



ACT
Government

Transport Canberra and
City Services

External Input Request

Requesting Directorate: EPSDD

Responding TCCS Division: DAS / ID

Subject: New RSPCA/Animal Welfare

Objective reference number: MIN S2023/02056

Please address the following issue:

Please address the comment about animal welfare standards for horses in the below corro.

"Dear Mr Steel MLA I note with interest that the RSPCA will be moving to new premises near Duntroon. Please note that since the Duffy fires there has been no capacity for the RSPCA to rescue horses or other large farm animals. There were previous efforts by the ACT Gov to establish a horse rescue in Watson yet this failed due to the operator breaching the lease agreement and failing to provide the agreed service. I propose that a section of Rural Lease 745 in Hall/Throsby/Casey be reserved as an RSPCA paddock for this purpose. The lease on this rural block was recently reduced by the ACT Gov for the purpose of building more homes. There is ample space to provide a large animal rescue paddock in this location, especially due to the greenbelt requirements. Furthermore, I believe it would add a nice aesthetic to the area. The ACT lacks welfare standards for horses, and is the only jurisdiction to do so. I enquired about this matter to the RSPCA in 2020, and was told this was partly due to having no suitable premises to seize horses in need of care. I myself am an avid horseperson and rescued 9 horses from Victoria after their devastating fires in 2020. These have now all been successfully rehabilitated and rehomed. I'd be very interested in applying for a small rural lease to be able to provide this service to the RSPCA and ACT residents. The cost of living increases have put pressure on horse owners and I believe this facility is needed in the ACT. Other suitable sites such as Gold Creek Homestead have been recently sold for aged care accommodation and Fassifern in Dunlop is also unavailable. Please consider this request as now is an ideal time to reserve this land before the town planners divide the aforementioned rural lease into residential blocks. I'd be very happy to discuss further with your staff should this be of interest. Sincerely, Julia Bocking"

TCCS Response:

The ACT has a Code of Practice for the Welfare of Horses in the ACT which provides for the care and management of horses in general, including those kept at commercial horse riding establishments.

Upon a comprehensive review, ACT's Animal Welfare Advisory Committee determined that the current Code of Practice requires updating and required redrafting. AWAC took into account similar codes of practice in other jurisdictions while drafting the revised Code, which will soon be endorsed by the relevant Minister.



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The ACT Government is progressing design for a new RSPCA facility to be located off Fairbairn Avenue in Pialligo. This new facility will be purpose built to support the RSPCA meet its animal welfare objectives. The combination of the location of the facility and being a purpose built facility on an appropriately sized site means that once operational the RSPCA expects to be able to accept large animals where no other opportunities exist to care for them.