

New Government. New approach to duck shooting? Not a chance!

RSPCA Victoria is bitterly disappointed that the Baillieu Government has announced that a **full** recreational duck shoot of **12 weeks** will go ahead in 2011.

RSPCA Victoria President, Dr. Hugh Wirth said, "The Brumby Government was clearly out of touch with Victorians and the rest of the country by continuing to allow duck shooting seasons year after year. This was a chance for our new leaders to positively shape animal welfare in Victoria. However it would seem that the Baillieu Government also has selective hearing when it comes to our native wildlife. Victorians want duck shooting banned!

"Year after year, shooting interests have been given the opportunity to plead their case to the Department of Sustainability and Environment and to the Minister. No such formal opportunity has been afforded to animal welfare organisations, which clearly indicates the decision to go ahead with a duck shooting season in 2011 is biased, self serving and made without any consideration for animal welfare," Dr. Wirth comments.

A full bag limit of 10 birds per shooter per day will be allowed, which could equate to almost 2 million birds being killed during the season. With a 25% wounding rate, this obviously suggests protection of our native wildlife is not on our new Government's agenda.'

In October 2010, the RSPCA along with the Coalition Against Duck Shooting rallied support from the Victorian community and gathered in excess of 30,000 signatures in support of a duck shooting ban. The petition was tabled in Parliament on 7 October by Carlo Carli, MP.

"There are approximately 22,000 registered duck shooters in Victoria. Our petition had over 30,000 signatures. Surely the Minister should listen to the majority of his constituents, particularly at a time when our native waterbird numbers are starting to recover from over a decade of drought. The 2011 season could have a significant impact on these waterbird numbers, and dire consequences for their welfare. It is high time for the Victorian State Government to come into line with more enlightened governments in other states and ban this cruel and barbaric sport," Dr. Wirth added.

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