

John F. Robins, Secretary, Animal Concern Advice Line (ACAL), c/o Animal Concern,  
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Animal Concern Advice Line (ACAL) is a recognised Scottish charity: No. SC030982.  
Animal Concern Advice Line was established in 2001 to take on the charitable work of Animal  
Concern which was founded as the Scottish Anti-Vivisection Society in 1876.  
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Consultation on Mobile Animal Exhibits,  
Animal Welfare & By-Products Branch,  
Welsh Government,  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff CF10 3NQ

Dear Sir or Madam,

There was an omission in my submission of 30<sup>th</sup> September and I'd like to correct that by making a supplementary submission to your Consultation on Mobile Animal Exhibits. I make this submission on behalf of the charity Animal Concern Advice Line (details above) and we agree to our submission being made public.

I would like to congratulate the Welsh Government on including in your consultation the issue of using reindeer as Christmas attractions.

Over twenty years ago I received a phone call late on a Friday evening in November. The caller was obviously the worse for wear but he insisted he had seen two reindeer on his way home from a pub in Partick. I explained to him that it was not uncommon to see roe deer in Partick and that was most likely what he had seen. He then told me in no uncertain terms that he knew what a roe deer looked like and that he had never seen one sitting in the back of a horse box wearing "bloody great antlers". I asked the local police to check it out and was later informed that my informant had indeed seen two reindeer in the horsebox they had spent the night in on a street in Partick before being used on the Saturday morning to haul Santa and his sleigh down Sauchiehall Street.

Although the police reckoned this was neither cruel nor illegal I am still concerned that the welfare of these animals had been compromised by leaving them unattended overnight at the side of a road in Glasgow.

A few minutes ago I visited the website of the biggest UK supplier of reindeer for Christmas events and they make the very welcome claim that their reindeer roam wild in the Cairngorms for much of the year with those chosen for use in Christmas events brought off the hill and given a few weeks training pulling sleighs on public roads. However the website goes on to say that they will take bookings from as far away as Cornwall. If they were booked for a Christmas event in Cardiff this would involve what are basically free-ranging wild animals in a round trip of over 1,000 miles taking over 9 hours each way. Assuming they

were going to cover several events while in the area it could involve many more miles of travelling with overnight stays either in their horsebox or in temporary paddocks.

I am sure the owners of these animals will take the utmost care of them on these trips but deer are easily stressed animals and I would be very surprised if these free range animals were not caused stress through being confined in a vehicle, travelling on long road journeys and then having to pull a sleigh along metalled roads or cobbled streets lined with noisy crowds.

I would like to see this use of reindeer or indeed any other deer proscribed in any new legislation.

Yours faithfully,

John F. Robins,  
For Animal Concern Advice Line