

For Immediate Release
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MEDIA ALERT
ADELAIDE, SA

DOGS ABANDONED FOR FIVE HOURS IN A CAR

A woman has been prosecuted for leaving her two dogs; only one survived

A woman who left her two Maltese dogs locked in a car for 5 hours while she visited her daughter in hospital was convicted on Monday in Elizabeth Magistrates Court of animal cruelty charges and banned from owning any animals.

In March last year a vigilant member of the public had noticed the two dogs in the hot car and immediately called SA police and RSPCA.

Andrea Lewis, Chief Inspector, says that it was only due to the collaboration between the member of the public, SA Police and RSPCA Inspectorate that one of the dogs managed to survive.

"We confirmed with the member of the public that it was OK to smash the car window to rescue the two dogs. Their quick thinking saved the life of Zoe, one of the dogs. Tragically it was too late for the other dog, who died from severe heat stroke. The dog that died was also neglected in terms of dental issues, matting, and skin conditions. It was a tragic sight."

Police attended quickly and with the advice of the quick thinking RSPCA Inspector covered Zoe, who was suffering with severe heat stroke, in a wet towel in an attempt to revive her. The RSPCA Inspector arrived shortly after. The Inspector who attended said that the deceased dog was hot to touch and that she was "shocked at how much heat was coming off the deceased dog".

The Defendant was convicted, sentenced to 2 months and 3 weeks' imprisonment - suspended upon entering into a 1 year good behaviour bond - and given a court order banning her from acquiring or having custody of any animals until further order. She was also ordered to pay almost \$3,500 in veterinary and legal fees.

Ms Lewis says that it's important to note that the day had been relatively mild.

"On this day it had rained and reached a maximum of 29 degrees, demonstrating that leaving animals locked in a car can prove fatal, even in relatively mild weather conditions. An animal should never be left alone in a car."

If you ever witness a distressed animal locked in a vehicle, please call RSPCA South Australia's 24-hour animal cruelty report line on 1300 4 777 22 or SA Police immediately.

Zoe - lucky to be alive - has since made a full and miraculous recovery, has since been adopted from our Lonsdale shelter and is a reminder that some happiness can come out of such a tragic situation.



Insert - Zoe, the surviving dog, after being rescued.

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