

Pet Industry Association **ceo report**

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The emergence of the activists behind the Clover Moore “ban pets in pet shops” Bill in WA recently and in Tas three months ago highlights the issues of modern activism – global, well funded and fast moving. Your Association has to be fleet of foot, very determined and well researched to confront these challenges and openly those many external stakeholders who are now actively assisting the Association to manage this issue.

Politicians are being “hit” with representatives from up to 12 “concerned groups” of activists (at least 4 of which emanate from the same source). The politicians have now “wised up” and routinely request more information from the Pet Industry Association and others.

Faced with losing the battle to a well informed and assertive Pet Industry Association and Pet Industry News, they resorted to personal attacks, naming this editor, the President and CEO of the Pet Industry Association, presumably in the hope that these people would then be the subject of personal hate email and other attacks by their supporters.

Faced with losing the argument of the proposed Bill in the “reducing euthanasia” objective for their activities by logical and reasoned debate from the Pet Industry Association and others, they simply changed the objectives of their activity to “reducing Puppy Mills”.

Faced with losing the argument that the proposed Bill will do nothing to reduce “Puppy Mills” to logic and reasoned debate from the Pet industry Association and others, they simply changed the definition of “Puppy Mills” on “Wikipedia” to include any person who breeds “irresponsibly”. They go on to state that these animals are sold in pet shops, implying that pet shops are the source of all evil. Of course, any pet shops that deliberately sourced from puppy mills would be stupid, as the stock is of poor quality and often carries diseases into the store.

Faced with a serious shortage of “Puppy Mills” to expose, since most of them have been properly closed and prosecuted under existing acts; the activists use frightening lurid pictures – most of which are more than half a decade old, from farms that were closed and prosecuted.

What is the real agenda here? It is looking more and more like the real agenda is not owning dogs and cats. This, of course, is the real agenda of both PETA and Animal Liberation (read Peter Singers book of you’re not sure) and PETA is rumoured to be funded at more than US\$60M per year.



So what is the message? Well, there are activists trying to take away our right to own pets – we know that. But it is the tactics that herald a new era. Deliberately ignoring fact, driving an agenda, changing the goal posts, resorting to personal attacks, using simplistic analogies, using high technology, well connected with politicians and very well funded. And people tend to believe everything they read on the internet.

Using the same old responses in the same old ways doesn’t work anymore. You have to try to be just as nimble, ignore personal attack, and stick to the facts at all costs. That is the price that the Pet Industry Association has paid in the last 12 months.

We are prepared for the likelihood that the activists will use the Christmas “quiet news period” to ramp up activity - to try and make people ashamed to own a puppy or a kitten. What a way to celebrate the Christmas season!

And on that note, the holiday season is Holy for many – a time of peace, reunion and sharing of gifts with family - human and furkids. May you celebrate joyfully with your God, your friends and your kin, and may 2009 be kind and generous to you and yours.

Joanne Sillince