ANIMAL WELFARE – RODEOS

Division Statutory Services

Presenter Terry Makings, Director Statutory Services

Purpose

1. To provide advice in relation to animal welfare issues associated with rodeos. This report was requested by the Marketing and Events Committee on 13 March 2007.

Recommendation from Management

2. That Council advise the correspondent that:
   2.1. pursuant to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986, the head of the Department of Primary Industries is the legal authority in Victoria given the power to issue and refuse permits for rodeos;
   2.2. the Council does not have the authority to ban rodeos in the City of Melbourne as sought; and
   2.3. animal welfare issues are appropriately advocated by the RSPCA.

Key Issues

3. A request has been received from a South Australian animal welfare activist urging Council to ban rodeos within the municipality. The concern expressed by the correspondent is that rodeos are not a legitimate sport and also states that the RSPCA is totally opposed to rodeos as the RSPCA considers them to be “inherent cruelty”. The writer urges the Council to place a ban on rodeos in the Melbourne municipality because animal cruelty is not entertainment and is psychologically damaging.

Time Frame

4. The “State of Origin International Rodeo” is being held at Vodafone Arena on 5 May 2007.

Government Relations

5. The City of Melbourne has consulted the RSPCA in relation to the rodeo. The Head of the Department of Primary Industries is the regulating authority for rodeo events.

Finance

6. The only cost to Council is the use of limited resources on a matter wholly within State Government control.
Legal

7. Pursuant to section 16 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* 1986, the Head of the Department of Primary Industries has been given the statutory role to administer the regulation of rodeos including issuing and refusing permits.

Comments

8. The City of Melbourne Administration does not possess the expertise to provide detailed advice in relation to animal welfare issues associated with rodeos. Council relies on specialised State Government agencies, such as the Department of Primary Industry and the RSPCA for information on animal welfare.

9. Rodeos are managed under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* 1986 by the Department of Primary Industry. The Department Head issues permits for rodeos and enforces the legislation.

10. Council has no authority to refuse the operation of rodeos nor the type of functions held at Vodafone Arena.

11. The RSPCA is totally opposed to rodeos and currently has a major campaign called “Vote with your Feet” which attempts to discourage people from attending the State of Origin International Rodeo being held at Vodafone Arena in May and other similar planned events.

12. Council has been advised that representatives of both the Department of Primary Industry and the RSPCA will be attending the May event and it is up to the officers of the Department to determine if the event is carried out lawfully and to prosecute the operators should permit conditions not be met or if there is evidence of animal cruelty.
FINANCE ATTACHMENT

ANIMAL WELFARE – RODEOS

There are no direct financial implications for Council arising from the recommendations in this report.

Joe Groher
Manager Financial Services
Pursuant to section 16 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* 1986, the Head of the Department of Primary Industries has been given the statutory role to administer the regulation of rodeos including issuing and refusing permits.

The *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations* 1987 specifies requirements for any permit application to the Head of the Department to operate a rodeo including:

"10 (1) A person who proposes to operate a rodeo must, in the application for a permit—

(a) nominate a veterinary practitioner who will attend the rodeo in accordance with the conditions of the permit; and

(b) specify the name of an organisation approved by the Minister by which the person is accredited”.

Kim Wood
Manager Legal Services