

Questions to Royal Canin for NCAT Hearing

Date: Mon, 27 Jul 2015 13:23:42 +1000

To: megan.auld@royalcanin.com, nathan.willoughby@royalcanin.com

From: Tom Lonsdale <tom@rawmeatybones.com>

Subject: Fwd: Testimony from a happy customer (and dog!)

Cc: complaints@teqsa.gov.au, c.pyne.mp@aph.gov.au, senator.carr@aph.gov.au, senator.dinatale@aph.gov.au, cathy.mcinnis@ipc.nsw.gov.au, aeod@ncat.nsw.gov.au, office@piccoli.minister.nsw.gov.au, canterbury@parliament.nsw.gov.au, <sarah.heesom@optusnet.com.au>

Dear Ms Auld and Mr Willoughby,

New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)

As you know the NCAT Hearing into Sydney University secret junk pet-food deals is being watched with interest as mentioned in the forwarded email below.

In preparation for the Hearing on 17 September 2015 I am seeking access to documents.

NCAT provides for the voluntary production of documents without need for summons and accordingly I seek your advice on the following five categories.

1.) Wall Street Journal

You will likely be aware of the [1997 Wall Street Journal article 'Doctors Give Treats for Plugging its Brands'](#) that makes harsh criticism of junk pet-food marketing by, for and of the veterinary profession.

Please advise if your company accepts the criticisms. If you disagree with the tenor of the article please provide your company's reasons why vets, in your view, should push your company's products on a trusting and unsuspecting public.

2.) Access to Secret Deals

As I understand from documents tabled by Sydney University, your company and the University object to public access to your secret deals.

Sydney University's reputation depends on it demonstrating the highest intellectual, scientific, educational and ethical standards.

Please advise any reasons you believe that junk pet-food deals should be kept secret as a means to maintaining or enhancing the intellectual, scientific, educational and ethical standing of Sydney University.

3.) Junk pet-food health claims

Nowadays junk food feeding of pets is the norm, largely I believe, due to the active endorsement by vets and the training vets receive in vet school. Despite this widespread acceptance, I am unaware of any long term comparative trials demonstrating the *suitability* and *safety* of junk food as compared with the natural standard as determined by evolution.

I believe that the onus of proof lies with veterinary schools to clearly demonstrate that their recommendations are backed by sound evidence as opposed to secret deals with financial backers. In respect to the general recommendations made by Sydney University Veterinary School and in respect to *particular recommendations relating to the products of Royal Canin and your parent company Mars Inc.* please supply your evidence:

- 1.) Processed dry dog and cat food should be fed as per label claims and is *suitable for purpose* of feeding every day for life without risk of ill-health or suffering and as compared with the natural standard.
- 2.) Processed dry dog and cat food should be fed as per label claims and is *safe for purpose* of feeding every day for life without risk of ill-health or suffering and as compared with the natural standard.
- 3.) Processed canned dog and cat food should be fed as per label claims and is *suitable for purpose* of feeding every day for life without risk of ill-health or suffering and as compared with the natural standard.
- 4.) Processed canned dog and cat food should be fed as per label claims and is *safe for purpose* of feeding every day for life without risk of ill-health or suffering and as compared with the natural standard.

There is a general view, put about by veterinarians, that junk food, especially Royal Canin junk food, increases the health and life expectancy of pet dogs and cats.

If you make such claims please supply any evidence you rely upon, in particular by long term comparison with dogs and cats fed a natural diet.

Ideally the evidence you rely upon will be from respected independent researchers and research institutions who have no current or past financial or other ties with junk pet-food makers.

4.) Murdoch University Junk Pet-Food Deals

You may be aware of the examples of Murdoch University junk pet-food deals as posted at www.rawmeatybones.com:

[No shame. Dancing with the Hill's Devil, division of Colgate-Palmolive Climbing into bed with Royal Canin, the Mars Inc. deviant. Full service: \\$356.16 per day](#)

[Murdoch University sells itself cheap and pimps its students to Colgate-Palmolive. Price: \\$123.28 per day and truckloads of Hill's dangerous junk food.](#)

['Lots of opportunity for the sponsor's involvement to sink in. . . .100% of our students are captured repeatedly.'](#)

[Murdoch/Hill's obscene partnership report: 'Almost all discharge letters recommended a Hill's specific diet.'](#)

Are your company's deals with Sydney University substantially the same as the junk pet-food deals with Murdoch?

If your deals are substantially different please advise with examples.

If your deals are substantially the same, then please advise why Sydney University should be obliged to maintain secrecy?

Since the [GIPA Act](#) makes a presumption in favour of disclosure, why should NCAT support your claims for secrecy if information is already substantially in the public domain as per the [500 documents released by Murdoch University](#)?

5.) Most recent complete set of accounts

So that NCAT may gain an appreciation of the extent of your relationship with public institutions I would appreciate to see the last full financial year's Royal Canin accounts and the accounts of Mars Pet Foods in Australia. Please mark the accounts to show precisely the amounts of funding for universities and veterinary associations. I do understand that Mars Inc is a private family owned company and does not usually release annual accounts. However, as a show of good faith and to be on a par with your rival Colgate-Palmolive, I trust that you will provide full public access.

In keeping with NCAT summons time frames, your prompt response within five working days would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

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Date: Sat, 25 Jul 2015 15:32:49 +0700
Subject: Fwd:Testimony from a happy customer (and dog!)
From: Peta Thomas <peta.thomas@gmail.com>
To: clinic@rawmeatybones.com
X-Antivirus: AVG for E-mail 2015.0.6081 [4392/10301]
X-AVG-ID: ID58948FD9-32693F71

Dear Dr Lonsdale,

Thanks for [letting me know about the upcoming Public Hearing at NCAT](#) on the 17th September.

Pet owners all over the world support you in your efforts to bring accountability to the veterinary and pet food industries. I believe the truth will win out in the end, but I am devastated for the many thousands of pets and pet owners who continue to suffer needlessly. I truly hope this Hearing will shine light on the dishonest tactics of pet food companies in their brainwashing of unsuspecting veterinary students in Australia.

Given your high profile internationally amongst concerned pet owners, I feel my dog Anzac and I are fortunate to have had the opportunity to meet you for a consultation. I recognise that my dog's experience is not among the worst cases you would have seen, but nevertheless he has suffered from a diet of kibble, never again! I'd like to share his story with you as evidence

of the change he has experienced, in the hope it might encourage others to convert to a Raw Meaty Bones diet.

My dog Anzac is a seven year old Labrador Retriever mixed breed. I purchased the dog as a ten week old puppy and he has been my companion ever since. Throughout Anzac's life I have been attentive to learning and implementing (to the best of my knowledge) a good diet for him. I really want my dog to live a long and healthy life, so I care about making the right food choices, the same as I do for myself.

I bought Pedigree dry dog food from the first day, believing this was a balanced diet for my dog. However, I quickly learned how much he also enjoyed fresh meat and human food scraps. I did some research online and started supplementing the kibble with a daily meal of raw mince, mixed vegetables, and brown rice. Anzac seemed to do ok on this mixed diet although he seemed particularly susceptible to sickness; he has survived meningitis, and several other instances of unspecified poor health. For five months between October 2014 and March 2015 Anzac was left in the care of friends while I was traveling and moved house. During this time his diet was predominantly Pedigree kibble, which was the standard diet for the two other dogs in that household. Over the months on this wholly processed diet Anzac put on 1.5 kilograms, his skin became itchy, dry and flaky, his teeth yellowed, and his energy levels dropped.

When Anzac returned to me I went to the nearest pet food shop, Pet Barn, with an aim to fix his health problems through an improved diet. The staff I spoke with there were passionate dog lovers who took me through the options available. I purchased a 7.5kg bag of Science Diet for mature, large dogs. It was on sale, but still cost me \$89! Initially Anzac didn't like it and he skipped a meal. After a day or two he warmed up to it and he fell into the routine of morning kibble and evening mince and vegetables (I left out the rice to help him lose weight). I noticed that Anzac was drinking a lot of water, despite temperatures being quite mild. As he was spending so much time standing at his food bowl, I also bought a raised stand so he could drink and eat more easily. The stand and bowls to fit cost me another \$55 on sale.

I was talking with my parents about the dog's diet and my father asked me, 'have you looked at what's on the ingredients list?', to which I responded, 'no, it's vet recommended so I have to trust them'. My own response set off alarm bells in my conscience, so I set about looking up the contents of the food. I was mortified to discover that corn was a primary ingredient. It's supposed to be dog food, not chicken feed! I'm not medically educated, but even as a conscientious consumer I just couldn't see how corn could possibly provide for a canine's dietary requirements.

I started reading online blogs and websites dedicated to natural healthy food for animals. I was quickly bamboozled by the amount of online content available on the topic, and was alarmed by the experience of other

pet owners feeding kibble: lethargy, dry and flaky skin, bad breath and flatulence, poor teeth just to name a few of their pets' symptoms, and I recognised many of these issues in my own dog. There's so much information available, but I really just wanted to talk with someone who could give me specific advice on my pet, ideally a veterinarian. One of the sites I found on Facebook had [re-posted a video](#) that caught my attention. The Facebook page was US based, so I expected that the experiment had taken place there too, but I was excited to learn that it was actually in NSW.

After seeing the video I decided that we just had meet with Dr. Lonsdale. I was so excited about the claims of the Raw Meaty Bones diet that I bought both your books online that day. Later that week I drove four hours from my home near Forster and brought my dog to see you so we could learn how to get him off the processed food diet, and restored to good health.

That was back in late May, and as soon as we returned home Anzac's new diet began on 1st June. It's now been eight weeks on the RMB diet and Anzac has made a great improvement. The itchy dry skin healed after three weeks. We don't have to suffer his nightly flatulence any longer. He has more energy, regularly running a 3 klm route alongside my bicycle on a bush track near our house. Despite now being 7 years old with a whitening muzzle, this is the first time that Anzac has ever run consistently in his life. All these health benefits from just eating raw meaty bones, and I can't forget to mention how much he loves every meal! I now have a healthy and happy dog, and my bank balance is much healthier too as I'm saving money.

I can't thank you enough for showing us how to get rid of processed pet food forever. I'm a big advocate for the Raw Meaty Bones diet amongst my friends and family now. When I speak about it though, I've come up against opposition, as people just want to trust the established brands especially the expensive ones that are labelled 'veterinarian recommended'. So I hope this Public Hearing gains a high profile locally and allows other pet owners to see through the rhetoric and sales tactics of these unscrupulous companies.

I wish you all the best in your campaign to show the veterinary profession and the public that there is a better way!

Best regards,

Peta Thomas

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