

**Submission
No 118**

INQUIRY INTO PUPPY FARMING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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A puppy farm/mill/factory – the latter being the most accurate description - is an inhumane high-volume dog breeding facility that churns out puppies for profit, whilst ignoring the needs and welfare of the pups and their mothers.

To prevent this cruelty, all dog breeders (with 3 or more breeding animals) should have to register with their local council before they can operate their business, and be required to undergo pre-registration and regular renewal of registration inspections, as set out in the Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms) Bill 2021. Similar rules must apply also for cat breeders. The current framework is outdated and difficult, allowing the mass overbreeding of animals to continue largely unregulated.

It is known, through reputable animal welfare organisations, such as the RSPCA, Animal Welfare League, Animal Liberation, etc. that many welfare problems exist in most of these factories, such as overcrowding, confinement, poor sanitation and insufficient food and water, leading to a very poor quality of life for the animals concerned. They suffer painful and potentially life-shortening veterinary problems due to the lack of proper oversight or veterinary care. This lack of proper care can lead to the production of puppies that can suffer from severe psychological and medical problems. Female dogs, and cats, are bred from for their entire lives, with breeding bitches (and queens) being callously euthanased, when no longer reproductive. Hundreds of animals can be kept at a single farm.

Rules must be implemented such as:

- annual vet checks for each dog (and cat) of the business, as well as before and after breeding.
- a 'fertile female' should be defined as a female dog or cat that is at least 12 months of age
- a staff ratio of at least one staff member for every five animals kept at the facility
- pet shops must be restricted to selling only animals sourced from pounds or shelters, not from puppy farms.
- all facilities should be issued a licence number which must be quoted for sales on line

For the year 2019-2020 the RSPCA alone received just over 28,000 unwanted, abandoned and seized dogs, almost 3,500 of which were euthanased, mainly due to over population in the shelters. If puppy factories are allowed to continue to operate, these numbers will only increase.

The demand for pets during Covid-19 has led to an increase of reported puppy factories. Since 1st July 2020, there have been 22 puppy factory raids in NSW. •

Victoria banned puppy farms in 2017. However, that doesn't stop previously unscrupulous breeders in Victoria, as some have just relocated over the border into NSW.

It is absolutely unacceptable that these factories be allowed to continue, as the majority of perpetrators have no love or concern for the dogs and puppies produced on their premises, but are interested only in the large amounts of profit to be made. This Bil will effectively regulate puppy factories out of existence and is in line with Victoria and Western Australian legislation. I strongly support it.