

Animal Welfare Policy

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Zoo and Aquarium Association (ZAA) believes that all zoos and aquariums must ensure the animals under their care live a good life by promoting positive welfare to the highest possible standard for the duration of their lifetime. Progressive zoos and aquariums strive for continuous improvement in animal welfare as it underpins all that we do as a sector.
- 1.2 This Policy establishes a contemporary understanding of animal welfare and encourages zoos and aquariums to promote good animal welfare (Positive Welfare) within their organisations.

2. Scope and exemptions

This Policy applies to all Regional and International Association Members.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 Zoos and aquariums undertake conservation, education, research and recreation activities for the community, and provide a significant socio-economic contribution to society. The Association recognises that in all activities zoos and aquariums have a responsibility to ensure a high standard of animal welfare, described as *Positive Animal Welfare*.
- 3.2 The Association adopts the *Five Domains Model*¹ to assist members in assessing and achieving positive animal welfare, and for the Associations' Accreditation Program.
- 3.3 The Association differentiates between animal welfare and ethics. While zoos and aquariums should also consider the ethical positions associated with keeping captive non-

¹ Mellor, D.J. and Beausoleil, N.J. (2015). Extending the 'Five Domains' model for animal welfare assessment to incorporate positive welfare states. *Animal Welfare* 24:241-253

domestic animals, nations in the Australasian region have democratically accepted the use of animals for a range of purposes including in agriculture, as pets, and for sport and recreation. Further ethical positions are considered separately to this policy.

- 3.4 Zoos and aquariums have taken a strong lead in several areas of animal welfare research including behavioural analysis and non-invasive physiological assessment of stress. Member organisations are encouraged to contribute to the knowledge of animal welfare science through participation in research projects and broad dissemination of project findings.
- 3.5 The Association recommends members develop their own position statements, policies, and procedures that align with this policy, and to maintain and improve welfare for all animals in their care.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Compliance

- a. The Director/CEO/Owner of an Association member, or their delegate, shall ensure that animals under the care of their organisation can satisfy the requirements of this Policy, as well as the requirements of all relevant welfare legislation and regulation.
- b. The Director/CEO/Owner of an Association member or their delegate is responsible for addressing situations of welfare compromise when they are identified.
- c. The Association's Accreditation Program shall ensure confirmation of Positive Welfare is implemented within its assessment processes.

4.2 Reporting

- a. The Director/CEO/Owner of an Association member or their delegate is responsible for reporting any situations of welfare compromise in accordance with the Association's *Accreditation Policy* as well as in accordance with all relevant welfare legislation and regulation.
- b. The Accreditation Program shall report any situations of welfare compromise to the Board if they cannot be addressed through the approved processes.

5. Related Documents

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies, procedures and guidelines of the Association:

- Code of Conduct
- Accreditation Policy
- Member Policy
- Regional Species Management Program Policy
- Animal Visitor Interactions Position Statement

6. Definitions

Affective States/Experiences: Individual mental experiences that are subjective to the animal and occur in its consciousness. These can be negative (e.g. pain, hunger) or positive (e.g. satiety, excitement).

Positive Welfare/Good Welfare: The welfare state of an animal that is achieved when positive mental experiences are promoted and at the same time negative mental experiences are minimised.

Negative Welfare/Poor Welfare: The welfare state of an animal when there are negative mental experiences occurring on a severe, frequent or ongoing basis.

Relevant legislation and regulation: legislation and regulation applicable to locations of Association members.

7. Board Approval

Approval History	Details
Approval Authority	Association Board
Relevant Committee and/or Stakeholders	Animal Management Committee
Original Approval Date	27/08/2012 (as Position Statement)
Last Review Date	12/12/2019
Next review date	12/12/2024

This document should be reviewed within five (5) years of the date of approval or last review.

Amendment History Approved / Amended / Rescinded / Reviewed	Authority	Date	Description / Notes
Approved	Board	12/12/2019	Upgraded from Position Statement to Policy