

STOP PUPPY FARMING

Public Submission Form

Please use this form to provide your feedback on the State Government's proposed methods to stop puppy farming in WA. These questions are taken from the consultation paper released by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries on Thursday, 3 May 2018. The paper can be accessed at [the Department's website](#).

The information you provide will be used by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) to inform policy decisions regarding stopping puppy farming in WA. If you need help completing this form, please telephone DLGSC on (08) 6551 8700 or toll free for country callers on 1800 620 511, or email puppyfarming@dlgsc.wa.gov.au.

For a Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) telephone: 13 14 50. To ensure your input is considered, please return your feedback before the consultation period closes at 4pm on **Friday 3 August 2018**.

Your contact details

Title:	Mr <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs <input type="checkbox"/> Ms <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr
First name:	Rosemary
Surname:	Elliott
Street or postal address:	████████████████████
Telephone (business):	Enter number.
Mobile telephone:	██████████
Email address:	████████████████████

Stop Puppy Farming Questions

1. Please indicate if you are any of the following:

- Dog Owner
- Dog Breeder
- Pet Shop Owner
- Pet Business – please specify below
- Local Govt. employee
- Local Govt. elected member
- Shelter organisation employee
- Shelter organisation volunteer
- Rescue group employee
- Rescue group volunteer
- Foster Carer
- Veterinarian
- Other – please specify below

Veterinary animal welfare advocacy organisation

Transitioning Pet Shops to Adoption Centres

2. Would you purchase a behaviour and health checked rescue dog from a pet shop?

Yes, providing these checks were conducted by a suitably qualified person, i.e. a qualified animal behaviour consultant for behaviour and a veterinarian for health check. Need to ensure the animal behaviour consultant is suitably qualified as there are many views regarding validity of different qualifications. Sentient supports behaviourists who promote reward based or force-free training, (i.e. no shock collars, check chains or other aversive methods to be used for handling or training dogs). Obviously all rescue dogs would be desexed, vaccinated and treated for parasites (fleas & worms). Also need to standardise the behaviour assessment in particular as this may be done differently depending on the individual assessor. Suggest the Department develops a suitable protocol in consultation with key stakeholders.

3. What background information would you want on the rescue dog?

Age; sex; microchip number; if surrendered then reason for this including if from a cruelty case; any previous and/or existing health and behaviour issues including response to children, response to other animals (e.g. cats, rabbits, birds), response to other dogs, barking, digging, separation anxiety (although difficult to assess in a shelter environment), any phobias (e.g. lightning, vacuum cleaners, etc), current diet, any allergies etc.

4. Do you think transitioning pet shops to adoption centres is beneficial?

Potentially, as long as the needs of the dogs are met. Pet shops are not ideal premises for retaining dogs due to limited opportunity for free exercise. This is a major concern and needs to be addressed – if a pet shop has developed a relationship with a rescue group, then perhaps volunteers could be used to walk the dogs daily. This is not as critical for pups under 4 months of age, although they do need to have positive human interaction. Also, if the rescue/welfare group is to be accredited, then pet shops also need to be accredited and to comply with minimal standards. Other states have implemented pet shop welfare codes, and WA should also do this. Staff need to be formally trained and suitably qualified.

5. If you are a pet shop owner or operator, what impact will this have on your business?

N/A Please note that large pet shop chains such as Pet Barn and Pet Stock do not sell bred animals but may sell shelter animals for adoption but appear to be successful financially.

Mandatory dog de-sexing for non-breeding dogs

6. How do you feel about mandatory dog de-sexing for non-breeding dogs?

This is supported as long as there are low cost desexing schemes available and significant community education before laws are introduced, especially to promote the benefits of desexing including it being a lifetime investment for your dog, ie if the average life span is 10 years, then \$500 is only \$50 per year which will be beneficial in terms of reduced problems associated with entire males or females including tumours later in life, reduced registration fees, reduced risk of unplanned breeding and therefore adding to number of unwanted puppies etc.

7. Exemptions from mandatory de-sexing will apply for health and welfare reasons as assessed by a veterinarian, and if the dog owner is a registered breeder. Are there any other reasons why a dog should be exempt from being de-sexed?

No

8. Should mandatory dog de-sexing apply to all dogs, including existing dogs, or just dogs born after a particular date?

Ideally it should be for all dogs but in practical terms probably best to announce a future date from when enforcement will apply.

Centralised Registration System

9. How will a centralised registration system benefit you?

Providing confidence to the general public and advocacy groups that appropriate records are maintained, more oversight will be undertaken and action followed up where breaches occur.

10. Do you think it is reasonable to increase dog registration fees for dogs that are not de-sexed to encourage de-sexing?

Yes

Unsure

No

11. Do you support increasing dog registration fees to fund a streamlined centralised registration system and to fund enforcement activities?

This is of concern as unsure of current registration fees for all councils – know of one local council which is \$20 per year which is reasonable. Would not like to see a steep increase in fees and perhaps an incremental approach would be best, i.e. 10% increase each year until reach 25% increase, ie \$25.

12. Do you think it is reasonable for dog breeders to pay an annual registration fee to cover the cost of monitoring and enforcing dog breeder compliance?

Definitely, most commercial breeders charge several hundred dollars (minimum) for one pup so an annual registration of a minimum of \$250-\$300 would be reasonable. If it is no longer profitable, then breeders have a choice to cease breeding.

13. Are there any other benefits, costs and/or issues associated with breeder registration that are not captured in this table? Please detail.

An issue is to ensure that anyone who breeds a dog, irrespective of the purpose, must be registered as a breeder on the centralised system and comply with mandatory standards.

14. Should there be any restrictions on who can register as a dog breeder? If so, what should these be?

Anyone convicted of an animal cruelty offence, including puppy farming or animal hoarding. Anyone breeding dogs with genetic faults that compromise animal welfare, e.g. individual dogs of brachycephalic breeds who require corrective surgery or are deemed to have compromised welfare due to inherited traits (i.e. short nose) which affect airway patency, heat & exercise tolerance etc.

15. Do you think local government is best placed to enforce dog breeder registration? Why, or why not?

Yes, as long as officers are appropriately trained in undertaking investigations, collecting evidence and have appropriate authority to seize animals who are obviously suffering to allow prompt veterinary treatment. Also, it is essential that breeders currently registered with a recognised dog breed club or organisations are still registered on the centralised database and need to be inspected and meet mandatory care and welfare standards.

Mandatory Standards for Dog Breeding, Housing, Husbandry, Transport and Sale

16. Should people who breed dogs have to comply with minimum standards for the health and welfare of their dogs?

Yes

Unsure

No

17. Should there be any restrictions on who can register as a dog breeder? If so, what should these be?

See 14. above

18. Should the number of litters that a bitch can produce be restricted by law?

Yes

Unsure

No

19. Should people who breed dogs for commercial gain be required to meet additional Mandatory Dog Breeding Standards?

Yes. They should also be required to demonstrate knowledge about the keeping of dogs. This could be in the form of a certificate in animal care.

20. If you said 'yes' to question 19, should this be based on:

- a) keeping a defined number of breeding dogs?
- b) if so, what number?
- c) any other criteria?

Please provide reasons:

We propose a maximum of 10 breeding females, a minimum age of 18 months before bitches are allowed to produce litters to ensure they are fully grown, and a lifetime cap of 4 litters produced by each bitch.

* Attach further documentation if required.

Confidentiality

Your submission will be made public and published in full on the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries website unless you ask for it to be confidential. Submissions that contain defamatory or offensive material will not be published.

Do you wish this information to remain private and confidential: Yes No

Signature:



Date:

3/8/18

Please return this form to:

Please return submissions by 4pm on Friday 3 August 2018

Post

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Perth Business Centre WA 6849

Email

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