

**NICK DAMETTO**  
Member for Hinchinbrook

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Dametto blasts 'activist' RSPCA in pro-hunting speech

THE true agenda of the RSPCA has been questioned by Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto in a speech to parliament defending feral pest hunters.

Speaking last week on the State Labor Government's review of the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, Mr Dametto said he was concerned about the involvement of the RSPCA in the review, accusing them of being "more focused on promoting animal rights rather than animal welfare".

"Under its new modus operandi, the organisation has been accused by those affected by their wrath of bullying, using their powers to steal animals, wiping out competition to the animal trading arm of their organisation, extortion and, even worse, seizing and even killing healthy animals," he said.

"The agricultural, veterinary, animal husbandry, conservation, hunting, breeding and racing industries have all been systematically targeted."

Mr Dametto said firearms dealers, feral pest hunters, pet shop owners and even veterinarians had approached him with their own "horror stories" of bullying and intimidation by the RSPCA since the government's review was announced.

"The allegations made include abusive and threatening phone calls by RSPCA officers, officers turning up at legitimate hunting events to provoke participants and officers making false allegations of mistreatment of animals at pet stores so they can be taken to their own shelters. The costs of care for those animals taken away is then charged back to the pet shop owner until the animal is adopted out or euthanised," Mr Dametto said.

"They are operating like a mafia organisation with little to no oversight by the State government. Unfortunately, the public is largely unaware of these practices by the RSPCA because they have been hoodwinked by a slick marketing campaign which portrays the organisation as caring for "all creatures great and small". That slogan couldn't be further from the truth."

Mr Dametto said the RSPCA was a multimillion-dollar charity that operated like a corporate and had the luxury of paying no tax.

"In the 2019-20 financial year, their profits were \$243 million nationally and in Queensland the RSPCA raised \$58 million," he said.

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"I ask all those who have been affected by this organisation to push back."

Mr Dametto said the RSPCA had made their views about recreational feral pest shooting "crystal clear".

"In a 2014 ABC article online, then RSPCA CEO Mark Townend labelled volunteer recreational feral pest hunters as "yobbos" and admitted he wanted to see feral pig shooting by amateur sportsmen banned," Mr Dametto said.

"What the RSPCA fails to understand is landowners largely have to rely on volunteer recreational shooters to conduct pest management. There just aren't enough professional shooters to do the job.

"Those sorts of statements by the RSPCA make the feral pest shooting community extremely concerned about the government's review into the Act, which is looking at all aspects of the legislation, including the use of hunting dogs for feral pest management."

Mr Dametto urged anyone with concerns about the government's review to sign a parliamentary e-petition [here](#) that calls on the House to do all within its power to prevent a legislative ban on dogs, trapping, baiting, and shooting for controlling feral or pest animals.

Queenslanders can also make a submission to the review up until Friday May 21 by visiting [biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://biosecurity.qld.gov.au) and searching for 'ACPA review' to complete the survey or submit a written response.

—ENDS—

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Photo caption:

*Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto is concerned about the future implications the State Labor Government's review into the Animal Care and Protection Act could have on existing feral pest and animal control methods.*

### **Media Enquiries**

Michael Serenc – 0423 108 848