

MOCK MEDIA CONFERENCE SCRIPT

Moderator- Zephora

CEO - Tawona Madangure

Animal Rights Activist PETA (Dhrubo Jouti Das Troyee)

Moderator (Zephora Rao):

Good afternoon, everyone, my name is Zephora Rao and I am a Communications Officer at Benefit Cosmetics in Australia. Thank you for joining us for today's media conference regarding our recent campaign addressing the major social issue of animal cruelty and animal testing in the beauty industry.

Benefit Cosmetics, founded in 1976, is an American beauty brand known for its fun, creative, and innovative products, such as the "Hoola" bronzer and award-winning brow products. The company operates in over 50 countries with more than 3,200 locations and is owned by the luxury goods conglomerate LVMH. Despite its success, Benefit Cosmetics faces criticism for its ethical practices, particularly concerning animal testing. Although the company claims not to test on animals, it allows third-party testing and sells products in China, where animal testing is mandatory. The brand is not certified cruelty-free by organizations like PETA and is accused of greenwashing. Animal testing continues to be a significant issue in the beauty industry which needs to be addressed. According to Humane Society International (2023), it causes the death of 500,000 animals every year, mainly including rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, rats and mice. Benefit Cosmetics has now chosen to align with more ethical testing practices to respond to this growing issue. Today you will be hearing from the CEO of Benefit Cosmetics and a PETA animal rights activist. Our speakers will provide an update on the campaign, and address the measures taken to better the beauty industry.

First, I would like to welcome the CEO of Benefit Cosmetics Australia, Tawona, to speak on behalf of the company.

CEO (Tawona Madangure):

Thank you all for being here today. As the CEO of Benefit Cosmetics, I'm here to address the recent concerns surrounding our animal testing policies, and more importantly, to share the steps we're taking to solidify our commitment to cruelty-free practices.

First and foremost, I want to acknowledge that in our effort to create safe and high-quality cosmetic products, we lost sight of something crucial. While it was never our intention to test on animals, there were instances where products were tested under our radar, particularly in markets where the regulations required it.

I recognize that this falls short of the standards we hold ourselves to, and more importantly, it falls short of what our customers expect from us. We understand that transparency and real action are necessary, and that's exactly what we're committed to moving forward.

That's why I'm proud to announce today that Benefit Cosmetics is officially joining PETA's cruelty-free program. This is a major milestone for our brand, and we are fully committed to meeting PETA's strict standards for cruelty-free products.

Moderator (Zephora): Could you please provide an insight towards how Benefit's collaboration with PETA will hold the company accountable to your efforts of banning animal testing?

CEO (Tawona Madangure):

As part of our commitment to joining PETA's cruelty-free program, I want to take a moment to explain how PETA will hold us accountable moving forward. Over 3 key factors Verify, Conduct & Renewal

First, PETA will work closely with us to verify that none of our products, ingredients, or manufacturing processes involve animal testing. This includes ensuring that our suppliers and third-party manufacturers comply with these standards.

Additionally, PETA will conduct supply chain audits to make sure that we maintain cruelty-free practices across every aspect of our production.

If we fail to meet these commitments, PETA can revoke our certification and hold us publicly accountable, which we are fully prepared to accept in the name of transparency and responsibility.

Moderator (Zephora Rao):

Thank you Tawona. Next, I would like to invite Troyee, an animal rights activist to provide a deeper insight into this social issue.

Animal Rights Activist (Dhrubo Jouti Das Troyee)

Good afternoon, everyone. I'm here today to address a critical issue that continues to affect the beauty industry—animal testing. Despite significant advancements, animal testing still takes place in labs around the world, and unfortunately, Benefit Cosmetics is a part of this practice. Although the company claims not to test on animals, it continues to sell in markets like China, where animal testing is required by law. This practice causes immense suffering for animals, such as rabbits, guinea pigs, and mice, which are subjected to painful and often lethal tests.

So, what exactly are these animals going through? Let me paint a picture for you.

Imagine a rabbit, confined to a small cage, unable to move or escape. This rabbit, along with countless others, is used in a test known as the Draize eye test, which involves applying chemicals to the animal's eyes to see how it reacts. These chemicals, often harsh and toxic, burn and irritate their eyes, causing redness, swelling, and in many cases, permanent damage.

This is the reality of animal testing. And the question I must ask today is: Is this necessary? In the 21st century, with all the advances in science and technology, is this really the only way to ensure product safety? The answer is no.

There are now a multitude of alternative testing methods that do not involve animals. Methods that are not only more humane but also more reliable and cost-effective. We can use human cell cultures, computer models, and other scientific methods. Now, more than ever, consumers are demanding cruelty-free products. Younger generations, particularly Gen Z and Millennials, are making ethical choices based on their social values, and they expect companies to be transparent about their practices. This shift in consumer behavior presents a huge opportunity for brands like Benefit Cosmetics to align with public expectations and adopt cruelty-free practices. Public opinion is changing, and it is clear that people are no longer willing to support beauty products that involve animal suffering.

While public perception is critical, what we need most are real-world actions. PETA has seen tremendous progress in countries like Mexico and the European Union, where new laws have been passed to ban animal testing for cosmetics. These legal victories were driven by public demand and advocacy efforts, showing that change is possible. Benefit Cosmetics has the power to be part of this global shift by committing to cruelty-free policies and ending its participation in markets that require animal testing.

We urge Benefit Cosmetics to take real steps toward becoming cruelty-free, not just through statements, but by obtaining certifications like PETA's Beauty Without Bunnies program or Leaping Bunny. Consumers expect this, and it's not just about ethics—it's about leading the industry toward a more humane and sustainable future. PETA will continue to hold companies accountable and work with policymakers to ensure that beauty can be achieved without cruelty. Thank you."

Moderator (Zephora Rao):

Thank you to our panel for providing us with this insight. Now, we would like to invite questions from the media.

Questions I have prepared for TCGCO:

What strategies will be used to engage and mobilize the community to participate in this initiative?

Are there specific public relations tactics being employed to encourage donations and spread awareness?

How will you measure the success of your public relations campaign for this partnership? What metrics will indicate whether the public is responding positively to the cause?

What challenges do you anticipate in communicating the dual message of combating fast fashion and homelessness, and how do you plan to address them through PR efforts?

Tawona's Questions

How do you plan to raise awareness and encourage the public to participate in this program?

In the past, we've seen various initiatives aimed at reducing the impact of fast fashion and addressing homelessness. How does this partnership differ, and what steps have you taken to ensure it will have a lasting and meaningful impact on both reducing textile waste and supporting Victoria's homeless population, especially given the economic challenges?

Zephora's Questions

What motivated TCGCO to partner with the City of Yarra in addressing the issue of fast fashion and homelessness?

Can you provide more details on how the clothing donation initiative will work? How can people participate, and where can they drop off their old clothes?