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Press Release

The Facts on Pet Shops



An article in Sunday's NSW Sun Herald by reporter Rachel Browne indicates, in part, that sale of animals through pet shops contribute significantly to the unacceptable high rate of euthanasia of pets in Australia.

The Pet Industry Association of Australia ('PIAA') is concerned that recent reporting on the pet industry is both inaccurate and misleading. PIAA members are recognized as leaders in their field, complying with codes of practice that are world class. In addition members have the ability to achieve Accredited Member status, the highest level of recognition for a business within the pet industry.

The PIAA abhors the breeding of animals in inhumane conditions. There can be no doubt that a small percentage of backyard breeders taint the rest of the industry and the sale of animals other than from PIAA retailers, RSPCA shelters, the Animal Welfare League and accredited breeders potentially leads to an ill considered purchase decision.

From the latest available RSPCA Australian National Statistics approximately 22,000 dogs and 39,000 cats were euthanased at RSPCA shelters in 2008/09. **Of this number over 84% for dogs and 72% for cats were put down for medical reasons and behavioural problems.** It's worth considering that the total dog and cat population in Australia is estimated by the Australian Companion Animal Council to be 3.7million and 2.2million respectively. **Whilst any euthanasia of animals for reasons of neglect or abandonment by owners is regrettable industry statistics suggest that the problem is not nearly as widespread as welfare groups and animal liberation officers would have us believe.** Indeed a recent Australian Veterinary Association report estimated that only 1.48% of puppies that end up in shelters come from pet shop sales.

Regulation of the pet industry is best served by suppliers and retailers meeting the membership criteria of the PIAA. In fact, the **Association believes there is a good case for retailers selling animals that there be compulsory membership of the Association.** In that way the control of standards and ethical behaviour can be monitored and action taken when non conformity occurs.

For more information please contact the Chief Executive, Roger Perkins on 02 9659 5811 of rperkins@piao.net.au.

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Pet Industry Association of Australia Ltd.
Ph: +61 2 9659 5811 Fx: +61 2 9659 5822
PO Box 7108, Baulkham Hills Business Centre NSW 2153
info@piao.net.au www.piao.net.au
ABN 47 001 782 770