

# Statement from RSPCA

RSPCA Victoria has one question for the state government when it comes to duck and quail hunting - why is Victoria different?

The government's decision to allow duck and quail hunting to continue flies in the face of its progress on animal welfare legislation, the Select Committee's recommendations, clear evidence of its harms, and public sentiment.

RSPCA Victoria Chief Executive, Dr Liz Walker has called on the government to reverse its decision.

"The recent Parliamentary inquiry recommended native bird hunting cease based on extensive evidence and a record number of submissions from the public," Dr Walker said.

"The evidence is there, with other states like Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia all having banned it up to three decades ago with people still enjoying the great outdoors.

"Instead of sanctioning the injury, pain, suffering, distress of our native birds, the government should have listened to the Inquiry, and millions of Victorians who also want to see it banned.

"This decision simply leaves us asking when it comes to duck and quail hunting, why is Victoria different?

"We urge the government to hear the millions of Victorians who have made clear their support for a duck hunting ban in Victoria and to reverse this decision."

The government is said to be considering a mandatory training program similar to the competency test used in Denmark – world leaders in wounding reduction, however the Danish program, developed in 1997, took more than 20 years to notice any significant reduction in wounding, with wounding rates still as unacceptably high as 10 per cent.

Based on the Game Management Authority's own figures, more than 300,000 native birds were killed in the shortened 2023 season, with tens of thousands more estimated to experience debilitating injuries.

Sadly, Victoria's native birds don't have 20 years to wait to see minor reductions in wounding rates.

Calls for a duck hunting ban in Victoria have grown louder every year, with independent research indicating two in three people across the state oppose it.

The Select Committee's recommendation

of a ban on native bird hunting was formed after consideration of extensive evidence including:

- The suffering caused to waterbirds through unavoidable wounding;
- Longitudinal data indicating species decline that provides clear evidence that hunting is unsustainable; and
- The majority community support for an end to native bird hunting in this state.

RSPCA is opposed to the recreational hunting of ducks as it causes unnecessary injury, pain, suffering, distress or death to the animals involved.

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