

RSPCA South Australia vs Sutcliffe

Today in the Adelaide Magistrates Court, Glynne Sutcliffe, a cat breeder from south of Adelaide, was sentenced after being found guilty at trial of ill-treating a large number of cats.

RSPCA South Australia prosecutors successfully showed that living conditions at the breeder's property were grossly inadequate due to, among other things, an over-population of cats; excessive accumulation of urine and faeces; inadequate food and water; and inadequate space and separation of cats. Magistrate Bennett found the evidence to be overwhelming with the cats' living conditions being "*well short of adequate*" and "*appalling*".

The charges related to two attendances at Ms Sutcliffe's property in 2011 by RSPCA South Australia Inspectors and Veterinarians. The first attendance resulted in 62 cats being seized including 20 cats that were found living in a single bathroom.

The second attendance, six weeks later, resulted in 40 cats and kittens being seized, again due to the appalling living conditions at the property. On that occasion, the bodies of 20 deceased kittens were found in rubbish bins on the property as well as three deceased kittens in the kitchen freezer.

In the written judgement, Magistrate Bennett commented: "*Some cats were visibly not in good condition, whilst more than 40% of those seized were found to suffer from feline AIDS.*"

His Honour noted that "*the conditions at Ms Sutcliffe's cattery during September/October 2011 not only justified RSPCA intervention, they required it*".

Ms Sutcliffe was convicted and ordered to pay a \$7,000 fine. Importantly, Ms Sutcliffe received a court order under the Animal Welfare Act 1985 prohibiting her from owning any animals. She was also ordered to surrender any animals she currently has to RSPCA South Australia within 14 days.

RSPCA South Australia is satisfied with this sentence and hopes that it will act as a deterrent to other members of the community who may be breeding large numbers of companion animals.

RSPCA South Australia sought, and was awarded by the court, compensation for veterinary and legal costs in the amount of \$16,330. This compensation goes some way to recognising the considerable resources used by RSPCA South Australia in pursuing this case over the previous four years.

==ENDS==
