



Media Release

7 September 2015

## They're Dying – right here in Melbourne

**From today, commuters travelling through Richmond will learn that our closest relatives – primates - are dying in cruel and invasive experiments, right here in Melbourne.**

A billboard, located on busy intersection Punt Road Richmond, is part of a campaign to Ban Primate Experiments and raises awareness of the hundreds of primates – macaques, marmosets and baboons – used here in invasive experiments every year, and largely funded by Australian tax dollars.

(Non-human) Primates are genetically the closest living creatures to humans. Their sentient ability is thought to be very similar to ours as primates have complex social interactions. They have the ability to form and remember relationships, remember behaviours, mirror tasks, and even make predictions about future interactions. Like humans, primates have a communicative language, they use gestures, facial expressions and body language to interact with one another.

Despite this, Australia uses hundreds of primates in highly invasive experiments every year.

**Helen Marston, CEO of Humane Research Australia:** *“Hundreds of primates are being used in Australia every year in biomedical experiments and many more are housed in breeding facilities awaiting a similar fate. These primates – macaques, marmosets and baboons – are sourced from three government-funded, research-specific breeding colonies located within Australia. Few Australians are even aware that their tax dollars are supporting this and HRA believes they should know”*

*“As well as the unethical nature of using sentient and highly cognitive animals as research tools, reliance on data from animal experiments is dubious as they are insufficiently predictive of human outcomes. This in turn causes major concern for Australian health when we rely on these out-dated models for human ills. This is a cruel and secretive industry that the public needs to be aware of”.*

**Helen Marston concluded.**

Humane Research Australia is specifically calling for:

- The replacement of primate experiments with more humane and scientifically-valid (non-animal) methods of research
- A ban on the importation of primates for research
- Establishment of a primate sanctuary for ex-laboratory animals.

For more information, please visit [BanPrimateExperiments.org](http://BanPrimateExperiments.org)

### Background

Humane Research Australia is a not for profit organization that challenges animal experiments and promotes more humane and scientifically-valid non animal methods of research.