



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 4 – REGIONAL NSW

## MEDIA RELEASE

# UPPER HOUSE COMMITTEE RELEASES SECOND REPORT ON ANIMAL WELFARE LAW ENFORCEMENT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**29 NOVEMBER 2024**

The Upper House Portfolio Committee no. 4 – Regional NSW has today handed down its second report on the operations of the approved charitable organisations under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979*. Under that Act, two charitable organisations – the RSPCA NSW and the Animal Welfare League NSW – are delegated law enforcement powers for the State's animal welfare laws.

Committee Chair, the Hon Mark Banasiak MLC, explained: 'This committee inquiry was established to provide a degree of parliamentary oversight of the exercise of what are, in effect, public law enforcement powers by two approved charitable organisations.

'As outlined in our previous (2021) inquiry's report, the RSPCA NSW and Animal Welfare League NSW have significant law enforcement functions and powers, but without the levels of accountability the community would expect. Government funding for this function has been historically low, and there were concerns about the capacity of the organisations to handle animal cruelty complaints, and the safety of inspectors who were often attending call-outs alone. Our 2021 report called for increased government funding for these charities' law enforcement functions, but at the same time we called for rigour around this. There need to be clear reporting and acquittal requirements, and expectations of service levels.'

Mr Banasiak commented, 'In 2023-24 the NSW Government gave both organisations significant grants for animal welfare law enforcement. Unfortunately, the annual reports published by these organisations don't help us understand how the government funding is used, or how well they are performing their law enforcement role. Moreover, in this year's inquiry, we heard evidence calling into question how appropriately some of the funding has been used, and suggesting there are some serious workplace culture and governance issues at the RSPCA NSW that are impacting the safety and morale of its inspectors.

'If the NSW Government is going to fund charities for a law enforcement function, it needs to ensure that the funding is used appropriately, and the organisations' operations are as effective as possible, in line with community expectations.

'The committee's report makes seven recommendations aimed at improving the level of government oversight and ensuring greater transparency and accountability of the charitable organisations. I hope the NSW Government will seriously consider and address the issues identified in this report.'

The report is available on the committee's [webpage](#).

-ENDS-

*For further information please contact Committee Chair, the Hon Mark Banasiak MLC, on 9230 2573*