



Re: New Proposed Amendments To The Animal Traders Regulations.

Angie Scott

to:

lklam

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From: Angie Scott

To:

Tuesday 6th November 2012

Dear Legco Members,

After reading the proposed amendments to the Animal Traders Regulations I would like to share the following comments as a member of the public.

I agree that at present there is insufficient deterrents within the penalty structure.

I still feel that even with the new proposed fines, these provisions still do not go far enough.

A stronger deterrent and zero tolerance MUST be implemented within the new regulation proposals to stop this mass scale of abuse called "Licensed Breeding".

The new proposed amendments do not go far enough to protect the welfare of these innocent animals who are forced into this industry.

Other countries around the world are working towards closing down "puppy mills " " breeding farms " " commercial breeding " while the Hong Kong Government is proposing 4 new breeding licenses.

These 4 categories of breeding licenses come with no guide-lines of real care or welfare standards to protect these animals.

I feel if The Hong Kong Government is going down this road of issuing these licenses they need to have all the strict codes of conduct in place including the back-up to monitor and enforce the law.

What is being proposed doesn't address any of the above mentioned points !

I fully support the new powers for the AFCD Director and would like to add some other areas where the Director should also be granted powers to act and issue fines.

Under Cap. 169 / Cap 139 B - The AFCD Director MUST be given the power to revoke any Breeders license for any such breach of the licensing conditions.

Any person within this industry convicted of animal cruelty offences should be banned for life and not granted a future license in any of the other licensing categories.

The Government needs to send a strong message out to "Animal Traders" by giving power in this way to the AFCD Director.

On the spot fines should be issued to "Animal Traders" by AFCD Inspectors on behalf of the AFCD Director for disregarding the animals' needs.

Court cases are a very lengthy and expensive process with the animals paying the real price with their life. In many cases the animals die from ill health before the case is heard in court.

I really do feel if my above mentioned measures were put into practice, we would see a big improvement in animal welfare, which is very much needed.

Over the years, clear evidence has been documented in the media of how badly these breeding animals are treated, often being dumped out in the street when they are too sick to breed any more. The local animal charities bear the cost of this direct cruel act by Breeders and are all over crowded at any given time of the year.

The following serious concerns have not been addressed in these new breeding regulations :

As part of the "Animal Trader License" I feel strongly that the registered breeding males along with the females should only be allowed to breed until the age of 5 years old. Providing the female dog is able to give birth naturally, with two season each year of two litters.

As many of the larger dogs have a life span of 8 to 10 years, it is unacceptable that these animals are allowed to be bred their whole life. Once they have reached the age of 5 years they must both be de-sexed by law.

Only then could these animals have a real life. But of course this would be the time when the Animal trader will dump the animals out. Therefore regulations must be set in place now to protect this heartless act by Animal breeders. I would suggest that these dogs who have been used as "working dogs", generating thousands of dollars per puppy produced, be protected by law. These Breeders must make a commitment to take care of these animals for the rest of their life.

This will not happen naturally so would also need to be addressed by new licensing animal laws and should be added now. I feel this is totally justified as these breeders use these animals in this way and are not treated as a family companion but puppy producing machines.

Hong Kong breeds many small sized pedigree dogs. It is inevitable these small sized females will need a caesarian operation to deliver her litter. With human females, it is recommended by Doctors that a woman only have two of these operations to delivery a baby in her lifetime, due to the health risks.

Therefore caesarian operations should also be limited and enforced in the breeding license.

Dogs registered as breeding males and females should by law have regular vet health checks, especially the females who are producing and nursing puppies which takes a great toll on her health.

These breeding dogs should be issued with health checks and certificates issued by The Society Prevention Of Cruelty to Animals. This would prevent Breeders from obtaining certificates from 'back street vets'. SPCA operates vet clinics all over Hong Kong, making their services accessible and very affordable for all Breeders to attend regular check ups. Mandatory check-ups need to be included in the license to protect these animals. Registered female breeding dogs should be checked twice a year and a male breeding dog once a year.

Breeders should be held totally accountable for their "working dogs" and their off spring. Bringing new life into this already over crowded dog populated city should be taken very seriously, especially when The Hong Kong Government at present has no choice but to put thousands of unwanted puppies and adult dogs to death each year. I feel there is more than enough evidence from the past years which show these Breeders' irresponsible behavior and uncaring conduct. Now this industry has to be very tightly regulated and monitored.

Personally I have adopted a total of six small dogs from different animal charities in Hong Kong, all with various health issues directly related to bad breeding. Most common is luxating patella which is an inbred serious painful knee disorder. It is only corrected by expensive surgery with a long and painful rehabilitation period of 6 weeks. The other cost being the pain and discomfort endured by the dog as normally both back legs will need this operation.

One of my adopted dogs has a serious character disorder which his mother or father would have clearly displayed but yet the Breeder still continued to breed from these bad genes. There is no cure or correction for this neurological inbreeding. Another one of my dogs was rescued from an illegal breeder and is totally blind in one eye with a condition called Dry Eye. When left untreated the eye will go totally blind, which is what happened. So I revert back to my point that these working dogs need check-ups every 6 months.

My last point I would like to bring up is the new measures proposed which would allow breeders to advertise their puppies on the internet. By giving the green light to this really concerns me. Although the new proposed measures would make it part of the licensing condition that all breeders advertising in magazines / newspaper would also need to print their breeding certificate number.

But I feel by allowing internet advertising is just opening up a new and very difficult area to monitor. At least with magazines / newspaper adverts they are traceable, where as the internet isn't. I am sure you will find these adverts will pop up and disappear over night with the buyer already hooked in buying that puppy, illegal breeding and cruelty would be hard to trace.

From what is being proposed in these new measures clearly shows just how out of touch the Hong Kong Government really is regarding the mass **PET INDUSTRY** and has no idea of how all these animal charities are struggling to deal with all the excess dogs dumped.

Angela Scott
Member of the public