



Wild Animals in Circuses Act 2019

2019 CHAPTER 24

1 Prohibition on use of wild animals in travelling circuses in England

- (1) A circus operator may not use a wild animal in a travelling circus in England.
- (2) For the purposes of this section, a circus operator uses a wild animal in a travelling circus if the animal performs or is exhibited as part of the circus.
- (3) A circus operator who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine.
- (4) Where an offence under this section is committed by a body corporate and is proved—
 - (a) to have been committed with the consent or connivance of an officer of the body corporate, or
 - (b) to be attributable to any neglect on the part of an officer of the body corporate, the officer (as well as the body corporate) is guilty of the offence and liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.
- (5) In this Act—
 - “animal” has the meaning given by section 1(1) of the Animal Welfare Act 2006;
 - “circus operator”, in relation to a circus, means—
 - (a) the owner of the circus,
 - (b) any other person with overall responsibility for the operation of the circus, and
 - (c) if neither the owner of the circus nor any person with overall responsibility for its operation is present in the United Kingdom, the person in the United Kingdom who is ultimately responsible for the operation of the circus;
 - “officer”, in relation to a body corporate, means—
 - (a) a director, manager, secretary or other similar officer of the body corporate, and
 - (b) any person purporting to act in any such capacity;

“wild animal” means an animal of a kind which is not commonly domesticated in Great Britain.

2 Inspections

The Schedule makes provision about inspections for the purposes of this Act.

3 Consequential amendment

In section 5(2) of the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 (exemption from Act for animals kept in circuses), after “circus” insert “in Wales”.

4 Extent, commencement and short title

- (1) This Act extends to England and Wales only, except that the amendment made by section 3 also extends to Scotland.
- (2) This Act comes into force on 20 January 2020.
- (3) This Act may be cited as the Wild Animals in Circuses Act 2019.