

Court Media Release

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PUPPY FACTORY BREEDER GUILTY OF ANIMAL CRUELTY

63 year-old puppy breeder Grace Bulley has pleaded guilty to 12 charges of animal cruelty in Goulburn Local Court on 2 June 2017 in relation to 71 dogs and puppies seized from her property in July 2016 by RSPCA NSW.

Ms Bulley was sentenced to a Section 9 Good Behaviour Bond for 21 months and fined \$4,500 for the most serious offence of grade 4 dental disease; and a Section 9 Bond and \$1,440 fine for 11 months for the other health-related offences. She was ordered to pay costs of \$27,273.20, and moiety of fines awarded to RSPCA.

RSPCA NSW prosecution sought a prohibition order to stop Ms Bulley from breeding or owning dogs, while Ms Bulley's defence lawyer initially argued there should be no ban, or if there was it should be 60 dogs not including puppies. Magistrate Beattie took into account that Ms Bulley has no prior offences and ruled that she can own no more than ten breeding bitches at any one time for two years.

The Magistrate addressed Ms Bulley saying her breeding activity was a "callous commercial arrangement" and the evidence was "a very distressing account of the dogs having very significant conditions for some time causing pain and suffering for the animals."

Charges are as follows:

- Did fail to provide veterinary treatment for dogs with grade 4 dental disease in relation to 40 dogs and puppies
- Did fail to provide veterinary treatment for a dog with oranasal fistulas in relation to one dog
- Did fail to provide proper and sufficient drink causing dehydration in relation to five dogs and puppies
- Did fail to provide veterinary treatment for 12 dogs with internal parasites and 66 dogs with external parasites (fleas).
- Did fail to provide veterinary treatment for 10 dogs with upper respiratory tract infections and 4 dogs with dyspnea (difficulty breathing)
- Did fail to provide veterinary treatment for one dog with conjunctivitis

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- Did fail to provide veterinary treatment for one dog with a skin infection, one dog with demodectic mange, 35 dogs with ear infections and two with facial fold pyoderma
 - Did fail to provide veterinary treatment for a dog with a large infected wound
 - Did fail to provide veterinary treatment for a dog with emaciated body condition and nine dogs that were severely underweight
 - Did fail to provide reasonable care for four dogs resulting in severely matted coats
 - Did fail to provide reasonable care for 16 dogs resulting in overgrown nails
 - Did fail to provide appropriate records of animals housed in the breeding facility and housed dogs in overcrowded pens.



Some of the mothers that had newborns with them had heat lamps above them; others were left to lay in the dark and cold with minimal bedding.

On 6 July 2016 RSPCA inspectors conducted a puppy factory inspection on a property at Marulan in the NSW Southern Tablelands. 180 dogs and puppies were found on the property, a large number with serious health issues. RSPCA NSW inspectors worked with veterinarians to seize all those requiring immediate veterinary treatment, and issued directions for a number of remaining dogs to receive veterinary care. The dogs and puppies remaining in Ms Bulley's custody after the mass seizure and have since been closely monitored by RSPCA NSW to ensure their welfare needs are being met.

In the whelping room which was cold, dark and smelling of stale urine and faeces, mothers with pups were found to be cold, infested with fleas, and most had serious dental disease. Some were found to be dehydrated and none had any environmental enrichment. Food available for the lactating mothers was of poor quality and not proper for their requirements.

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Throughout the complex there was a serious overcrowding issue in pens, with no way for a dog to retreat or even hide from other more dominant dogs. They had insufficient or no bedding being forced to eat sleep and defecate on a thin layer of wood shavings.

Feed bowls were attached to the walls and dogs were required to compete with each other for food.

There was very little or no natural light. In a large shed that housed 28 pens, reasonable lighting was only available when a roller door at each end of the building was opened. The dogs had no access to outside fresh air or sunshine; they had no enrichment and were simply part of a production line to

breed. They displayed a number of unhealthy stereotypic behaviours including; spinning, jumping up and down on the spot, retreating into a corner and in some cases fighting.

Apart from behavioral symptoms indicating stress and boredom, dogs were found with numerous medical conditions ranging from internal and external parasites (worms and fleas) serious grade four dental disease, some of which included ulcerated gums and exposed bone, painful ear infections, irritating skin conditions, conjunctivitis, anemia, fight wounds and injuries. One mother had a prolapsed vagina and yet was still exposed to a mating male in the same pen.

The noise in the main shed was deafening and it was necessary for the investigating inspectors to go outside to communicate.

In a small grassed area between the large shed and the next row of pens a male Samoyed dog was located. He was unable to see out. Bulley alleged he got to see other dogs when he was required to mate with them.

In one kennel row, dogs were exposed to the freezing wind, the cages were so dark at the back Inspectors required a torch to count the dogs in each pen. Water bowls were filthy and again the dogs were overcrowded with insufficient bedding.

RSPCA seized 71 dogs and puppies in need of immediate veterinary treatment.

Ms Bulley was and still is producing large quantities of pups for the pet shop market and also private sales. All of the seized and mentioned dogs were either mothers with pups or in the process of being bred, despite the medical conditions that they were suffering.

Ms Bulley surrendered 68 of the seized dogs on the 8 August 2016 and then surrendered a further 5 from the sheds a week later. She alleged RSPCA had done her a favor by removing the dogs because it had lightened her workload. 3 male stud dogs that were in RSPCA custody were surrendered on the day of the hearing. Ms Bulley initially alleged she wanted them back for breeding even though one of the dogs has serious genetic problems causing breathing difficulties.

When asked to provide appropriate records required under The Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Dog and Cat Breeders, she was unable to. Ms Bulley was supplying a number of pet shops with pups but could only show records for some dogs.

On the 21st of July 2016 RSPCA attended a pet shop in the Sydney area and asked if they had receipts in relation to the pups they had purchased from Ms Bulley. One of the owners of the business alleged Ms Bulley hadn't given them receipts for the pups that they had purchased since January 2016, however the following day RSPCA received a call to say that Grace Bulley had now provided them with some receipts to the value of \$21,750.

From the 4th of January 2016 to the 28th of June 2016 Ms Bulley had provided receipts totaling \$112,024 for pups sold.

RSPCA NSW worked with several breed-specific rescue groups to care for and rehome the dogs and puppies seized. Many of the dogs required extensive behavioural rehabilitation due to issues associated with living in puppy factory conditions their entire lives, and long term medical reasons. RSPCA NSW also placed some pregnant or nursing dogs in breed specific rescue groups or foster care so the pups could be raised away from a shelter/kennel environment. Some of these pups were subsequently rehomed through RSPCA NSW adoption facilities.

RSPCA NSW worked with each rescue to determine the resources required for each dogs care and where possible most of the medical work was done by RSPCA NSW prior to placement, for example three Dachshunds required urgent dental work due to severe dental disease prior to placement with rescue. Many of the Boston Terriers and Pugs required corrective surgery for congenital problems common to brachycephalic breeds (breathing difficulties, suffering from respiratory distress etc). Rescue groups were then able to focus on behavioural rehabilitation.

All charges brought under the [Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act](#).

For more information, or an interview with a RSPCA NSW spokesperson, please contact Stefania Kubowicz
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