

RSPCA demands definite date for ban on wild animals in circuses

Will the Westminster government stay true to its word?

Wednesday, April 18 2012

The RSPCA is demanding a clear deadline date for a promised ban in England on wild animals in circuses.

Whoops of joy could be heard all over the country on 1 March when the government in Westminster announced that they would introduce a phase-in ban.

It was hoped the days of hauling circus animals like zebras, lions and tigers around the country for our entertainment were finally at an end.

But as the weeks have gone by, doubts have been raised over the true commitment to making these promises a reality.

Gavin Grant, RSPCA's Chief Executive, said: "The question which needs to be asked is does the government intend to stay true to its word?

"We have been studying the details of the plans and find them vague and littered with contradictions.

"Nothing short of a proper ban will safeguard the welfare of these majestic animals. Everyone who cares about these animals agrees. So let's get on with it."

Detailed study of the plans have revealed that:

- The government has failed to set a deadline and remains vague about the details of a full ban.
- The licensing scheme planned for the meantime will not safeguard the welfare of animals and may encourage circuses to get more wild animals.
- In a letter to the RSPCA on 30 March from a civil servant at Defra wrote: "I am not aware we have ever suggested that the licensing scheme would be a 'temporary' measure..." This was despite the previously stated intentions to ban.

The RSPCA is asking those who agree with us to join our campaign now and write to Defra demanding a clear date now.

Notes to editors

- For further information and interviews please call the RSPCA press office.
- For information about the RSPCA's Big Stop campaign please visit <u>www.rspca.org.uk/getinvolved/campaigns/wildlife/bigstop/takeaction</u>

Contacts

Press office direct lines: 0300 123 0244/0288

E-mail: press@rspca.org.uk

www.rspca.org.uk/media t: @rspca_official f: facebook.com/rspca

> Duty press officer (evenings and weekends) Tel 08448 222888 and ask for pager number 828825

Southwater, Horsham West Sussex RH13 9RS Tel 0300 1234 555