

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Cat and Dog Review](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Feedback on cat and dog laws
Date: Sunday, 4 August 2019 11:44:58 PM

Good Evening

Regarding the dog and cat legislation review, in my experience Broome Shire (WALGA included) is very weak in the ability to enforce current cat/dog legislations in my region.

Making the cat and dog legislation align makes great sense, however when the requirement to desex dogs comes in (which is well overdue), it's simply going to be unaddressed, as the requirement for cats to be sterilised is now. 'City' laws often sound good in the regional towns, but they are often completely ineffective, as the local government/shire simply do not have the capacity to enforce them.

While I admire Minister McTiernan for her efforts, in dragging all animal related legislation into the present, there are still fundamental flaws with changing legislation without the ability to fund mass free desexing of both cats and dogs, to impact the over population of dogs and cats. People are attracted to puppies and kittens (which are both far too readily available), and find their older animals with 'problems' easy to surrender to shires and welfare groups. This is a social issue, which impacts animal management. Many homes have animals that they feed, but if the animals are impounded, they won't pay fees to get them back, as they can just get another cat/dog.

Public housing with poor standards of fencing, and no documented information on the numbers of animals in the house, means containment of dogs in particular is poor.

Particular demographics also have massive difficulties with maintaining their 'pets' in a way mainstream public would consider 'humane', with basic human health concerns, such as worms, fleas, ringworm, and mange/scabies often affect children as well as the pets in the home.

There is no valid education for how to keep pets. Pet ownership is mostly experience gaining by the family having a pet when you were a kid, and your parents teach you about water etc. Many Indigenous/low socio-economic families had/have such limited knowledge, and ability to financially support, pets that expecting them to desex, chip, register, worm, parvo vac etc is impossible to achieve.

Shire subsidies to encourage desexing is almost at an all time low for Broome, hence there continually an overburden of domestic animals in the town, surrounds, and communities throughout the Kimberley. Scrutiny of annual figures would prove the lack of Shire support in desexing to reduce domestic animal populations. Although the financial benefit scrapes the line on attractive, the actual process to get approval, arrange and get the animal to the vets, be able to pay the

balance (approx 50%). The sterilisation is subsidised however the chip and registration aren't, and the requirement to chip/register to get the desexing discount, means many just find it 'too hard'.

Everyone is so busy appointing reasons and solutions, but is anyone asking if the shires/government is holding up their end of trying to manage domestic animal overburden? The reality is that the shire, government, and many of the people involved with this consultation process, have unrealistic ideals, and no actual door knocking/working with the people in their homes experience. The government funded desexing programs for the Kimberley region are piecemeal, inadequate, and cost more to conduct than the benefits they bring long term.

There is a massive overburden of domesticated cats and dogs in the Kimberley! The true amount is unrealised, and as there is no recording or surveyed census of animals, the regional issues will continue to worsen, while putting a muzzle on a greyhound, or using a barking or electric boundary collar on a dog will be thoroughly documented.

Yes, the legislation needs to be unified, ie **mandatory desexing for dogs and cats**, and **must be registered breeder to allow birthing of pups at home** (this is true backyard breeding), but unless there is investment in actually desexing animals, in effective numbers, legislative changes aren't going to matter.

People avoid current legislation by handing pups and kits around like currency, and when they think they are going to have a visit from the ranger, or an animal ends up in the pound, they simply get another. Did you know there is a common name in the communities, called 'spare dogs'? As there is known attrition, whether from death, being seized, given away, most families have 1 or more 'spare' dogs. I've personally had great success in getting people out of the mindset, but it's literally through throwing money at it, not just telling them what they are supposed to do.

I hope these views assist in decision making, oriented towards "mandatory sterilisation" legislation.

Thank you.

Wendy Roberts

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Reference: [Pause for paws - Feedback on dog and cat laws in WA](#)

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