



PET INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Pet Care Professionals

## **PIAA Fact Sheet on proposed changes to the dog breeding industry in Victoria**

PIAA's key mandate is **animal welfare** and accordingly welcomes a review on breeding standards, especially for dogs **but** is highly concerned with the severe approach taken in Victoria.

The Victoria government will introduce the following changes

- Impose a limit on the maximum number of female breeding dogs in domestic facilities to ten
- Impose a restriction on pet stores to the sale of pound only dogs and cats

PIAA believes this is an emotional and radical decision based on sensation and not facts.

The NSW Government on the other hand recently held a parliamentary enquiry into these issues which found that:

- **The number of animals** kept by a breeder **is not in itself** a factor which determines the welfare of breeding animals
- Pet shop sales **not be banned** because a ban would lead to less scrutiny of animal sales without improving welfare”

**PIAA's concerns with the Victorian approach can be summarised as follows:**

### **The changes do not address the root cause of the problem:**

To date enforcement of relevant codes has not taken place and this is largely responsible for the problems the industry is now experiencing. Best practice can happen in large or small breeding operations alike. Limiting the amount of dogs is not going to improve animal welfare. PIAA wants to see the problem addressed at its source by making sure good practices are in place and **responsibly enforced**. The outcome of the proposed changes will be to eliminate professional breeding in Victoria while at the same time not improving animal welfare.

### **Enforcement Nightmare**

Restricting breeders to 10 dogs will convert the now 300 breeders to over 3000 plus micro breeders making the industry impossible to regulate. Micro puppy farms will be prevalent across Victoria and amateur and inexperienced breeding will be rife. This will also encourage increased online trading, leading to even poorer welfare conditions to what we are currently experiencing.

### **Eliminating transparency from the industry:**

Banning puppies in pet shops will take out the only transparent part of the industry and transfer these sales to online sales which cannot be monitored or controlled, let alone regulated. If anything puppy sales should be done via pet shops or visible breeder premises to promote transparency and animal welfare.

### **Good legislation already available:**

New Victorian legislation developed in consultation with stake holders by the previous Napthine government and recently implemented by the current Minister Jaala Pulford is the strictest in Australia. Implementing the Minister's proposed changes in 2016 will have given these changes **less than 8 months** to show their effectiveness. The new code was beginning to take effect and weed out poor operators without completely destroying the industry.

### **Online trading will boom**

The proposed changes of banning dog sales in pet shops will lead to an exponential growth in on line sales.

### **The ban will not reduce dogs in Shelters.**

The type and breed of dogs commonly found in shelters are typically not traded by pet shops. The ban will therefore have a limited effect on rehoming dogs in shelters, as many families want family friendly breeds of which shelters have a minimal supply. We agree that strategies need to be investigated to reduce the number of healthy dogs being euthanised in shelters **BUT** limiting the choice of Victorian's to what they can buy at a pet shop is not the way to do this.

### **Demand for Family dogs will increase.**

There is an increasing demand for family dogs in Victoria (and all other states) and this is NOT for the breeds available in shelters. Restricting supply will only lead to substantial price increases, attracting rogue operators and a criminal fringe to trade in puppies (as has happened in Europe) It will also lead to the purchase of puppies from interstate (in particular NSW) as Victoria will not be able to keep up with demand.

### **Economic Fallout.**

Legitimate and ethical breeders and pet store owners who have been in the industry for many years will be forced out of business which will in turn lead to staff redundancies and other social and economic consequences.

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