

**Submission
No 313**

COMPANION ANIMAL BREEDING PRACTICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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15 June 2015

The Hon Adam Marshall MP
Chair of the Joint Select Committee on Companion
Animal Breeding Practices,
Parliament House,
Macquarie Street,
Sydney NSW 2000.

Dear Mr Marshall

Re: Submission by Campbelltown City Council to the CABP inquiry

1. Campbelltown City Council recognises that the breeding of companion animals in NSW is governed by standards which fall under the auspices of animal welfare organisations such as the RSPCA and would therefore like to make a submission in general terms from Council's perspective that relate to the specific terms of reference of the inquiry.

2. Campbelltown is a Regional City with a population of approximately 155,000 people living in some 52,000 residential properties. The socio-economic make-up of the population is quite diverse and varies from the very low income earners to those which make up the top 10% of income earners in the state.

There are almost 15,000 cats and 45,000 dogs identified on the Companion Animals Register as domiciled in the Campbelltown LGA. The owners of most of these animals would be considered responsible, however it is estimated (based on the percentage of micro-chipped animals received at the Council Animal Care Facility) that the total number of companion animals in the city, numbers at around 74,000 dogs and 110,000 cats. It is estimated that in the Campbelltown LGA, 41% of dogs and 87% of cats are not micro-chipped.

3. There are a significant number of unwanted dogs and cats. These animals are allowed to stray uncontrolled in the streets which apart from being a nuisance can also create a safety issue to persons and traffic in the city. Each year approximately 2,000 dogs and 1,100 cats are impounded in the Campbelltown LGA. Whilst we have over 25 companion animal rescue organisations on our books, unfortunately hundreds of animals are still euthanized each year because of the large numbers that are unwanted. We see that a large part of the problem is the unregulated breeding of companion animals which leads to an oversupply and therefore high euthanasia rates.

4. The cost to the community for the impounding and caring for companion animals in pounds and shelters is significantly high and potentially unsustainable into the future. This cost has been steadily rising with community expectations for better treatment and care of impounded companion animals increasing in conjunction with the growing demand for

housing of impounded animals, due to the ongoing oversupply of unwanted companion animals.

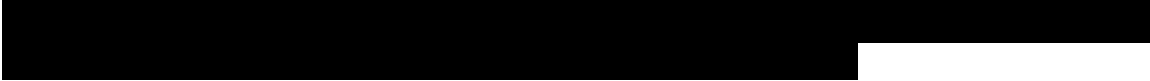
5. In terms of safety, Campbelltown has one of the highest incidents of reported dog attacks in the state. A large number of attacks are caused by unwanted, uncontrolled and roaming dogs in streets, parks and reserves around our city.

6. Campbelltown City Council has taken a number of initiatives to try and reduce the number of unwanted animals in our city. These include the implementation of policy to de-sex every companion animal sold from the animal shelter; community education; and council funded companion animal de-sexing programs for low income earners, including a de-sexing program jointly funded under the NSW state government's "Responsible Pet Ownership Grants Program."

Whilst these initiatives contribute to a localised easing of the problem, it clearly is not enough. It is our view that further regulatory intervention of breeding practices across NSW, stemming from the proposed inquiry is required.

Recommendations:

- This Council supports the recommendation of the NSW Companion Animals Taskforce in that "a breeder licensing system should be established and the Companion Animals Register should be updated to capture breeder licence information for each animal record".
- We support the recommendation of the NSW Companion Animals Taskforce to revise the Animal Welfare Code of Practice for breeding dogs and cats so that the guidelines become more enforceable under POCTA.
- We recommend that only breeders of recognised pedigree animals be licensed and that the breeding of cross breeds be prohibited. Furthermore, Council supports the CAPB inquiry examining the issue of pet store retailing, particularly with a view to restricting potential for "impulse buying" of companion animals, given the significant numbers of surrendered animals received by Council companion animal impound facilities. This may help shut down or reduce the proliferation of puppy farms and backyard breeders and eliminate the health problems in animals which are inherent with cross breeding.
- We also recommend that each licensed breeder be limited on the number of litters so as to eliminate or at least reduce the current oversupply of unwanted animals. This process may be assisted by working closely with recognised organisations such as Dogs NSW and the NSW Cat Fanciers Association to ensure that objective restrictions are introduced that are based on realistic demand for each breed.
- It is also recommended that the committee consider some form of enforceable or more highly incentivised de-sexing of non-breeding stock of companion animals so as to reduce unintended breeding.



Yours sincerely

Ms Lindy Deitz
Acting General Manager