



Queensland Pit Game Fowl Club Inc.

PO Box 687, Park Ridge Qld 4125

Secretary: Stephen Kavanagh

15th February 2018

Animal Welfare Standards Public Consultation

Po Box 5116

Braddon ACT 2612

To Whom It May Concern,

RE: Public consultation for the draft Animal Welfare Standards & Guidelines for Poultry.

The Queensland Pit Game Club is a registered incorporation that has been actively supporting Australian Pit Game fanciers since 1990. Our members and associates are not limited to just Queensland. Our aim is to promote breeding and Exhibiting of Australian Pit Game.

After consulting both members and fellow poultry enthusiasts we the managing Committee comprised the following response to

Handling and Husbandry

SA9.10 *"A person must only perform de-snooding, dubbing, de-spurring and web marking on day old hatchlings selected as potential breeders."*

- ❖ Dubbing of many Game fowl and Mediterranean breeds is necessary for the fowl's wellbeing.
 - Members expressed increased risk of injury when fowl in particular males are left un-dubbed.
 - Straight Combs can grow extremely large hindering the bird from eating and impacting its quality of life.
 - Dubbed fowl of these breeds are less likely to suffer from diseases spread by flying insects.
 - Members mentioned Dubbed fowl having noticeably higher fertility and longer life spans.
 - Fowl that have been dubbed are less likely to suffer from frost bite or heat stress.

- ❖ Restricting Dubbing to Day old hatchlings is not practical outside of the commercial environment.
 - A large portion of poultry enthusiasts hatch under broody hens. Disturbing a sitting hen could result in her leaving the nest or killing chicks.
 - Unnecessarily handling of day old chicks exposes them to a risk of injury and possible rejection of the hen when returned back to the nest.
 - Commercial methods of sexing is not applicable across all breeds of poultry. This would lead to the unnecessary dubbing of females.

- ❖ The club feels that the current proposal regarding dubbing could have negative impacts on keeping pure bred fowl. The Queensland Pit Game fowl Club and other associated clubs could also face closure.

- Some breeders have suggested turning away from breeding Australian Pit Game or other breeds traditionally dubbed, as they feel that leaving the Comb intact significantly impact on the bird's wellbeing and quality of life.
 - With more and more restrictions on poultry keeping in particular male birds by councils fewer people are keeping pure breeds of fowl and turning towards commercially produced hybrid fowl already. Many of these breeds are already facing possible extinction.
 - Many Australian Pit Game Breeders across Australia have suggested they will withdraw from Exhibiting Male birds from future shows. Our club relies on funds gained through holding one show a year solely for the purpose of showcasing Australian Pit Game. Numbers have noticeably declined over the last few years already.
- ❖ The club recognises a need for Animal Welfare Standards & Guidelines but finds that in the case where dubbing applies to non-commercial fowl we ask that dubbing be able to be carried on fowl up to 16 weeks of age by an experienced person.

SA9.12 *"a person must use appropriate pain relief when carrying out surgical procedures on poultry."*

- ❖ There is no registered veterinary product for pain relief in poultry.
- It would be considered poor practice for vets to prescribe off-label products without knowing the future ramifications regarding egg production, fertility and human consumption of both eggs and meat.

Yours sincerely

Secretary of the

Queensland Pit Game Fowl Club Inc.

Stephen Kavanagh