

TASMANIAN POULTRY FANCIERS ASSOCIATION
INC.

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To: Animal Welfare Standards Public Consultation,

PO Box 5116

BRADDON, ACT, 2612

Sent via email to publicconspoultry@animalhealthaustralia.com.au

RE: PROPOSED AUSTRALIAN ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS & GUIDELINES FOR POULTRY

The Tasmanian Poultry Fanciers Association Inc. is a state based association that is the main body covering ten clubs around the state for the promotion of keeping and breeding exhibition poultry.

The association wishes to address the following issues that will affect exhibition poultry in Tasmania with regard to the proposed Australian animal welfare standards and guidelines for poultry.

S.A 6.4 and 6.5 – Continuous lighting exposure to poultry

Many exhibition birds are reared under artificial light in rearing facilities very different to commercial operations. The chicks are often kept in small broods where continuous lighting is needed for warmth to sustain young chicks that otherwise would not survive. Because of this we request purebred poultry be exempt from these standards.

S.A 7.3 – Monitoring of ammonia levels in sheds.

Exhibition poultry in most cases are kept in a free-range situation and when kept in sheds are not in intensive conditions. In this case purebred poultry fanciers we believe should be exempt from complying with this.

S.A 9.8 – A person other than a veterinarian must not perform pinioning, castration or devoicing on poultry

Pinioning is performed to prevent some flighty breeds of waterfowl from escaping and breeding with the wild waterfowl population, which has been documented. We would suggest that pinioning be undertaken by an experienced person on a hatchling under 3 days of age and then by a veterinarian with anesthesia on an animal over 3 days of age.

S.A 9.10 – “ A person must only perform desnooding, dubbing, de-spurring and web marking on day old hatchlings selected as potential breeders.

This standard and guideline has particular relevance to us as these procedures are undertaken to maintain the welfare and health of our stock. They are procedures used to maintain many rare purebred lines and while commercial poultry operations cull adult birds once peak production wanes, the genetic value of our birds is such that we work to maintain the health of our birds for often up to 10 years.

We would request purebred poultry be allowed some modification to these guidelines and standards to assist the maintenance and the welfare of our birds. We seek amendments to this standard as the current standard has the following potential adverse impacts to our birds:

Dubbing of day old chicks would be detrimental to the welfare of the chicks as the wound would be a catalyst for attack and predation by other chicks and potentially the brooding hen and a significant numbers of female chicks would be unnecessarily dubbed. We would propose delaying the dubbing procedure to no later than 5 months / 20 weeks and that this procedure only be carried out by experienced & accredited persons. This would allow proper segregation of the bird following the procedure to avoid attack by other fowls and ensure the unnecessary dubbing of female birds as only male birds require dubbing for welfare purposes had this procedure performed.

In relation to toe web marking. This is traditionally performed on day-old chickens hatched in incubators, but may be performed at a later date on chicks hatched under hens. We believe that chicks should not be toe web marked after 7 days of age.

We trust you with the concerns of our members and look forward to further consultation to support the development of Guidelines and Standards that promote the welfare of Australia's unique purebred poultry genetic resource.

Yours sincerely



John Watson (Hon. Sec.)

Tasmanian Poultry Fanciers Association Inc.