



Confined space: Battery cage protesters get their point across yesterday. Picture: HANK van STUIVENBERG

Mall shoppers a captive audience

By TOM STURROCK

ANIMAL welfare activists staged an unusual protest in Wollongong's Crown St Mall yesterday.

The human battery cage is on a national tour and the caged volunteers hope to draw attention to the plight of hens housed in cramped, inhumane conditions.

Organiser Drew Frye called for state governments to take a stand against the practice of battery caging.

"It came pretty close to being banned already - NSW and Victoria

were the only states who were against banning battery cages. They objected on economic grounds because it would make every egg cost a little bit more," Mr Frye said.

"(Europe) is in the process of phasing cages out totally, so we think Australia should follow that example."

Mr Frye said about 10 million hens were caged in Australia, each forced to live in a space the size of an A4 sheet of paper. The hens never saw the outside world, and some had their beaks removed to reduce violence in the confined spaces.