

**Submission
No 256**

COMPANION ANIMAL BREEDING PRACTICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Name Suppressed
Date Received: 15/06/2015

Partially Confidential

Dear Joint Standing Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Inquiry into Companion Animal Breeding Practices in New South Wales.

Companion animals continue to be abused in intensive breeding facilities around New South Wales with investigations revealing a lack of veterinary care, unhygienic conditions and overcrowding.

Puppy farms breed dogs intensively under appalling conditions that fail to meet the animals' behavioural and physical needs. Breeding bitches and their puppies are often kept in small cages, causing immense suffering and a host of medical and behavioural problems. For many unfortunate animals, this confinement is for their entire breeding life. For the puppies produced by these farms, many will have long-term health and behavioural problems as a result of the inadequate conditions they were born into.

In order to effectively stop puppy farming, a clear line needs to be drawn between responsible dog breeding and puppy farming. In order to do this, the following outcomes need to be achieved:

1. A legislated breeder licensing program in New South Wales that sets strict standards on adequate housing, exercise, socialisation, hygiene and food. It must require not only an initial certification but annual inspections by a competent person or organization with a proven and demonstrated concern for animal welfare
2. There must be significant penalties for anyone breeding animals outside the breeder licensing system.
3. All dogs are permanently traceable to the breeder and all subsequent owners and sellers through a nationally coordinated system.
4. Compulsory minimum standards for the breeding of dogs, linked to enforceable animal welfare legislation, consistent across all jurisdictions.
5. Compulsory minimum standards for the sale of dogs, linked to enforceable legislation, consistent in all jurisdictions.
6. Strengthened export provisions for sale of puppies overseas.
7. A high level of awareness of puppy farming with Centrelink and the ATO and increased compliance with taxation laws.
8. Gaps in regulations for the welfare of dogs in the breeding and sale of dogs are closed and regulations are effectively enforced.
9. Ban the sale of animals from pet shops, online (including [REDACTED]), markets and in print media and encourage pet shops to work with local rescue and welfare organizations to assist with adoptions of homeless animals.
10. A limit on the number of animals a registered breeder can have on their property, to ensure better animal welfare outcomes.
11. A limit on the number of times an animal can be bred in its life, as well as protections for animals that have reached the end of their breeding cycle.
12. 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.

13. A high level of public awareness about puppy farming and the responsibilities of breeders, retailers and buyers. Many people in New South Wales continue to purchase dogs from intensive breeders with little information about the conditions in which these dogs are bred.

In order to achieve these outcomes, some important but practical steps need to be taken to improve current controls over the breeding and sale of dogs in Australia. You will find a report detailing the required actions in a document produced by the RSPCA entitled "Legislating to end Puppy farming"

I support animals from approved rescue shelters be sold in pet shops providing that appropriate measures are put in place for adoptions, which protect the welfare of the animal.

I ask that the Companion Animals Act 1998 and other relevant legislation be reviewed immediately, with a view to shutting down these puppy factories.

While the focus of this submission has been on Puppy Farms there are also large numbers of cats and kittens killed every year due to cat owners not de-sexing their cats, un-owned abandoned or feral cats breeding unchecked, back-yard breeders of cats breeding indiscriminately and kitten farms. The unregulated breeding of kittens and the very high euthanasia of cats and kittens is another issue that needs serious and urgent attention.

Yours Sincerely

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