

VETERINARY IRELAND PRESS RELEASE – 11th October 2012

Veterinary Ireland congratulates the Gardai and DSPCA in rescuing of puppies and calls on the public to report the existence of illegal puppy farms

Veterinary Ireland, the representative body for vets in Ireland, congratulates the Garda Task Force for their excellent work in identifying and rescuing the consignment of puppies destined for the UK 'market' last Tuesday.

Alan Rossiter MVB, President of Veterinary Ireland said “We deplore the conditions that these animals were kept in and the ill health they were suffering from and we commend the DSPCA for taking them in and giving them the care they need. In particular we are horrified by the mutilations to which many were subjected (tail docking, dew claw removal). These procedures are done by or at the behest of the breeder, in unsterile conditions, using no anaesthesia or pain relief and are best described as barbaric - a stanley knife or pliers is often used to cut off the offending piece of healthy tissue, causing acute and chronic pain and leaves the pup open to serious infections”.

As these procedures serve no benefit to the dog - they are done to make them 'look better' - they are considered by the profession's regulator, the Veterinary Council of Ireland, as unethical and thus must not be performed by vets. However there is currently provision in old legislation for a non-vet to legally perform these on young pups.

Commenting on this anomaly, Mr Rossiter continued “We accept this old provision for non-vets to dock puppies will be remedied soon in the excellent Animal Health and Welfare Bill that is being guided through the Oireachtas by Minister Simon Coveney.”

“In the interim we urge the public to be vigilant when considering buying a puppy, and wherever possible to inform the breeder in advance that they will not buy a docked puppy”.

Puppy farming is now regulated by the Dog Breeding Establishment Act 2010 which is administered locally by local authorities, specifically by vets in the Local Authority Veterinary Service. All 'puppy farms' must be registered with the local authority, must meet minimum standards of housing and welfare and are subject to regular visits.

On being asked how can the public assist Brendan Smyth MVB, chairperson of the Local Authority Veterinary Service said “If a person is aware of the existence of a suspected illegal puppy farm, they should in the first instance report that to the local authority in which the puppy farm is situated who will investigate.”

For more information please contact:

Alan Rossiter MVB
President Veterinary Ireland
Contact Number - 086 8250067

Brendan Smyth MVB
Chairperson, Local Authority Veterinary Service
Contact Number – 047 30535

Veterinary Ireland represents veterinary practitioners in private practice and in Central and Local Government. We are happy to provide appropriately qualified and informed persons to contribute further to this debate in a constructive and reasoned manner

Please contact Veterinary Ireland HQ on [01 457 7976](tel:014577976) or by e-mail at HQ@vetireland.ie.