

**Submission
No 294**

COMPANION ANIMAL BREEDING PRACTICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Submission

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

Under the terms of reference a)

The current situation in New South Wales in comparison with other jurisdictions

I consider NSW has failed to take any significant action on banning puppy farms, backyard breeders or the banning of the selling of cats and dogs in pet shops and online. In Victoria and the ACT stringent new regulations, which include a promised ban on the sale of dogs and cats in pet shops in Victoria. I feel it is incumbent for NSW to follow the lead of Victoria and the ACT and take serious action.

The inadequate legislation in NSW, which is allowing dogs to suffer cruelty and neglect in puppy factories. The current NSW Code of Practice doesn't protect the welfare of animals and, once a permit is granted, there is no requirement for mandatory inspections or permit renewals.

Under the terms of reference b) Proposals to limit the number of animals allowed to be kept by breeders

I urge the NSW State Government to stamp out large scale puppy factories, by limiting the number of breeding dogs permitted and the number of litters any dog can have.

I firmly believe it is the responsibility of the NSW State Government to put an end to the use of dogs as breeding machines to supply the pet industry.

I also urge the NSW State Government to:

- Ban the sale of puppies and kittens through pet stores
 - Online trading sites
 - Backyard breeders
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- **Under the terms of reference c) Calls to implement a breeders' licensing system**
 - I urge the NSW State Government to put forward Proposals to limit the number of animals allowed to be kept by breeders, combined with strict regulations on the number of litters allowed each year, and the time between litters.

I urge the need for breeder legislation to require independent inspections based on enforceable Standards for the care and rehoming of breeding animals and their litters; microchipping which records the breeders' details; and desexing prior to sale or exchange of kittens, and puppies recognizing that overbreeding of cats and dogs is a major problem that urgently needs to be addressed by NSW State Government.

Pet shops are regulated in different ways in each State and Territory — whilst some require the kittens and pups to be vaccinated, and some to be microchipped, pet shops are generally not required to desex prior to sale.

Not only does the selling of non-desexed animals eventually contribute to the number of unwanted animals in shelters, for every animal sold, equally healthy and deserving animals needing homes in animal shelters are on death row waiting for someone to adopt them.

Pet shops should only be allowed when they are rehoming animals from a registered shelter, or rescue group. In this way pet shops become Adoption Centres, ensuring animals are vaccinated, desexed, microchipped and registered, as they would be when adopted from a pound or rescue group, whereas, in a pet shop, dogs and cats are sold with no regard for their future welfare, desexing etc.

- **Desexing prior to sale**
- If puppies and kittens between 8-10 weeks are required to be desexed before they are sold or transferred to their new home, they cannot contribute to the current overpopulation. This needs to be a national approach, introduced via each State's legislation, and enforced by Local Government officers with assistance from animal welfare agencies. It should be included as a requirement in Breeder and Pet Shop Permit systems. Desexing exemptions should be provided only if breeders with permits are supplying the animals to other breeders with government permits (of purebreds, and mixed breeds) who abide by responsible breeding standards and guidelines.
- All pounds, shelters and rescue groups should be required by State law to desex all cats and dogs, puppies and kittens prior to rehoming.
- Well promoted government subsidized desexing programs are essential to help financially disadvantaged owners of cats and dogs to desex their pets, and avoid unplanned breeding with the introduction of Breeder Permit systems. These have been successfully developed in conjunction with local vets and animal welfare groups in a number of cities.

It is also recommended that NSW State Government should actively promote adoption through rescue groups/pounds/shelters.

According to the terms of reference (d

The implications of banning the sale of dogs and cats in pet shops

I believe this will lead to a decrease in the euthanasia rate in our pounds and shelters, as well as removing a source of income and supply for the sale of puppies and kittens bred in puppy farms, kitten mills, and by backyard breeders. These facilities are inhuman animals are confined in atrocious conditions, many of them suffer illness and injury which is ignored.

250 000 healthy cats, kittens, dogs and puppies are euthanized annually in Australian Pounds and Shelters. I believe the banning of Puppy Farms and Backyard Breeding combined with the banning of the selling of puppies and kittens in Pet Shops is a progressive step in lowering these high rates of Euthanasia.

The NSW State Government can help fight the euthanasia of healthy adoptable cats and dogs. Adoption is the intelligent alternative to impulse buying. No puppy factory whether it is 'clean', 'model', 'state of the art' or otherwise is the answer.

“Adopt Don’t Buy While Pound Animals Die” should become an initiative of the NSW State Government. Policies and Legislation must be implemented, along with Media and Education Campaigns to decrease the euthanasia rates in NSW Pounds and Shelters.

I also suggest NSW has the potential to lead Australia in phasing out Kill Pounds and Shelters, and becoming the first state in Australia to implement Zero-Kill Refuges for cats, dogs and other homeless animals.

Thanking you for this opportunity to express my thoughts on this significant issue.

Kathryn Woolfe

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