

28 February 2018  
The Bulldog Club Taskforce  
Media Statement

### **Trade-Me profiteering ends but who will clean up the mess they leave behind?**

The ban on selling three brachycephalic dog breeds via Trade-Me starts tomorrow. On the surface it might have looked like a laudable stance. In reality, it was a flawed decision which has resulted in a purchasing rush – where sales soared ahead of the ban (and Trade-Me’s success fees along with it) – to buy these pedigree dogs. Their decision has stigmatized the perfectly healthy, well-bred dogs and their breeders and owners, and is simply a case of tossing the puppy out with the bathwater.

Trade-Me has relied on overseas research which has been misunderstood and misrepresented, and does not compare to the situation in New Zealand dogs. That research has been used to falsely state that 90-95% of these breeds in New Zealand have Brachycephalic Obstructive Airways Syndrome (BOAS). Veterinarians, breed clubs, breeders and owners alike have spoken out to say this is categorically untrue in New Zealand.

Amanda Rutherford, President of the Auckland Bulldog Club, said the British statistics used to validate the Trade-Me decision have been misrepresented and relayed in a nonsensical way, and are not equal or comparable to the New Zealand standard of dogs. “They have effectively accused responsible and caring breeders and owners, with healthy specimens of the breed, of abusing their dogs, simply by owning them. Owners, including children, have been bullied on the street in the wake of Trade-Me announcement. We asked Trademe if they had even read the research they were quoting, they would not confirm that they had”.

Bulldog owner Dr. Sarah Baker said that in every breed of dog you will always find unscrupulous breeders, and as such the ban will merely serve to drive those unscrupulous breeders to sell dogs on other unregulated websites. “Nothing will actually change, those poor breeding and poor animal welfare practices will continue, no matter what breed of dog is concerned. Trade-Me is an influential organization which could have used its position in the community to educate people about ethical and safe breeding, and the production of healthy dogs. Their decision has, in our view, not been well thought through”.

Most responsible breeders sell their dogs privately and have waiting lists. Please contact DogsNZ or local breed clubs to get details of where to go, take your time, do your research and ask questions of the breeders, and try to visit the puppies in their home environment before purchasing where possible. Get the right breed and dog for you.

The Combined Bulldog Club Taskforce is made up of the 5 national bulldog breed clubs. The aim of the Taskforce is to be advocates for our breeds and to educate and inform owners and breeders of bulldogs.

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