

A photograph of a young rhinoceros calf standing in a grassy field. The calf is light grey with thick, wrinkled skin. It is positioned in the foreground, facing right. Behind it, the lower half of an adult rhinoceros is visible, showing its large, dark, wrinkled skin and a prominent horn. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the natural environment.

Dr **Cheng** Wen-Haur
Deputy CEO / Chief Life Sciences Officer
Wildlife Reserves Singapore

WRS Animal Welfare Framework

Wildlife Reserves Singapore Group





WRS Animal Welfare Framework

- Animal Welfare Code
- External Oversight
- Management Structure
- Communication – Internal and External

WRS Animal Welfare Code

- Statement of Commitment to Provide Positive Welfare for the animals in our care
- Drafted by representatives of Life Sciences team members in 2016
- Adopted in 2017 by Top Management: Ensuring resources to provide positive welfare
- Clearly defines animal welfare in our context
- Ongoing Communication to ensure all animal care staff understands and delivers the code as part of their daily work

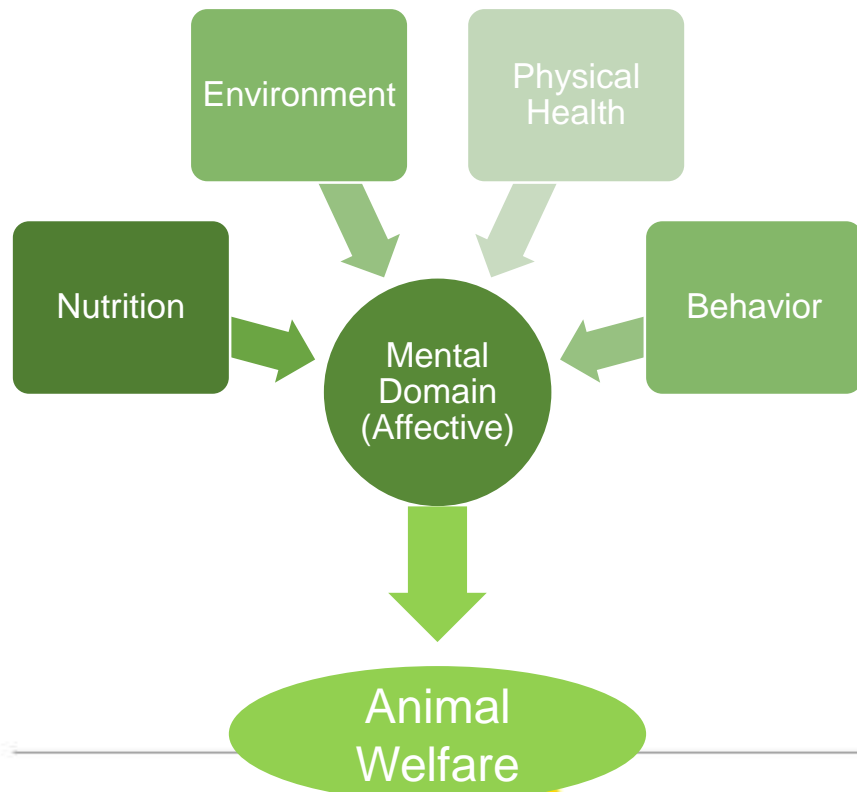




What is Animal Welfare

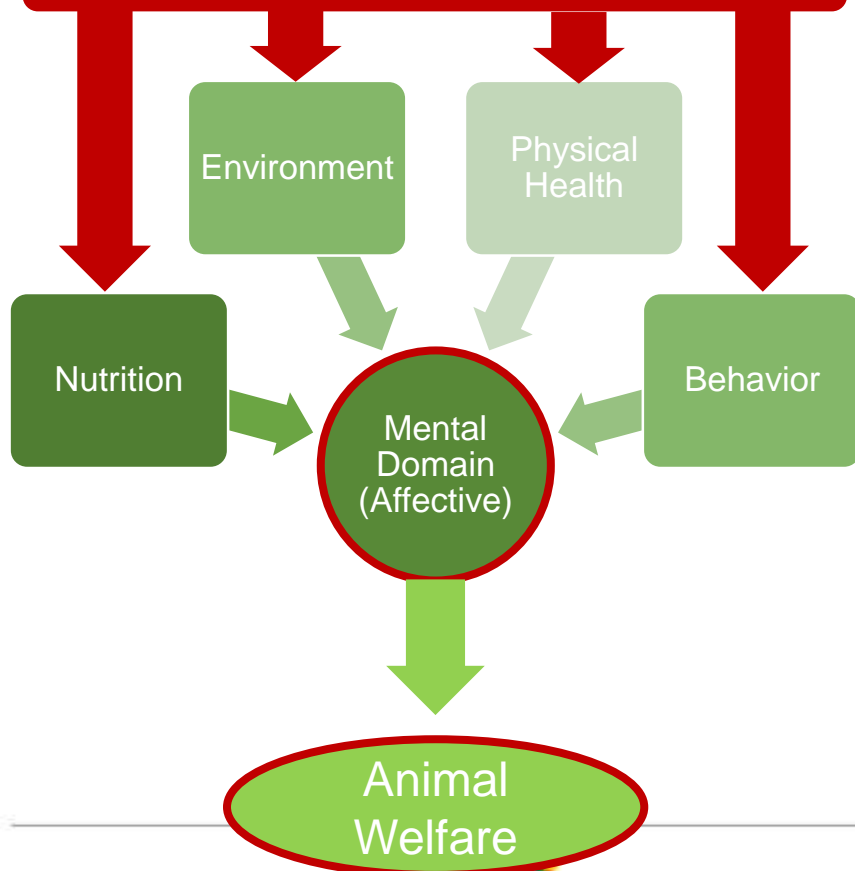
- **Animal Welfare** refers to how animals relate and cope with their environment
- It is the result of all experiences animals are exposed to, both negative and positive and as such can be affected by different components of the environment
- Animals in good (positive) welfare are healthy, well-nourished, able to express natural behaviors and live in an adequate environment

5 Domains of Animal Welfare



5 Domains of Animal Welfare

Animal Care Practices in the Zoo



5 Freedoms vs 5 Domains

5 Freedoms

Hunger & Thirst
Discomfort
Pain and Disease
To express natural behavior
Fear and Distress

Aims at alleviating suffering
Originated from intensive industrial
farming mid-20th century

5 Domains

Nutrition
Environment
Physical health
Behavior
Mental

Aspire to allow animals to **thrive**
and to have **a life worth living in**
our care
Actively promotes **positive welfare**
as the animal experiences take
centerstage



WRS Animal Welfare Framework

- Animal Welfare Code
- **External Oversight**
- Management Structure
- Communication – Internal and External

External Oversights

- Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee (AWEC)
- External Advisory Committee providing guidance and oversight on matters pertaining to animal welfare and animal ethics
- Majority External and Independent Members
- Animal management, wildlife experts as well as minimum 2 independent members who have no professional training or background with animals
- Approval / endorsement of welfare related /ethically sensitive matters



External Accreditation

- WRS is an accredited member of EAZA and ZAA
- Southeast Asian Zoos and Aquariums Association, SEAZA just commenced our own welfare certification system
- All WAZA members will require its members to passed its own regional association accreditation system by 2023

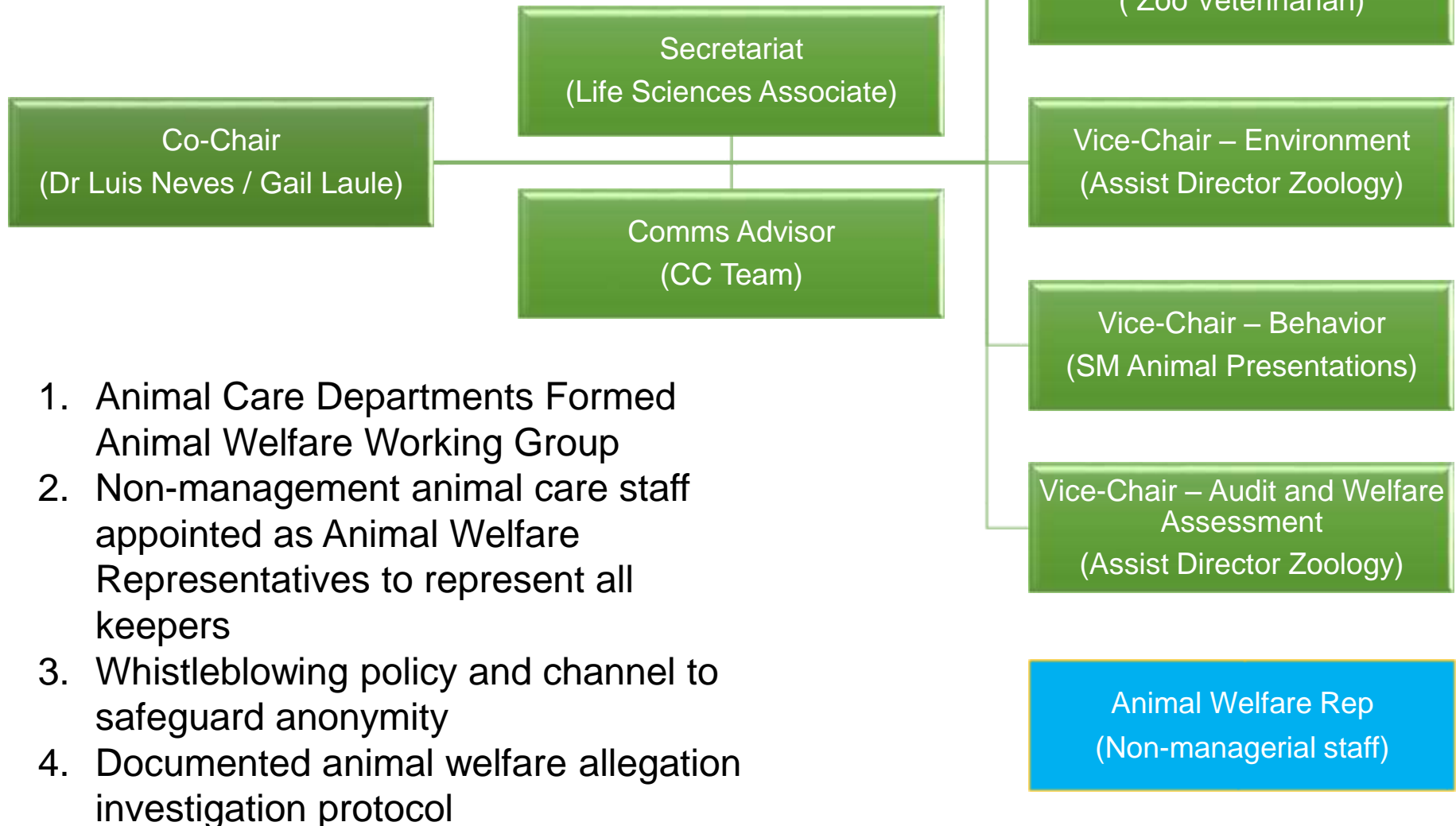




WRS Animal Welfare Framework

- Animal Welfare Code
- External Oversight
- **Management Structure**
- Communication – Internal and External

WRS Animal Welfare Working Group





Continual Upskilling of Staff

- Animal Care staff has the biggest impact to ensure great welfare for our animal
- In-house Courses: Basic Animal Husbandry , Zookeeper Development Program
- Ongoing Consultant Assisted Workshops: Positive Re-enforcement Training, Behaviour Enrichment
- Overseas Study Tours





Quality of Life Assessment

Allows for evidence-based decision-making

Allows for objective tracking of the QoLA progression through the animals lifetime / course of disease

Quality of Life Assessment (QoLA)

- Provides evidence-based evaluation of the life quality of an individual
 - “A life Worth Living”
- Scoring system (1 - 5) based on objective assessment of:
 - Pain
 - Daily “Maintenance” Behaviors
 - Food Intake / Appetite
 - Ease of Movement
 - Social Interaction w/ others and/or caretakers
- A total score under 18 equals compromise of quality of life



Old Boy, 25 years old
Malayan Crested Fireback



WRS Animal Welfare Framework

- Animal Welfare Code
- External Oversight
- Management Structure
- **Communication – Internal and External**



Internal and External Communication

- Internal: Board, senior management, all staff
 - To ensure commitment and support at the highest level
 - To build an animal welfare culture among animal care staff
- External: Local community and external partners
 - To build trust and goodwill
 - To be regarded as leaders and champions of animal welfare

High Profile Sensitive Case

26 yo 'Singaporean' Polar Bear
Severe arthritis and paw lesions

Assessed by QLA to have
irreversible poor quality of life



Roberto Z. Coloma

38 mins • 2

Wildlife Reserves Singapore has the best communications department in the country, bar none. #inukathebear





Thank You