



Branches in all States and Territories
130,000 members Australia wide

Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (Inc.)

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Tony Burke, Minister for Sustainability, Environment,
Water, Population and Communities
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Monday, October 25, 2010

Dear Minister,

I write to you today on behalf of the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia Inc (SSAA National) seeking to clarify the Federal Government's position on *'the role that hunting and hunters play in regards to native and introduced wildlife management in Australia'*.

SSAA National is Australia's premier body representing firearm owners. SSAA National has more than 132,000 members, in which the vast majority participate in some form of hunting. SSAA National is committed to member education and promoting their role in being part of the solution to minimise the impacts of damaging introduced species such as foxes and rabbits. You may have come across one of our promotional billboards placed at Canberra Airport in the Qantas baggage pick-up area since February this year.

Our members have been involved in many conservation-based projects over the years that have protected native wildlife from both predation and habitat degradation. For example, members through their hunting efforts have helped re-establish Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby populations in South Australia's Flinders Ranges. They also protect Bridled Nailtail Wallaby populations around Emerald in Central Queensland. SSAA National has a proud history being involved in such projects and many more across the Australian landscape.

Hunters generally see themselves as environmental stewards and custodians. They are a valuable but under-utilised wildlife management resource and conservation tool. They have been on the frontline of waterbird conservation for many years where they harvest a healthy organic free-range food, while at the same time ensuring sustainable populations our native game species for future generations.

SSAA members spend approximately \$389 million per year to participate in recreational hunting activities. SSAA National has calculated from a recent survey that around \$274 million of this amount is spent specifically hunting introduced species. This figure demonstrates the substantial personal financial contribution that members make to help manage the impacts of introduced species on both our environment and agricultural sectors. Currently, SSAA National has not attempted to determine the overall cost benefits to the public purse by members volunteering their time or calculated the full environmental, social and economic benefits resulting from our introduced species impact reduction. This is something that we are keen to investigate in the future. One thing for certain is that SSAA members make a substantial financial and practical contribution to the wellbeing of our natural environment and our rural communities.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Godson
Special Project Officer - Pest and Wildlife Management
Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia Inc.