

Submission from N Sharrett and S Honnery, Directors of Purple Style Pty Ltd T/a Fur Kidz Resort

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Pet shops should not sell live animals. End of story.

Mandatory de-sexing: we run a dog boarding kennel and also an indoor heated swimming pool for dogs. We have a financially vested interest in this proposed legislation. We also breed pure bred dogs and we have submitted personal responses in relation to that.

We would like to raise concerns in relation to compulsory de-sexing of dogs. We are very concerned that this will bring about a down-turn in business. Following the introduction of similar laws around cats, as well as the containment policies, we noticed a gradual then significant downturn in our boarding numbers for cats. It was significant enough that we were not break-even with cats and we were needing to undertake maintenance and upgrading of our facilities. We made the decision to focus on dogs only. That was OK as we gutted our cattery and repurposed it for dogs but that in itself incurred expense.

Boarding kennels are very seasonal once we were all enjoying the benefits of the mining boom, FIFO's boarding dogs (that's fallen away significantly) and people holidaying where we tend to be busy during school holidays and then shortly after that when retirees holiday.

We have a varied customer base, some pedigree dogs, lots of x-breed dogs, some rescued some raised from puppies.

We have invested in real estate in an area that is zoned for kennels. We have invested in infrastructure, training to keep relevant, we have built up a good reputation and have a modest business. We limit our numbers so we can keep it personal. Our investment is significant yet our profit line is not.

We do not condone the concept of dogs being bred in disgusting conditions and we do appreciate that you are trying to eradicate that type of breeding however, your proposal is so wide sweeping that a lot of our boarders would not be in existence if your proposal had been implemented 10 years ago and the boarder I refer to were not bred by your target group.

A lot of people need dogs in their lives. For many of our customers their dogs are the only source of company they have during the day and sometimes the night. I ask that you rethink your proposal on such a blanket de-sexing policy.

Not only will it impact on small businesses like ours, with an estimated \$7b spent annually on pets in this Country it will also have an impact on many others.

In relation to our Indoor Heated Dog swimming pool. A vast number of our customers swim dogs due to joint injury or post-operative treatment on soft tissue that supports joints. Others swim to prevent joint and/or soft tissue injury in the future and to keep their dogs in optimal fitness. Some swim for weight loss, again de-sexed dogs, bitches in particular, struggle to maintain a healthy weight once de-sexed. Almost all of the dogs that swim here have been de-sexed. Almost all of the customers, when asked, wish they had not de-sexed their dogs as the injuries occurred post de-sexing.

Your paper suggests that de-sexing must be the removal of all reproductive organs, testes, ovaries, and uterus. Please reconsider this drastic position, please open it up so that people have an option to use ovary sparing spay and vasectomy.

We note that when dealing with boarders most; will be well balanced; easily adjust to new surroundings; have good overall health; live long lives. Where we see an anomaly to this nearly always the dog has been de-sexed. We never see incontinence in intact animals and overall muscle retention is greater in intact animals.

Posturing in animals is normal, especially when a new boarder arrives, when posturing moves beyond that to aggression it is nearly always with de-sexed animals. When questioned nearly all of the owners opted for de-sexing as a 'cure' for unwanted behaviour. The obvious answer would have been training. De-sexing did not improve the problem and nearly always made it worse.

So to recap.

- We believe mandatory de-sexing will have an eventual but inevitable impact on ours, and many other boarding kennel businesses.
- We believe that mandatory de-sexing will contribute to unwanted health and behavioural issues as we already see the results of de-sexing on many of our customers both at the dog pool and in our boarding facility.

Central Registry: How will this work for us? We hold a kennel licence to keep up to X number of dogs. We pay a yearly registration fee which covers our dogs registrations and our kennel licence. We advise the shire every year of the numbers of dogs we have in our ownership and our personal dogs get recorded on a database. We pay a yearly fee of \$200 for our kennel/dog registrations.

If you do not maintain this practise we will suddenly have to pay a per dog licence which many of us may find prohibitive. As Dogs West breeders our own dogs are already registered with Dogs West and we are seeking an exemption to having to register again as breeders on your database. We understand you will seek to extract that data from DW. I also ask you to maintain the current practice of the bulk registration, particularly where people in the kennel zones are dog breeders

Historically the dogs in the kennel zone prove to be very little work for the local governments, with very few, if any, call outs in relation to dogs owned by residents. Occasionally there may be dogs dumped in the kennel zone but that would not even amount to one dog per 5 years in my experience.

Mandatory minimum standards: Kennel Zoning is unique to Western Australia. There is no information in previous models that would be applicable to us. We, in the kennel zones, have jumped through hoops, spent many thousands of dollars to build infrastructure which is compliant with Local Government By-Laws. Most of us have been subjected to some type of inspection from time to time.

A lot of us exceed expectations of the Local Government. The majority of us maintain our kennels to a high standard, as doing so is imperative to the health and safety of our dogs and our boarders. Please keep in mind the value of the kennels zones for those of us who provide a valuable service to the community in terms of boarding, dog breeding and also other business such as grooming, therapies, training etc.

We should not be adversely affected by your decisions in this space. What we have is a great working model for dog care. A place where breeders can live and boarding kennels can exist with very little impact on other and the environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into your proposal.