

KILLER PROSECUTIONS

Puppy Farms

AIAM 16 October 2015
Townsville

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City of Casey



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Puppy Farms

Legislation

- Domestic Animals Act 81/1994
 - The purpose of this Act is to promote animal welfare, the responsible ownership of dogs/cats and the protection of the environment by providing –
 - A registration scheme for Domestic Animal Businesses which promotes the maintenance of standards of those businesses -

Puppy Farms

- » Casey has thus far prosecuted 4 illegal Domestic Animal Business's (puppy farms)
- » Seized 200+ dogs (+27 born in captivity)
- » Total of 284 charges laid for all 4 'puppy farms'
 - » Domestic Animals Act = 194
 - » POCTA = 84
 - » Local Laws = 6
- » All 4 prosecutions successful

Puppy Farms

Case Study 1

- Large scale 'farm' undertaking breeding of dogs for pet shop market
- No permit in place as Domestic Animal Business
- Has been operating for many years
- Animals in relatively good health
- Facility clean and hygienic
- Accurate records and history
- Offender cooperative and helpful

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Puppy Farms

- Officers did not find any cruelty concerns
- Accurate Vet records on every dog
- Accurate Sale records for past several years
- Orders awaiting completions

Puppy Farms

- » Offender cooperative
- » Made full admissions
- » Willing to comply with relevant Code of Practice
- » Stopped breeding animals immediately

Puppy Farms

Outcome

- Company and Individual charged - 117 counts
- Plea of guilty by both Company and Individual
- Company Convicted and Fined \$8700
- Individual No Conviction – placed on bond
- Ordered to comply with Council Directions and relevant Codes of Practice

Puppy Farms

Case Study 2

- Information received from 'customer'
- Council undertakes Investigation and finds 'puppy farm' operating
- Several ads found on;
 - Gum tree
 - Trading Post
 - Facebook

Puppy Farm

Investigation

- Operational Order completed
- 2 x Officers (plain clothes) attend subject property and purchase 'puppy'.
- Officers gather enough information and evidence to obtain search warrant

Puppy Farms



- » Many dogs found tethered around the property
- » Several litters found
- » Several dead puppies found
- » Little to no water available

Puppy Farms

- » Officers greeted by many dogs at time of warrant execution



Puppy Farms



- » Putrid food left in full sun
- » Maggot infested
- » No water

Puppy Farms



- » Dogs tethered with little to no shelter
- » No water

Puppy Farms



- » Over 50 derelict vehicles on property
- » Property generally very untidy and unsightly

Puppy farms



- » All Animals seized and conveyed to holding facility
- » Council sought and obtained order from Court awarding 'custody' of all dogs
- » New homes found for all dogs and puppies

Puppy Farms

Prosecution

- » Charged with 51 offences under DAA, POCTA & Local Law
- » Offender un cooperative during investigation
- » Plea of 'not guilty' entered
- » Matter booked in for full contest
- » Offender enters plea of 'guilty' at commencement of hearing

Puppy Farms

Outcome

- Matter Proven
- 10 Year banning order put in place
- No Conviction
- \$7400 fine

Puppy Farm

Case Study 3

- Information received from Animal Welfare Org regarding this property
- Attend site and undertake inspection in support role capacity
- 52 dogs found housed in sub-standard conditions
- Facility not compliant with relevant Code of Practice

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- » Council informed by welfare agency that no further action to be taken
- » Decision made by Casey to investigate further
- » Due to complex nature of investigation 2 x members tasked full time to investigate

Puppy Farms

- » Several dogs found to be in need of urgent vet treatment and care



Puppy Farms



- » None of the existing facilities come close to compliance with Code of Practice

Puppy Farms

- » Pens covered in faeces & urine, no bedding, no natural light, very small with two dogs in each pen



Puppy Farms

Challenges with this investigation

- » Offender has undertaken this activity for approx 30 or more years
- » Did not believe she was doing anything wrong
- » 'This is my hobby'
- » Total denial of any wrongdoing whatsoever
- » Older lady with serious medical issues
- » Very aggressive offender family members

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Charges

- » 54 POCTA offences detected
- » 25 Domestic Animals Act Offences
- » 1 Local Law Offence

- » Enters plea 'not guilty'

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Outcome

- » Matter proven
- » No conviction
- » Banning order denied
- » Placed on Undertaking
- » \$4960 fine
- » Banned as member from applicable organisation
- » NOTE* - Undertaking breached, charges pending

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Case Study 4

- » Information Received concerning 'puppy farm' being conducted inside rental premises.
- » Gathering evidence proves difficult
- » Landlord/agent undertake inspection – AMO accompanies landlord & agent (civilian clothing)
- » Evidence gathered concerning operation during inspection by officer
- » Search warrant obtained

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- » All 22 dogs seized from inside dwelling – including 8 puppies



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- » Execution of Search Warrant proves challenging
- » Offenders un-cooperative and aggressive
- » Substantial criminal history
- » Police Assistance required

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- » Forced entry required
- » Police and AMO's involved in 'scuffle' with offenders
- » Police seek 'back up' additional 18 police attend
- » Police deploy OC Spray inside dwelling

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Charges

- » Record of Interview conducted in Police Station
- » Each offender charged with 32 offences
- » Offenders also charged with 'hinder'

Puppy Farms

Outcome

- » One offender pleads guilty
- » Second not guilty – final hearing yet to be held
- » Guilty plea receives following –
 - » Conviction
 - » \$1900 fine
 - » All dogs surrendered to council for re homing
 - » Costs \$8942

Local Laws and FV prevention

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