

Tom Lonsdale Veterinary Surgeon

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5 February 2004

WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Dr Bruce Cartmill
President, NSW Division of AVA
The Australian Veterinary Association Limited
PO Box 371
ARTARMON NSW 1570

By facsimile only: 9411 5089

Dear Dr Cartmill,

NSW Division of Australian Veterinary Association Investigation

Thank you for your letter of 8 January 2004.

My solicitors, Messrs Yeldham & Associates, advise that they wrote to you on 28 January and 3 February 2004 seeking particulars of the 'accusations' levelled against me. When I have access to full details of the complaint and all material that the NSW Division of the AVA propose to rely on prior to submitting their findings to the Federal Body, then I shall be in a position to properly and fully respond.

Pending receipt of your full particulars I offer a partial response:

By bringing important issues affecting 'the welfare of animals and society' to the attention of the relevant regulatory bodies and Members of Parliament it was not my intention to 'denigrate' the veterinary profession — more a case of doing my duty as a concerned citizen and veterinarian with access to special knowledge and information.

The email complained of contains information I believe to be accurate and disseminated in furtherance of 'the welfare of animals and society'.

Naturally I feel able to substantiate statements contained in the email of 21 July 2003.

If the statements complained of are accurate, but nonetheless in your opinion you consider those statements 'denigrate the integrity of the veterinary profession', then the problem appears not so much to devolve upon airing the issues but more to do with the veterinary conduct itself.

Veterinarians have many obligations, and sometimes those obligations may conflict or appear to conflict. I would like to draw your attention to the AVA Code of Professional Conduct where I submit that Clauses 1, 2, 3, and 7 take clear precedence over Clause 8.

Dr Bruce Cartmill
President, NSW Division of AVA
5 February 2004

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Principles of Code of Professional Conduct for members of The Australian Veterinary Association

Members of the Australian Veterinary Association are committed to using their skills and knowledge for the welfare of animals and society

1. Veterinarians shall always consider the welfare of the animal first in the provision of veterinary services.
2. Veterinarians should strive to improve the quality of veterinary services, and the health and the welfare of animals, at every opportunity.
3. Veterinarians should provide the best possible veterinary services to the animals under their care and to the community based on current scientific knowledge.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. Veterinarians should continue to develop their professional knowledge and skills and share their knowledge with colleagues and other relevant professionals as appropriate.
8. Veterinarians should uphold the integrity of the veterinary profession.

In conclusion I suggest that:

- * By standing in AVA Elections since 1994, and obtaining around 10% of the votes cast, that this tends to confirm the health of the veterinary profession and of the AVA and a willingness on the part of some members of the organisation to openly debate important issues.
- * The email, the subject of the 'accusations', is an important manifestation of the good health of the profession and fully accords with my responsibilities as a registered veterinary surgeon and longstanding member of the Australian Veterinary Association.

If, however, you resolve to continue with your investigations then principles of natural justice seem to require a prompt and full response to the questions raised by my solicitors on 28 January and 3 February 2004.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Lonsdale

Cc: Yeldhams and interested parties.