

puppyfarming@dlgsc.wa.gov.au

Stop Puppy Farming
Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
PO Box 8349
Perth Business Centre
Western Australia 6849

SUBMISSION BY: **Ms Carol King** – [REDACTED]
Dogs West Member Number: [REDACTED]

STOP PUPPY FARMING PROJECT

MY OBJECTION:

I would like to take this opportunity to record my objection to the State Government's proposed legislation because it will adversely affect Registered, Pedigree (Dogs West) breeders who breed less than 20% (www.ankc.org.au) of the annual demand for dogs in Australia.

I personally own and very occasionally breed King Charles Spaniels (not to be confused with the more popular Cavalier King Charles Spaniel). The King Charles is a rare breed in Australia, in fact statistics show that there are only around 75 of this breed being shown at Australian National Kennel Council (ANKC) shows in this country at the current time.

It is difficult to obtain this rare breed within Australia with a very limited gene pool and a low number of breeders. Over the past 16 years or so I have actually imported 3 males from the UK, and 1 bitch from New Zealand to enable me to continue my breeding program with the intention of assisting other breed enthusiasts (all members of the ANKC) to increase the gene pool in Australia.

Breed statistics for the King Charles Spaniel (from ANKC data) show that there has been the following trend over the past 7 years:

2010 – 29	2011 – 11	2012 – 27	2013 - 29
2014 – 24	2015 – 47	2016 – 25	2017 - 33

This is not an easy breed to produce progeny from. Typically they have litters of 1 or 2, occasionally 3 or 4. Often a cesarean section is required, and in one instance approximately 5 years ago, I had a mother stop breathing under anaesthetic (she was revived by the Vet) but sadly all 5 puppies suffered from mid-line failure. Four of these were euthanised at the vet clinic on the day, the only one which came home with me however passed away within 24 hours.

A very expensive exercise, but that is what ethical, registered (Dogs West therefore ANKC) breeders do. Whatever it takes to produce a quality registered pedigree animal potentially for the show ring is our aim.

As ANKC (through Dogs West) members, we are already governed by very strict rules and regulations regarding the registration of all puppies bred, and I feel that additional restrictions and yet another regulation to be forced upon us would further seriously make hobby of showing dogs unviable.

Before moving to Perth in 2011, I spent 25 years in Karratha. At that time I owned and bred Cavalier King Charles Spaniels. I was involved in the Karratha and Districts Kennel and Training Club from 1990 until 2011 when I retired from working in the Oil and Gas Industry as a Maintenance Management Specialist (both offshore and onshore).

During that time, I held a number of positions with that Club – Instructor, Secretary and also President.

My experience over that time, as an Obedience Instructor, conducting 4 x 8 week terms annually gave me a huge insight into the thoughts of the general public when they decided to purchase puppies or adult dogs (from whatever source).

The ratio of ANKC registered pedigree dogs was approximately 4% with cross bred / unregistered ANKC dogs making up the other 96%.

Over my 20 years in Karratha interacting with the general public (also organising information sessions for School Fetes, organising agility demonstrations and co-ordinating a program for schools regarding pet ownership and responsibility) while liaising with Karratha Vet Clinic, Pilbara Wildlife Carers and the Shire of Roebourne Ranger Services I have gained considerable experience with dogs and their behaviour.

While I do not wish to appear “elitist” regarding cross breeds, and obviously many (in fact some 80% or more people in Australia have cross breeds, and are very happy with them). I did however during that time make some interesting observations. In general, the first cross of any breed – for example Maltese / Shi Tzu, the temperament to me appeared fine. Great social interaction and nice family pets in my opinion. However, the 2nd cross of a Malt x Shi to a Malt x Shi appeared to come along with not only health issues but temperaments which to me were questionable at best.

I am of the opinion that if regulated, registered ANKC (therefore Dogs West) breeders only make up less than 20% of the dogs being sold in Australia, that they should be exempt from this proposed legislation. In fact according to ANKC data, in 2014 it was 17%, reducing to 15% in 2016.

I totally agree that Puppy Farming as such should be totally banned, however if legitimate breeders who show dogs and do everything they are already bound to

under the very strict Code of Ethics of Dogs West hold us accountable to, I cannot condone legislation forcing us to sterilise all our animals.

I am not a Veterinarian, however there are many papers published on the subject of early sterilisation. In fact some countries ban voluntary sterilisation unless for a vet recommended reason – for example pyometra in bitches, and I have personally been forced into this situation with 2 of my girls over the years for exactly that reason.

Regarding the Pet Shop issue, under Dogs West Rules and Regulations, I have never been allowed (and never have) supplied any dog, for any reason, to a pet shop. I believe all Pet Shops should have their ability to sell live dogs withdrawn with immediate effect.

In closing, I would earnestly entreat the State Government to exempt Dogs West members from the proposed legislation. With house blocks becoming smaller, and apartment living being more popular, there is already a shortage of purebred dogs in general and toy breeds in particular.

I believe this shortage would be actually increased should Dogs West breeders be required to comply with the proposed legislation, thereby increasing opportunities for “Puppy Farmers” to fill a perceived gap.

Yours sincerely,

Carol King

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