



SPORTING SHOOTERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) INC.

23 May 2016

Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001
By email to nrc@nrc.nsw.gov.au

**Re: State-wide review of NSW pest animal management
Draft Report – *Shared Problem Shared Solution***

Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (NSW) Inc “SSAA NSW” welcomes a number of the recommendations contained in the draft report prepared by the Natural Resources Commission “NRC” as part of the NSW Government’s review of pest animal management.

Of particular interest to SSAA NSW are the recommendations relating to the involvement of recreational hunters in pest animal management. As previously stated, SSAA NSW strongly believes that the use of volunteer shooters and hunters has to date been an underutilised resource and this is where it, and its members can make a greater contribution to pest animal management.

SSAA NSW applauds the NRC for its formal recognition within the report that recreational hunting is a valid and valued recreational pursuit and also the valuable role that recreational hunters can play in assisting with pest animal management.

Specifically SSAA NSW strongly supports the implementation of the following recommendations from the report:

- **22 ‘*Actively engage recreational hunting groups in regional pest animal management.*’**
Using the skill, expertise and knowledge of recreational hunters in the development of regional pest animal management programs is a sensible and logical step given their extensive experience and associated interest in animal ethology and habitat.

Additionally, inclusion as stakeholders in regional pest management groups will assist with changing the existing unfavourable perception of recreational hunters within the farming and general community. SSAA NSW believes it is vital that the discord between the perceptions of these communities and the objectives of recreational hunters involved in pest animal control are aligned and sees this collaborative approach to planning as an ideal mechanism to facilitate this.

- **23 ‘*Reduce red tape surrounding recreational hunting on private land.*’**
Any move to reduce the bureaucratic and financial burden on recreational hunters in the pursuit of their chosen activity is strongly supported by SSAA NSW. The introduction of the G Licence was strongly condemned by SSAA NSW members who are resentful that they are forced to pay an additional fee for a licence that requires no training, no membership of an AHO to hunt deer on private land; an activity they had been doing previously without these additional requirements.

• Promoting Shooters and Shooting Sports • Firearm Safety and Junior Development • Conservation and Ethical Hunting

- **16 'Manage deer as a pest animal.'**

There is an extensive variety of evidence to support the declaration of deer as a pest animal along with strong support from the farming and general communities given their negative economic, environmental and social impacts.

Concern for welfare of deer has been raised as a reason for retaining their status as a game animal. SSAA NSW does not support this view; recreational hunters are bound not only by codes of ethics but also relevant legislation to ensure the humane treatment of any animal, whether they be declared a game or pest. Animal welfare is a vitally important component of any hunter training and accreditation as well as the codes of ethics for clubs and organisations involved in hunting and feral animal control activities.

In conclusion, SSAA NSW looks forward to continued engagement with the NSW government, its agencies and other organisations with regard to the outcomes of this Review and also welcomes any opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, any resulting initiatives and programs.

Yours sincerely,



Diana Melham
Executive Director