



NEWS RELEASE

“Don’t buy pets on impulse”: Public service announcement before *The Secret Life of Pets*

Singapore, 2 September 2016 – “Don’t buy pets on impulse” – that is the message the SPCA wants to convey to moviegoers watching the much-anticipated motion picture *The Secret Life of Pets*, a comedy about the lives pets lead after their owners leave for work or school each day.

As with any movie that centers on animals, the Society is concerned that the popularity of that animal spikes and leads to impulse purchases of pets, which usually results in the animals becoming unwanted after the novelty wears off. In June this year, the Straits Times reported on the upsurge in local retail sales of Blue Tangs after the release of Pixar’s *Finding Dory*, while in 2003, the prequel *Finding Nemo* sparked an increase in the demand for clownfish. Pet store retailers also witnessed an increase in the sale of guinea pigs, following the release of the film *G-Force* in 2009.

For *The Secret Life of Pets*, the SPCA is collaborating with Cathay Cineplexes to run a public-service announcement (PSA) before the movie. “We do not expect everyone to rush out to get a pet after watching the movie, but we recognise that there may be people who will be smitten. Adding a PSA before the movie allows us to get the word out that a pet is a lifetime commitment. It takes a lot of time, effort and a fair amount of costs to keep an animal happy and healthy. Once the initial excitement wears off, and reality sets in, some owners abandon, give up and/or neglect their pets,” said Dr Jaipal Singh Gill, SPCA’s Executive Director. He adds that pet shops retailing animals also have a huge part to play in being frank and responsible with potential owners, informing them of the costs, time and effort involved with the care of these animals.

The SPCA takes in over 200 abandoned or unwanted pets at its shelter each month and the Society hopes that by working together with cinemas, they can reduce the number of unwanted pets as a result of impulse purchases.

"Cathay Cineplexes is pleased to support the SPCA in its efforts to educate the general public against buying pets on impulse. We hope that the PSA before the screening of the movie helps to serve as an effective reminder that making the choice to have a pet is a big responsibility and that it is a decision to be made with serious consideration," said Miss Lena Tan, Group Marketing Manager of Cathay Organisation.

~ End ~

For more information, please contact:

Melanie Lee (Ms)
Communications Officer
Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)
Tel: (+65) 62875355 [ext. 12]
E-mail: communications@spca.org.sg

About *Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)*

The SPCA is a registered animal welfare charity and its two main objectives are to promote kindness to animals and to prevent cruelty to animals. Relying mainly on donations from the public and fundraising, the Society provides various animal welfare services including a 24-hour emergency service, cruelty investigation, an adoption programme, an education programme for schools and organisations, a sterilisation programme for community animals, running an animal shelter and supporting quarantine for unwanted, abused and abandoned animals. For more information, visit <http://www.spca.org.sg>