


~~Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The time for matters of public interest has expired.~~

EXHIBITED ANIMALS BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. JJ McVEIGH** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) (12.03 pm): I present a bill for an act to provide for exhibiting and dealing with exhibited animals and to make consequential amendments of the Biosecurity Act 2014, the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the regulations mentioned in schedule 3. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Exhibited Animals Bill 2014.

Tabled paper: Exhibited Animals Bill 2014, explanatory notes.

It is with pleasure that I introduce the Exhibited Animals Bill 2014, which will enable animal exhibition in Queensland while minimising risks to animal welfare, biosecurity and safety. It will reduce red tape, create new opportunities for industry and meet community expectations for risk management. This bill has the support of industry. I have met with the Zoo and Aquarium Association of Queensland president, Al Mucci, from Dreamworld, and executive officer Kelsey Engle from Australia Zoo who have endorsed the government's reforms. These reforms were developed with thorough consultative meetings and arrangements between my department and industry. As honourable members know, reducing unnecessary regulatory burden is the key to unlocking the full potential of the Queensland economy and is vital to the shared vision of the Queensland Plan. This is why the LNP government is delivering on reform of the legislation that currently regulates this industry.

Queensland's current legislation is disjointed, fragmented and inefficient. There are currently six licensing schemes and provisions spread across four acts: the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002, the Fisheries Act 1994, the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001. Some exhibitors need multiple licences, each with their own fees and processes, because they are regulated under more than one act. Some animals cannot be exhibited at all in Queensland, even if the associated risks can be managed.

The current legislation is difficult to navigate and impedes innovation and adaptation by businesses in this evolving industry. There are also safety and animal welfare risks posed by exhibiting animals that are not appropriately regulated. The Exhibited Animals Bill 2014 will consolidate the regulatory and licensing schemes for the exhibition of native and exotic animals into a single fit-for-purpose legislative framework. It requires all exhibitors to take an active role in identifying and managing the animal welfare, biosecurity and safety risks associated with exhibiting animals.

The bill will require all those involved in exhibition and dealing with an exhibited animal to prevent or minimise these risks. The bill will also simplify how the government authorises the exhibition of animals that generally cannot be kept in Queensland without a licence. Only those exhibitors who need a licence under current legislation will need a licence under this new legislation. However, those exhibitors who currently require more than one licence will be able to operate under a single licence. To further reduce red tape, licences can be granted for up to three years, compared with the current two years in some cases.

Exhibitors will be able to propose the activities they wish to conduct under their licence and explain, in the form of a management plan, how they will prevent or minimise the associated risks. This will give them the opportunity to use their expert knowledge to manage risks in their unique circumstances. This compares with the current legislation, where exhibition is limited by species and by activity.

Licensing decisions under the bill will be risk based—a licence could be granted to keep almost any animal for any type of exhibition if the risks were prevented or minimised. Consequently, it will allow a greater range of species to be exhibited in Queensland. Under the current legislation, some animals cannot be exhibited in Queensland at all, even, as I have said previously, if all the risks could be managed. The flexibility of this risk-based approach will be complemented by monitoring of licensed exhibitors.

The frequency of assessment visits will depend on the compliance record of the exhibitor. Assessments will be charged to the exhibitor to create an incentive for industry members to

proactively minimise animal welfare, biosecurity and safety risks. The accreditation of private sector assessors will provide more flexibility for exhibitors. Exhibitors will be able to go to the market for accredited assessors to prepare a report that will be used in deciding licence renewal applications. This will encourage industry self-regulation.

Minimum exhibition requirements will ensure that animals kept under an exhibition licence are actually exhibited. This is important because the species to which they apply cannot be kept for private recreation in Queensland. High pest potential animals listed as prohibited matter under the Biosecurity Act 2014 will need to be based in a fixed exhibit open to the public. Most other species will need to be exhibited on at least 12 occasions each year.

017 Replacing the fragmented current legislation with a single industry-specific act has been publicly canvassed for many years. It took the LNP government to get the ball rolling by releasing a detailed proposal in a regulatory impact statement for public comment late last year. The LNP government has continued to involve industry during drafting of the bill. In particular, industry nominees took part in a detailed workshop to discuss a working draft of the bill in July this year.

I would like to thank those who have provided comment and feedback through these consultation processes. Your involvement has ensured that we have delivered a framework for the exhibition of animals in Queensland that cuts red tape and creates opportunity, while minimising the risks to animal welfare, biosecurity and safety.

The bill sends a clear message that the LNP government recognises the importance of the exhibited animals industry and will work with exhibitors throughout Queensland to foster world-class wildlife experiences for tourists and the industry's contribution to our own way of life in Queensland. This bill will deliver benefits, therefore, to industry and also to the wider community. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. JJ McVEIGH (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) (12.10 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee.

~~RECREATION AREAS MANAGEMENT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL~~

~~Introduction~~

~~**Hon. SL DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (12.11 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Forestry Act 1959 and the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Health and Community Services Committee to consider the bill.~~

~~*Tabled paper:* Recreation Areas Management and Another Act Amendment Bill 2014.~~

~~*Tabled paper:* Recreation Areas Management and Another Act Amendment Bill 2014, explanatory notes.~~

~~I am pleased to introduce the Recreation Areas Management and Another Act Amendment Bill 2014. This bill will amend the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 and the Forestry Act 1959 to support this government's commitment to cut red tape and streamline the permit system for tourism and recreation in Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed areas. The amendments through this bill will address two key initiatives. The first initiative will streamline the processes and requirements applying to operators seeking approvals to conduct commercial activities that cross marine parks and recreation areas. Recent amendments to subordinate legislation under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 allow commercial activity permits for protected areas, such as national parks, to be combined in a single document with a state and/or Commonwealth marine park permission.~~