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## **Groups Call For Ban On Duck Shooting in Tasmania Protest on Parliament Lawns tomorrow**

Against Animal Cruelty Tasmania (AACT) will hold a protest on Parliament Lawns at **12.00 noon** tomorrow as part of an ongoing campaign to end recreational duck shooting in Tasmania. A striking display of 1000 duck silhouettes will stand in memorial of the tens of thousands that are slaughtered each year in this state.

AACT, the Tasmanian Conservation Trust (TCT) and RSPCA Tasmania are again urging the Lennon Government to ban this cruel and unnecessary “sport”, which causes enormous pain and suffering to many native water birds. Anti-duck shooting campaign coordinator for AACT, Chris Simcox said:

“We have witnessed first hand the brutality that is duck shooting. The nature of the shotgun is that ducks are almost never killed outright. A shooter will often take between four and ten shots to kill a duck. The first shot can bring the duck crashing to the water. Subsequent shots inflict further injury until the fatal shot is delivered. All the while the duck is struggling about in great pain and distress.”

Figures compiled by the Department of Primary Industries and Water from shooters license returns show that more than 35 000 water birds were shot and bagged during the 2006 open season in Tasmania. Scientific studies estimate that a similar number of ducks may be shot but not retrieved, bringing the total number killed closer to double that figure.

Drought conditions observed across Australia this year are considered the worst seen in twenty-four years of aerial surveys. Recent surveys show that water bird numbers have declined dramatically across the nation and experts are concerned where birds will breed. Mr Simcox said:

“The drought is worse than 2002, when only Tasmania had a duck shooting season. Other states and territories were critical of the Tasmanian decision when elsewhere bird numbers were very low due to the dry conditions. This year it looks like being worse still. We should follow the lead of Queensland, New South Wales, Western Australia and ACT and bring an end to recreational duck shooting forever.”

“Given the dry conditions, the likelihood that birds will migrate from the mainland (as happened in 2002), and the high numbers being shot, to have an open season in 2007 would be irresponsible. We call on David Llewellyn, Minister for Primary Industries, to declare a permanent ban on duck shooting.” concluded Mr Simcox.

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