

**Submission  
No 221**

## **INQUIRY INTO PUPPY FARMING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Cheryl Forrest-Smith

**Date Received:** 3 March 2022

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Re: NSW - 'The provisions of the Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms) Bill 2021'

Dear Inquiry Panel Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to lodge my personal submission in response to the above.

### 1 Puppy Farms: The Hidden Suffering Behind the Marketing

Puppy farms are live-animal factories that hold anywhere from 20 to 1,000 mother dogs in horrendous conditions.

### 2 Strawberry: her short life is her message

She was still a puppy when she was left to endure a horrific 4 days of pain and suffering so intense that it killed her.

The whistleblowers called her Strawberry.

A beautiful boxer puppy not even one-year-old when she was forced to endure a pregnancy and birthing process that her young body simply couldn't cope with.



- Strawberry managed to deliver 3 pups before complications set in. Strawberry struggled for days trying to birth the rest of her pups.

As she grew weaker by the hour, she started oozing green and brown fluid and she was described by the whistleblowers as smelling 'dead'.

As she lay there deteriorating and becoming dangerously ill, the flies started to swarm over her body laying their eggs. Within 24 hours Strawberry, still clinging to life, was crawling with maggots. They were in her mouth and her vagina.

Her pups had died inside her and started to rot... and she gave birth to small pieces of her dead puppies. Strawberry was seriously ill but her owner did not take her to the vet.

- **8 weeks after Strawberry died, her two surviving puppies appeared on the Facebook page of, a West Australian pet shop. Their pictures were accompanied by a simple post: coming soon - 2 female boxer puppies. Belying their tragic start to life and the fate of their mother and litter-mates whose bodies were discarded at the back of the puppy factory.**



Strawberry's abuse occurred on a puppy factory that the New South Wales Agriculture Minister Adam Marshall claims was 'monitored' by authorities and is regulated by 'robust' animal welfare legislation.

### 3 Cruelty And The Council

The story of cruelty, corruption — and a council who refused to act.

Last year we investigated a horrendous puppy factory within Berrigan Shire Council in Southern NSW ran by local puppy farmer. Berrigan Shire Council simply turned a blind eye.



- **In fact, they refused to even acknowledge she was running a puppy factory.** Even though this puppy factory was in breach of the state government's code of practice, in breach of local government by-laws and in breach of the NSW Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.

When it became clear that Berrigan Shire Council were ignoring us and refusing to do their job, we quickly lodged another complaint, this time with RSPCA NSW.

Thankfully the RSPCA (along with their vet) raided the property and removed a large number of dogs that were being kept in appalling conditions in tiny cages, clearly in urgent need of veterinary attention, ear infections, dental disease, open and untreated wounds. The attending RSPCA vet was able to provide medical treatment immediately on site and many of the dogs were taken to RSPCA where they received ongoing vet work and rehabilitation.

Had the council chosen to do their job rather than decide to protect illegal business, these dogs could have been saved earlier.

### 4 The code of practice and non-compliance

Currently in NSW, the code of practice cannot be utilised unless there is a complaint made, and even then, only if those in authority choose to do their job. Many puppy factories that Oscar's Law has exposed in NSW have never been inspected by the local councils that issued the original

development application. In several cases, puppy factories have gone unchecked for over 15 years!

Just one example of non-compliance and inaction - which is current:

‘Development Application (DA), for a Modification of Existing Approval for Use of Existing Property for the Purpose of an Animal Boarding & Training Facility – Dog Breeding’.

Prior to the application, the applicant has a catalogue of blatant non-compliance issues going back to 2019. Council received approximately 45 formal, informed and valid objections. To date, Council and animal welfare agency monitoring, compliance, and enforcement action has been completely inadequate and ineffective, and the enabled the Applicant to continue non-compliance practices.

Of additional concern, is this Applicant’s (‘FindAFrenchie’) dog breed. French Bulldogs are amongst several brachycephalic or “flat-faced” bred dogs who suffer from Brachycephalic Obstructive Airway Syndrome (BOAS) negatively impacting on their ability to breathe normally. This condition significantly compromises their welfare.

- Please see ‘Supplementary file’: My submission to Central Coast Council, lodged 16.02.22.

This is just a very small glimpse of the ample evidence, readily available, of the suffering and death inflicted on animals by the puppy factory industry, because it is primarily driven by profit - To maximise financial gain. Money and animals are a toxic mix, and the animals always pay a terrible price.

### Summary

I am strongly opposed to the commercial breeding and intensive housing of dogs and puppies, cats and kittens. These operations, commonly known as puppy factories, generate serious and abhorrent animal welfare issues across Australia and notably in NSW. The industry in NSW is self-regulated and many councils are seemingly complicit. NSW laws need to be urgently amended to bring them into line with recent changes to the Victorian legislation. Because now, NSW has become the puppy farming capital as more and more states implement legislation to stamp out this cruel trade – with puppy farmers flocking to where the laws are weakest, e.g.

In NSW, there is no state-wide licensing or registration scheme in place, no limit on the number of female dogs any breeder can have, no limit on the number of litters dogs and cats are forced to have, no mandatory vet checks or staffing ratios, and no qualification requirement for breeders.

Countless investigations, including Animals Australia’s, have uncovered dogs living in barren and putrid pens without adequate food, water, exercise, vet care, or socialisation. Their only ‘purpose’ in life is to be breeding machines for the breeders to sell the puppies and kittens they give birth to for maximum profits. The fate of ‘spent’ animals is also of very grave concern.

The commercial breeding and intensive housing of dogs and puppies, cats and kittens does not provide any community or public benefit. It most certainly is not in the interests of the animals – In addition to the cruelty involved, puppy and kitten farms contribute to the constantly growing issue of companion animal overpopulation and abandonment. When every year in Australia, thousands of healthy dogs and cats are killed in pounds and shelters, simply because there aren’t enough homes for them, deliberately breeding companion animals and selling them for thousands of dollars is an obscenity.

The time is well-overdue for NSW to ban this systemically cruel, ruthless, profit-driven industry and save the lives of the thousands of beautiful, abandoned dogs and cats, puppies and kittens through the support and promotion of responsible adoption.

Yours faithfully – and in hope,