act. It also allows information to be shared with certain public sector bodies and public authorities in specified circumstances. Information sharing must be carried out in accordance with guidelines issued by the CEO of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD).

Why are information-sharing powers needed?

Animal welfare matters can involve multiple regulators and enforcement agencies.

Appropriate information sharing can help regulators respond more effectively to animal welfare concerns, support compliance activities and improve the protection of animals while maintaining safeguards around the use and disclosure of information.

Will information about animal owners be publicly shared?

No. The information-sharing provisions do not allow unrestricted disclosure of information. Information may only be shared in the circumstances authorised by the Act and must be handled in accordance with legislative requirements and applicable information-sharing guidelines.

What safeguards apply to information sharing?

Information cannot be shared without limits. The Bill specifies who can share and receive information and the circumstances in which information can be disclosed. The CEO of DPIRD must also issue information-sharing guidelines, and disclosures under the new information-sharing provisions must comply with those guidelines. The guidelines must be published on DPIRD's website

What is the Animal Welfare Account?

The Bill establishes a dedicated Animal Welfare Account for fines arising from offences under the Act. Money in the Account may be used for research, publicity and educational programs promoting animal welfare, inspector training and administration of the Account.

What are administrative guidelines?

Administrative guidelines will allow the Minister to provide guidance about the administration and enforcement of the Act. Relevant guidelines must be taken into account by people performing functions under the Act, but they do not override the Act or change its legal requirements. The guidelines must also be published on DPIRD's website.

How will the operation of the Act be monitored?

The Bill introduces annual reporting requirements to provide information about the administration and enforcement of the Act, including information about inspector numbers, expenditure and emerging trends or issues.

Will the Act be reviewed again?

The Bill introduces a requirement to review the Animal Welfare Act at least every 10 years to ensure the Act is regularly reviewed and updated. This requirement will ensure that the

Act remains current and reflects the evolving nature of animal welfare science and societal values.

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