

Media Release

8 December 2016

## They're Dying – right here in Melbourne

During December and January, commuters on Melbourne's train network will learn that our closest relatives – primates - are dying in cruel and invasive experiments, right here in our own state.

The train adverts are part of a campaign to Ban Primate Experiments and raise awareness of the hundreds of primates – macaques, marmosets and baboons – used in invasive experiments every year, and largely funded by Australian tax dollars.

Freedom of Information documents earlier this year uncovered the unexpected deaths of two marmosets recently imported from France:

- 20 February 2016, a female marmoset aged ten years (and known as CJF602) was found listless and bleeding from her bowel. After being treated and placed in a humidicrib she began gasping for breath and died. CJF602 was a female “breeder” recently imported from France. The cause of her death is unknown.
- 14 January 2016, a male marmoset aged 8 years (and known as CJM814) was found listless with shallow breathing and vomiting clear foamy liquid. The vet was called for treatment but the marmoset died 30 minutes later. CJM814 was a male “breeder” recently imported from France. The cause of his death is unknown.

These incidents have occurred despite assurances from the industry of their apparent “gold standards” of animal welfare:

*“The welfare of every animal is continuously monitored and recorded. The outstanding facilities provided to support animal research in Australia are governed by individual state and territory legislation, ensuring the highest standards.”<sup>1</sup>*

According to the latest available statistics (2014), over 200 nonhuman primates are used in experiments in Australia every year. Some of these monkeys are used in neuroscience; an area of research recognised to inflict substantial suffering.

**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”*

*“It is even harder to justify knowing that [scientific literature has revealed](#) that despite the genetic similarity to humans, non-human primates are not appropriate models on which to base medical research.” **Marston concluded.***

**How many more animals are suffering and dying unnecessarily in these facilities at the expense of Australian tax dollars?**

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.

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<sup>i</sup> James Bourne, The Guardian, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/mar/01/you-might-find-my-research-using-monkeys-abhorrent-but-it-could-save-your-life>