

**Submission
No 240**

COMPANION ANIMAL BREEDING PRACTICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Ms Janine Hodge
Date Received: 15/06/2015

To: Joint Select Committee on Companion Animal Breeding Practices in New South Wales
From: Janine Hodge

My submission to the Committee is in relation to unregulated establishments used for the commercial intensive breeding of dogs, commonly known as “puppy factories”.

RSPCA statistics for 2012 - 2013 show that over 10,000 dogs are euthanased nationally each year, including over 4,000 in NSW.

In light of these sad statistics, I would like to submit to the Committee that the strictest controls be placed upon the breeding of puppies for sale through pet shops and online. Clearly there is already a gross oversupply of dogs, and to allow more dogs to be bred when so many are in need of homes, is unconscionable.

We, as a community, are responsible for the plight of these dogs.

Many organisations, such as the Animal Welfare League, Oscar’s Law, Animals Australia and the RSPCA have brought to light numerous terrible examples of puppy factories where dogs are kept in conditions that no normal person can see as anything other than cruel and degraded. It cannot be acceptable that any animals are subjected to this kind of treatment and neglect simply to make profit for unregulated backyard breeders. Any members of the Committee who have ever had a pet dog will know that the conditions discovered in some puppy factories are simply wrong.

Sadly, there are clearly people in our community who have no care at all for the treatment of animals, as long as there is money to be made. Because we know that there will always be people who cannot be relied to behave decently, we must introduce the strictest controls and regulations, and ensure that we police them. If we fail to do this, then we are all morally responsible for what occurs in these desperate places. Self-regulation and voluntary “Codes of Practice” are clearly inadequate where serious animal welfare issues are at stake.

I would like to submit that the Committee consider making changes to our animal management and welfare legislation that:

- ensure the traceability of animals to a breeder - including registration of breeders, microchipping of all animals, and the display of breeder registration credentials at point of sale
- uphold animal welfare standards in relation to the treatment of breeding dogs and puppies, including provisions for exercise, veterinary care, numbers of litters, social contact for the dogs, staff to animal ratios, standards of housing for the dogs
- mandate regular monitoring for breeding establishments and punitive penalties where laws are not complied with, including the seizure and removal of dogs from a property.

Organisations such as the RSPCA have articulated the changes that are needed in relation to this “industry”, and I refer you to the work they have done.

Please take this opportunity to make the changes that will protect dogs from the kinds of conditions that were exposed at this [REDACTED] puppy mill:

[REDACTED]

It’s time. We all know it’s time.