

**Submission
No 337**

COMPANION ANIMAL BREEDING PRACTICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Willoughby City Council
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Position: Corporate Planning and Governance Co-ordinator
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Mr David Hale
Joint Select Committee on Companion Animal
Breeding Practices in New South Wales
Parliament House
6 Macquarie Street
Sydney, NSW 2000

Dear Mr Hale

RE: Joint Select Committee on Companion Animal
Breeding Practices in New South Wales

We kindly request the Joint Select Committee on Companion Animal Breeding Practices in New South Wales considers this submission on behalf of the Companion Animals Committee of Willoughby City Council. We understand the formal submission period has closed, however the Companion Animals Committee would be grateful if the points raised in this submission could be considered by the Joint Select Committee.

The submission, prepared by the Companion Animals Committee is as follows:

About the Willoughby City Council Companion Animals Advisory Committee

The Willoughby City Council Companion Animals Advisory Committee ('the Committee') consists of elected Councillors, pet industry professionals (including a veterinarian), Council officers who deal with companion animal matters (such as Rangers and Bushland specialists) and local community representatives. The Committee was established over 15 years ago and acts to promote responsible pet ownership, raise awareness of the benefits of keeping pets and contribute to solving companion animal-related issues in the Willoughby area.

Members of the Committee are also very concerned about the conditions in which some companion animals are produced and the numbers of companion animals euthanased each year in NSW. We therefore wish to submit the following points for consideration by the Joint Select Committee on Companion Animal Breeding Practices in NSW.

a) the current situation in New South Wales in comparison with other jurisdictions;

While the situation in each State is important, forming a nationwide approach is critical, due to the high numbers of trans-state purchases of puppies and kittens, bought sight unseen via the internet, and flown to the purchaser.

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(b) proposals to limit the number of animals allowed to be kept by breeders;

The Committee feels that there may be a place for limiting the number of cats and dogs held by one breeder. There are already council areas in NSW that limit the number of cats and dogs on a premises; this is also done in other states to deter hoarding and backyard breeders.

Unscrupulous breeders can mistreat one animal or many. The requirement that the nutritional, behavioural and veterinary needs of all the animals on the premises be met should be the dominant consideration.

(c) calls to implement a breeders' licensing system;

The Committee strongly supports a breeders' licensing system for anyone selling animals as pets. Properly publicised, this would allow purchasers to discern which breeders have satisfied set criteria to obtain a breeding licence.

Dogs NSW has a directory of breeders and promote responsible breeding practices, but obviously they have a vested interest in the industry and are not regulated. Control of breeders should rest with the RSPCA/NSW government.

(d) the implications of banning the sale of dogs and cats in pet stores;

Although there is a code of practice for animals in pet shops and recent studies have not shown that pets bought from pet shops are any more likely to be taken to a shelter than animals obtained from a shelter, cats and dogs and probably all mammals should not be kept in shops.

The pet industry body PIAA now has a guarantee to rehome any pets bought from one of their member pet shops - that is a pretty good guarantee but should be incumbent on all pet shops, not just PIAA members.

In the event that pet shops are allowed to continue to sell puppies and kittens, what guarantee can be given to potential pet buyers that the animals are from ethical breeders?

(e) any legislative changes that may be required; and

The Committee would like to see more authority given to animal welfare groups such as the RSPCA to inspect, report and prosecute unethical cat and dog breeders. There are adequate laws already available to police conditions within pet shops, but resources need to be devoted to enforcing them.

The registration system for companion animals requires review to improve ease of use and the quality of the data. As all animals are required to be chipped at time of purchase, councils could then play a much more effective role in this legislation.



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Councils should monitor online sellers of puppies and kittens in their local areas. This will assist in the stopping of puppy and kitten mills.

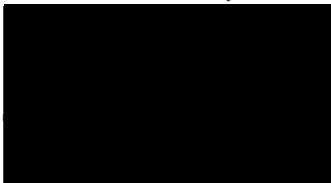
(f) any other related matter.

Online pet shopping

There is little or no policing of 'free to a good home' or 'purebred' animals offered on [REDACTED] and through other classified sites. Those animals are more at risk of relinquishment than pet shop purchased ones. As in a), above, the interstate nature of some of these transactions is a serious issue for both animal welfare and consumer protection.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission

Yours sincerely



Darius Turner
Corporate Planning and Governance Co-ordinator

On behalf of
Willoughby City Council Companion Animals Committee

