

## **COALITION OF ANIMAL PROTECTORS**

### **PRESS RELEASE - CAP COMMENTS ON ACT PUPPY FARM LEGISLATION**

CAP has applauded the ACT's new legislation to licence breeding of companion animals and prohibit dog and cat factories in the ACT.

Since the Strategic Companion Animal Management Package (SCAMP) of 2001-2002, people who keep companion dogs and cats "entire" have been required to have a special licence to do so. The intention of this requirement was to enable animal welfare inspectors to keep tabs on licensed backyard breeders and to investigate unlicensed ones. However, there was no power of routine inspection, and no funding was made available for enforcement.

CAP spokesperson, Robyn Soxsmith comments, "Aside from the question of whether funds will be made available for enforcement this time, the immediate problem with the new legislation is that only breeders who are ethical enough to apply for a licence will be subject to routine inspection. Unless inspectors have power of entry to investigate hearsay reports, anyone illegally breeding dogs and cats for sale will be able to continue to do so."

Ms Soxsmith points out that the police and the RSPCA already have the power to inspect any premises for animal abuse - with a warrant, or with the owner's permission, or without either if there is strong reason to believe an animal emergency is taking place right now. But these three limitations have made it difficult to ever catch out anyone who is simply breeding animals unlawfully.

"So what this means," Ms Soxsmith explains, "Is that any animal emergency taking place on the premises of an illegal breeder is unlikely to even come to light."

Ms Soxsmith goes on to observe that another limitation of the new law is that, until all jurisdictions ban these dog and cat factories, there is nothing to prevent people buying animals from interstate breeders. "Nevertheless," Ms Soxsmith concedes, "This type of prohibition has to start somewhere and, and all due kudos to the ACT for taking the this first step."

Ms Soxsmith goes on to say that, while the new legislation is a definitely a step in the right direction, the biggest problem with companion animal breeding is simply that so many dogs and cats are still being killed in Australia simply because no-one wants them. "Until every dog and cat born is guaranteed a home, no-one should be breeding any more of them at all," Ms Soxsmith states.

"It is a pity," Ms Soxsmith concludes, "That Shane Rattenbury's animal welfare deals with the ALP included only chickens and pigs and cats and dogs. It is a great shame he was forced to abandon his principles in regard to the welfare of kangaroos, and the ecological disaster of culling them."

Contact: Robyn Soxsmith, ph 0424 191 561, email - [chook\\_toad@hotmail.com](mailto:chook_toad@hotmail.com)