

SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

(In association with R.S.P.C.A. England) Patroness: LADY Y.P. McNEICE



FRIENDS FOR LIFE

17 May 2010

Forum Editor
Straits Times Press

Dear Sir,

I refer to the feature, “Good breeding practices urged for dog farms” (S.T. Friday 14 May) which reported on the unscrupulous practices of dog breeders on farms. This was a follow up to the previously reported case recently, of an owner giving up his business and abandoning his 75 breeding dogs.

It is clearly evident that there are breeding farms existing that are sub-standard when it comes to providing adequate care for their animals, and stronger action and enforcement is necessary to raise the quality of these establishments.

Although there have been new guidelines and standards introduced by the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority, including compulsory animal management courses, dogs are still enduring extreme suffering because of the indifferent and callous attitudes of dog breeders. Coaxing or warning errant owners and breeders into compliance instead of prosecuting them has encouraged further abuse in the industry – i.e. mere slaps on the wrist are no deterrent to improving the poor conditions. If standards are not up to the mark then breeders have to be taken to task and enforcement stepped up.

The SPCA has for some time, been advocating to the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA), the revoking of licences for breeders who are cruel to the animals under their care, because only when stronger penalties are meted out can we hope to see standards improve.

In relation to AVA officials’ comments that the onus should be on the consumer to make an effort to be informed and only patronise farms or shops with good standards (i.e. self-regulation by the consumer), the SPCA is of the opinion that it should be the licencing authority, who has the veterinary expertise and access to the breeding animals, that should be urgently raising the industry standards.

In the interest of animal welfare which AVA as the Veterinary Authority has the mandate to ensure the humane treatment of all animals under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Section 42, Animals & Birds Act), it is time to take strong deterrent action when animals are made to suffer.

Yours sincerely,

Deirdre Moss (Ms.)
Executive Officer