

**Submission
No 248**

COMPANION ANIMAL BREEDING PRACTICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Mrs Amy Mariette BLACKMORE
Date Received: 15/06/2015

Dear Joint Standing Committee Members,

My thanks to the NSW Baird Government for finally listening to the concerns of animal welfare advocates. We have long clamored for the State's companion animals to receive the care and attention they deserve. Also, thank you for providing the opportunity for people to provide a submission to this Inquiry.

There are many uncaring, unscrupulous, greedy people who care nothing for the misery they inflict on animals. This is true across all animal industries, and all every government has done is listened to, and protected vested interests. Is this Inquiry to be the turning point, where good men actually do something to prevent evil continuing to happen?

I do not need to tell you the conditions that have been exposed by animal advocates in the intensive breeding facilities of our companion animals. It is telling that it was animal lovers who uncovered the putrid underbelly, for there was no government body to protect these abused animals. In fact, the governments' inadequate laws, lack of policing, and uncaring courts, have made a mockery of animal welfare, and have protected the abusers.

If this Inquiry is to achieve more than the previous Companion Animals Taskforce, I hope that you take to heart what animal lovers request.

1. There must be a Companion Animal Breeder Licensing Program which registers ALL breeders.

Any breeding of animals without prior registration and certification as a breeder, should be illegal and hefty fines imposed. No 'accidental breeding' of family pets must be tolerated.

2. Backyard breeders must be specifically targeted. These leeches care nothing for breed standards, or proper animal husbandry. A quick buck is all they are after and it is highly unlikely that report their income and pay tax.

They do not abide by codes that require microchipping before sale. They advertise through such venues as [REDACTED] and other sites like these.

The Government must set up a 1800 number where these people can be reported, investigated stopped and prosecuted. Their premises must come under the same scrutiny as licensed breeders, and they must be prosecuted if they are not licensed breeders.

3. The Licensing Program must set strict standards regarding adequate care – warm, soft clean bedding; plentiful nutritious food and clean water made available daily; dry, well ventilated hygienic housing (with concrete floors); all animals must be allowed daily exercise in roomy outdoor runs; animals must be allowed to socialize and play with others, and preferably with people too.

There is no point in setting these standards if they are not policed which is the current situation. To rely on a charity (RSPCA, and even worse, the AWL) to uphold laws and ambiguous slack codes, is ludicrous. This shows the Government is just NOT serious, but just wants to 'appear to be doing something'.

It has been shown many times over that some people cannot be trusted to do the right thing. Regular, unannounced inspections by a purposely set-up group of animal welfare advocates, must be instituted to ensure standards are upheld. Inspectors from the Department of Primary Industries are not necessarily animal lovers and cannot be trusted to do a good job and be unbiased. Only people who genuinely love animals must be employed.

4. A limit must be set on the number of breeding animals a registered breeder can have on their property. This is to ensure better care, better kenneling and more space per animal.

5. A limit must be set on the number of litters in year, and the number of times an animal can be bred in its lifetime. Animals at the end of their breeding cycle must be cared for, not killed and dumped as sometimes happens. Such animals can be found homes by rescue groups, or pet shops.

6. In no way must puppies and kittens be bred for sale in Pet Shops! Pet Shops can do a good service by being an outlet for rescued animals. Some already do that, and it is proving to be a great success.

7. A ban on the selective breeding of animals for characteristics that are physically or psychologically harmful to the animal itself or to others, for example breeding that makes a dog more aesthetically pleasing but compromises their health. There are many examples of this – even German Shepherds have in-bred design faults.

8. Lastly, for this to be meaningful, the DPI's Codes of Practice must be re-drafted. They are hopelessly inadequate, full of loopholes, using suggestive, rather than directive phrasing, and sub-

standard to today's best practices. The previous DPI Minister, Katrina Hodgkinson (who was involved with the Companion Animals Taskforce) has done nothing to correct these failings, although she said that she was 'concerned' about animal cruelty. Can we rely on the new Minister to correct failings in the legislation? Suggestive language, which is not enforceable, does not make people abide by codes of practice.

Yours Sincerely,

Amy Mariette Blackmore