

## **RSPCA attacked over anti-rodeo campaign**

The Country Alliance party has criticised the RSPCA over its campaign to ban rodeos.

The RSPCA argues that rodeos are cruel to animals and has asked communities not to support them.

However Alliance spokesperson, Russell Bate, said that the evidence being put up by the RSPCA is uncorroborated and takes animal welfare concerns out of context.

He said that rodeos and associated activities such as camp drafting and cutting competitions are responsibly organised and are a vital part of the social and economic life of many small regional communities. He emphasised that these events are conducted under veterinary supervision.

"We support sensible animal welfare measures and the role of organisations like the RSPCA in helping animals in need. What we won't support are extreme policies such as banning properly run rodeos which produce a net benefit for country towns especially in the absence of evidence of the animal neglect that we are being told exists," he said.

"Last year we warned the community about the importance of taking extreme animal welfare policies of groups such as the Greens, seriously. These are not based on fact, but political perspectives. The Greens are now in a position to propose legislation to ban rodeos," he said.

"The problem is that Victoria can't afford to have policies like this put in place. We hope the State Government and opposition will follow our lead and support rodeos"

He said rodeo organisers have proper procedures in place that look after the animals that are often agreed to with animal welfare groups such as the RSPCA.

"No government should act on banning activities without gaining a proper understanding of their economic impacts and other societal benefits they bring. In fact rodeos are a lifeline for many struggling country towns, which cannot be ignored."

For media comment contact Russell Bate

Website: [www.countryalliance.org](http://www.countryalliance.org)

Admin: [admin@countryalliance.org](mailto:admin@countryalliance.org) / ph 0425 746 066

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