

Sentience Workshop Introduction

What is sentience and why was it included in the Animal Welfare Act?

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Sentience

- An animal's ability to have feelings, perceptions and experiences that matter to it.



A bit of history...

- Animals Protection Act 1960
- Animal Welfare Act 1999
- 2000 UDAW
- 2008 New Zealand signs “in principle”
- 2009 FAWC’s “a life worth living”
- 2013 New Zealand’s Animal Welfare Strategy
- 2015 Animal Welfare Amendment Act
- SENTIENCE

The changing focus...

Photo RNZSPCA

- Prevention of cruelty
- To...
- Physical, health and behavioural needs - minimum standards
- To...
- Something more – the introduction of the positive



Animal Welfare Matters

- It matters how animals are treated – it matters to the animals and it matters to us.
- We have responsibilities toward animals in our care and animals affected by our activities.
- Using animals is acceptable as long as it is humane.

Why did we need a strategy?

- Animals are sentient – they can feel pain and distress.
- Not complying with minimum standards of animal welfare is unacceptable.
- Even isolated cases of poor animal welfare could damage our reputation



Animal Welfare Amendment Act 2015 – Sentience!

- Appears as an amendment to the Long Title of the Act which states its purpose
- “To recognise that animals are sentient” is now the first clause
- BUT not defined



The Five Domains Model

- Physical/Functional Domains
- Affective Experience Domain
- For every negative a corresponding positive
 - Isolation vs affectionate sociability
 - Depression vs Excitation/playfulness
 - Chilling vs thermal comfort
 - Pain and debility vs the comfort of good health and high functional capacity













Thank you

