



Australian National Kennel Council Ltd (ANKC Ltd)

Statement on Puppy Farming and finding homes for unwanted companion animals

ANKC Ltd is strongly opposed to sub-standard dog breeding operations, which breed and sell either pure-bred or mixed breed dogs. “Puppy farms” or “mills” are often characterised by substandard health, welfare, breeding, and socialisation practises of puppies and concentrate on volume and large-scale breeding to maximise financial profit.

“It’s a sad fact that some dog breeders are trying to make a quick profit by cutting corners when it comes to properly raising dogs. Such puppy farms can put at risk the dog’s wellbeing through overcrowding unsanitary conditions, and cause dogs to miss out on the socialisation aspect of growing up. Dogs often lack interaction with humans in these establishments.

ANKC Ltd is also deeply concerned at the problem of so many unwanted companion animals in the community .Animals that could be valued family pets and companions but that instead end up being euthanized in large numbers.

ANKC Ltd agrees with the comment of Professor Crispin the Chair of the UK Dog Advisory Panel who states”:-

“Surely it makes sense to identify dogs before they leave their mother and the breeder, I think they should be registered in some way so they can always be traced back to their breeder, and that would get rid of nefarious practices in breeding. It’s so simple I don’t know why we don’t do it.”

The State of NSW has started this process by the Companion Animals Act 1988, NSW which contains a requirement that all Companion Animals must be identified by microchip as follows:-

s8 Identification required from 12 weeks of age and before sale

- 1) A [companion animal](#) must be identified as required by the regulations from the time the animal is 12 weeks old.
- (2) A [companion animal](#) must not be sold unless it has been identified as required by the regulations (even if it is less than 12 weeks old when it is sold).

s9 Registration required from age 6 months

- (1) A [companion animal](#) must be [registered](#) under this Act from the time the animal is 6 months old. [The owner](#) of the animal is guilty of an offence if it is not [registered](#).

There are some exemptions in the Regulations and these will need to be tightened.

It is also important that a centralised database be setup so that the data is available to ascertain patterns of breeding throughout the community.

ANKC Ltd supports this approach and has made it mandatory that all puppies registered on its pedigreed dog database be microchipped and that the microchip number be recorded.

ANKC Ltd believes that universal microchipping will, if rigorously enforced, be the ideal vehicle to identify puppy farmers to enable them to be more accurately targeted.

Under the NSW microchipping system, all companion animals must be identified and registered.

The system in place in NSW is accepted both by the general public and recognized dog breeders.

Compulsory Registration of Breeders

A number of parties have recommended that all breeders of companion animals be registered or obtain breeder permits.

There has been little study of the effectiveness and viability of such a scheme.

A pilot scheme at the Gold Coast Council has not yet been fully scientifically examined or peer reviewed at this time. Indeed, there are a number of questions as to cost, public acceptance, breeder involvement and the general effectiveness of that scheme for the stated purpose of reducing the numbers of unwanted companion animals.

ANKC Ltd is not aware of any empirical studies that demonstrate the preference of a Breeder Permit Scheme such as that which is being trialled in the Gold Coast to a Breeding Code such as is now successfully operating in NSW without the requirement for licensing of breeders or breeder permits.

ANKC Ltd is of the view that a Companion Animal Breeder Licensing Scheme would set up another costly layer of bureaucracy with attendant additional fee structures Rules and Regulations needed to operate it.

Such a system would also further prejudice recognized breeders, i.e. members of ANKC Ltd affiliates who already are required to:-

- 1) Comply with State and Territory Laws and Breeding Codes,
- 2) Comply with the extensive State and Territory Canine Councils Rules and regulations and Code of Ethics
- 3) Comply with the ANKC Ltd Code of Ethics.
- 4) Obtain a high pass in a detailed Canine Council open book exam before qualifying for a breeder's prefix/approval. Without that approval members may not breed a litter.
- 5) As of January 2012 microchip all puppies prior to ANKC Ltd Registration with ANKC Ltd and member affiliates

If a system of compulsory registration of breeders was introduced the ANKC Ltd would strongly lobby that its members, who are already highly regulated, obtain an exemption.

Conclusions

ANKC Ltd therefore recommends that identification of all companion animals by microchip, registration and notification of all changes of ownership throughout their lives, is the cost effective solution to provide the data base that is needed to locate and identifying puppy farms and puppy farmers.

That database would also provide the additional benefit of identifying sources of unwanted companion animals with a view to providing statistically based scientific solutions to that problem.

ANKC Ltd believes such a system should be universal and would work more efficiently than a licensing system. We believe that what is needed is more effective enforcement of existing laws to catch the unethical parties not more laws to create cost and burdens for the ethical and responsible breeders.



Hugh Gent OAM

Chairman

Australian National Kennel Council Ltd

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