



Protest case laid out



A protest installation in Fremantle... part of a national tour of the Human Battery Cage project. Picture: Martin Kennealey

GROUPS of protesters spent a few hours squashed into small metal cages at sites around Perth recently to reflect a day in the life of the country's estimated 10.5 million battery hens.

The Human Battery Cage installation artwork was in King's Square and the Henderson Street Mall, near Fremantle Markets, during the latest leg of a six-month national tour.

Project co-ordinator Shane Galgleish said the stunt was intended to educate consumers about where the eggs they ate came from.

"Around 80 per cent of all eggs bought come from hens kept in tiny cages on factory farms," he said.

"These 10 million hens each has a space smaller than the size of an A4 sheet of paper and they never get the chance to stretch their wings or to see the light of day.

"We're here to raise awareness of this issue in a novel way that we hope the public can easily relate to and empathise with."

The RSPCA has long opposed the use of battery cages which, it says, cause intense suffering for the hens, which cannot stand, groom themselves or stretch their wings.

The Australian Egg Corporation, which represents about 400 commercial egg producers, says cage hens have better disease control, are protected from predators and have lower mortality rates.

The Human Battery Cage project travelled to Adelaide last week.

Kate Emery