

10th June 2014

Competition Policy Review Secretariat
The Treasury
Langton Crescent
PARKES ACT 2600

Submission to the Review of Competition Policy

Submission prepared by Zoo and Aquarium Association

Secondary boycotts, markets-based campaigns, and consumer and environment groups (Section 5.27 and 5.28)

This submission addressed Section 5.27 and 5.28 of the Issues Paper headed 'Secondary Boycotts' and serves to raise an important issue with the question; "do the provisions of the CCA on secondary boycotts operate effectively, and do they work to further the objectives of the CCA?".

The Zoo and Aquarium Association supports the current exemption for conduct related to 'environmental protection or consumer protection' contained in section 45DD of the CCA.

The Zoo and Aquarium Association is the peak body for zoos and aquariums in Australasia representing over ninety member organisations with two thirds of those based in Australia. The Association has as its mission statement:

"To harness the collective resources of zoos and aquariums to conserve biodiversity in the natural environment".

An independent study reported that zoos and aquariums in Australia attract 15.4 million visits per annum (including 3.8 million international visits). In 2005-2006 nearly 36% of the population over 15 years of age visited a zoo or aquarium at least once and it was concluded that more Australians visit zoos and aquariums each year than any other form of cultural entertainment apart from going to the cinema. In 2007-2008 zoos and aquariums provided educational classes to around 613,000 students. To date zoos and aquariums in Australia have participated in and/or conducted more than 100 significant research projects in the name of advancing our understanding and conservation of some of the world's most endangered species.

A key part of our role is to help the community make informed decisions on how the human threats to wildlife can be reduced or mitigated. An important role members of the community can play in preventing threats to wildlife is to ensure their consumption habits have the smallest possible impacts on the environment and wildlife.

Visitors to Australian zoos and aquariums rely on these facilities to be an authority on environmental issues particularly when it comes to threats to wildlife, and look to us for advice and direction on these matters. Zoo and Aquarium Association members have, from time-to-time, engaged in market-based campaigns that provide our community with information that helps them to make informed purchasing decisions

that will help minimise the impacts of their decisions on the environment and wildlife. Like many other environmental and consumer campaigns the work is evidence-based and serves to promote behaviour that helps reduce human impacts on wildlife and the environment such as the sourcing and supplying of Certified Sustainable Palm Oil by Australian food manufacturers.

Providing information to the community about the practices of businesses is important from the perspective that it encourages informed consumer choice. It is also a valued characteristic of our tradition and culture of free speech in Australia and drives continual improvements in industry practice that achieves sound environmental outcomes.

The Zoo and Aquarium Association strongly urges the Review Panel to retain the exemption for consumer and environmental boycotts.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Hibbard', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chris Hibbard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR