

**Submission
No 16**

COMPANION ANIMAL BREEDING PRACTICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Date Received: 1/06/2015

[REDACTED]

1 June 2015

From: Ms Patricia A Lightfoot
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To: Committee Inquiry into puppy farming and sale to pet shops.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

There is great concern regarding the above and as I have been involved with dogs and cats since 1974 I think my experience may be of some assistance.

I have owned dogs mainly since 1974 when I bought a golden retriever puppy as a pet originally to guard my prize gold fish from cats. He was registered with the RASKC (now Dogs NSW) the pedigree register for breeders of pure bred dogs of licensed or registered breeders. As it was he won best puppy in breed at the Royal Easter Show, handled by his breeder. So I decided I would continue his show career. He gained his Championship title 2 years later, when we retired him. During this time his highest award was Reserve Challenge at the Royal Easter show. These were days when in a metropolitan championship show, especially one that introduced International judges, there were often 2,000 entries, the Royal Easter show would have in excess of 5,000 entries. Now these have reduced to much less than this. Showing dogs and breeding them is a very expensive hobby nowadays, especially some of the exotic and rare breeds that cost thousands to buy as a puppy, and their new owners vetted by the breeders. Or should be shall we say, and in my experience they are. People prepared to pay \$1000 plus for a puppy, should by rights know what they are in for.

Dog breeders licensed by Dogs NSW are monitored very closely, and if they are not following the ethics set down for their particular breed, they are investigated and may lose their license. However, it is councils that license kennels and if one is granted by them, [REDACTED] then anyone can breed puppies without any restraints to how many litters a bitch can have and the conditions they are housed, etc. Unless the RSPCA is informed. Even they are, only in exceptional conditions, able to close a kennel down permanently.

There are no laws that stop anyone from breeding dogs (and selling them to a pet shop). Just ask the local branch of the RSPCA [REDACTED], who know the number of post natal puppies that are dumped along the roads or in ditches.

My dog Teddy was one of these, he and his litter brother were left tied to the gate of the shelter on a Saturday. Luckily the manager came to feed the dogs and found them. Although I had pure bred whippets, both champions, I wanted a dog suitable for obedience training. So I took Teddy when I inspected their pen, two quiet little boys, sitting looking at me and when I asked 'What are you two doing here?', Teddy barked once, put one ear up and his head on one side. He came from a farm (working dogs) I think as within days when sheep appeared on the TV he looked and barked at them. He developed into a border collie and is now nearly 12 years old. He was desexed and went to obedience earning 2 CCD passes, before I was forced to give up due to a hip disability.

Personally I believe it should be mandatory for all dogs and cats to be de-sexed unless they are registered on the main register of Dogs NSW at birth or the Feline equivalent. It would be almost impossible to monitor, as even puppies on the limited register of Dogs NSW are sold entire and that doesn't stop a new owner from breeding from them in the future.

Councils should monitor all dogs to make sure they are registered for life with the council. It is more expensive to register an entire dog or bitch. Working dogs that do not require to be registered, should be kept on their premises or farm. But they are not. One has to only watch the advertisements on the Internet or even local paper, where puppies are for sale from working or pig hunting stock. A good working dog is a very very important tool for a farmer admittedly, and a good one worth hundreds of dollars to them. But a working dog does not make for a happy domestic pet if the right conditions are not supplied. Such as obedience or trialing of some kind to keep them from being bored from lack of mental activity. [REDACTED] if very wary of this when selling working dogs of pure or mixed breed. He won't let one go unless he is certain the dog is going into the right environment for him/her.

I must add I think the [REDACTED] has more dog leash parks than [REDACTED], which is part of the responsible dog owners lobbying and work by various canine clubs and members. They have an active Dogs NSW breed and obedience clubs.

[REDACTED] Or puppies from working dog stock being dumped or given away to unsuitable owners. Some are never retrieved by their owners, (they are not micro-chipped) and often are not suitable for re-homing as pets unless they can be placed in another suitable working environment.

I do believe there are some very sensible and responsible pet shops and stopping them from selling surplus puppies or kittens, may add to the number of stray or dumped puppies and kittens in the community. Of course – these pet shops are also licensed or should be. Clover Moore put forward a bill years ago that was defeated regarding pet shops. I don't feel it is only puppy farms giving them stock it is back yard breeders too.

Just monitor the 'for sale' ads in the local papers, and then monitor them. Note – often there is only a mobile number attached. All households should have council registered dogs, cats are not by law need to be registered with the council, which I believe they should be. But some are registered as a way of retrieving the cat should they stray.

Any kennels breeding dogs should be licensed by the council and inspected regularly, even the ones belonging to registered breeders with Dogs NSW. Farmers should register their working dogs and microchip their dogs and should they breed a litter make sure the puppies go to responsible homes and not given away to anyone, the same with pig dogs or bull Arab breeds. All puppies are cute, it's when they grow up some owners will have problems. Invariably it is the dog or bitch that misses out and ends up destroyed or unwanted.

Yours faithfully

Patricia A. Lightfoot (Ms)