



# Stop Puppy Farming Questions

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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

## Transitioning Pet Shops to Adoption Centres

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

N/A in the circumstances of the respondent.

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

Any previous history of offences under the Dog Act 1976, such as attacking and/or nuisance behaviour.

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

Concerns that if these changes are seeking to advocate pet shops as the only means to source non-purebred dogs then supply -v- demand issues as well as significant purchase costs may well arise.

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

N/A in the circumstances of the respondent.

## Mandatory dog de-sexing for non-breeding dogs

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

Not supported, concerns are raised about the extent of the issue being portrayed (i.e. is puppy farming widespread in WA). The author of this submission has been involved in the Local Government Ranger Services for twenty (20) years and has only ever encountered one (1) instance. It is also inappropriate to single out the lack of mandatory sterilisation as the cause for high euthanasia numbers. The problem is far more complex than one single cause. Unlike cats, the author contests that most dog litters are planned in the first instance, however due to a number of circumstances (i.e. dog behaviour, financial capacity) they are subsequently neglected, abandoned or surrendered.

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?

Notwithstanding the above, exemptions from mandatory de-sexing should apply for individuals breeding for their own purposes and not necessarily for commercial gain (i.e. farm working dogs, etc.).

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

So as to provide equity, the transitional period should be similar to that used with the Cat Act 2011.

## Centralised Registration System

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9. How will a centralised registration system benefit you?

A centralised database would negate the need for Rangers to liaise with other Local Governments when trying to establish the ownership of dogs registered outside their municipality. It would also allow dog history to be better documented and accessible to Rangers. There would also be the ability for better tracking of restricted breed and dangerous dogs within the community.

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?

Yes – registrations should increase to cover the cost of administering a centralised database. Local Government should not be financially disadvantaged under a centralised registration system. Revenues currently raised from dog registrations by Local Government are used to offset enforcement activities (i.e. Ranger Services), education programmes and facility maintenance (i.e. animal waste disposal bags and associated bins).

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?

Yes – however the amount needs to be sufficient so that it adequately covers the expenses incurred by Local Government in monitoring and enforcing the requirements.

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

Nil identified

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

So as to provide equity, the same restrictions should be applied to dog breeders as those applied to cat breeders under Section 37(2) of the Cat Act 2011.

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

Yes – however there needs to be better cooperation between Racing and Wagering WA ('RWWA') and Local Government. Under the Dog Act 1976, racing Greyhounds are currently exempt from the registration requirements. This means that Local Governments currently has no visibility on the Greyhounds that reside within their district. Previous experiences with RWWA show that there is a reluctant to share information with Local Government. This situation needs to change if Local Governments are going to be responsible for enforcing dog breeder registrations. The Dog Act needs amendment compelling all racing Greyhounds to be registered with their Local Government and/or on a centralised system.

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

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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 response to question 14.

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?

Recommendation has merit, however this would depend on how onerous the Standards ended up being. The drafting of the Standards need to have significant industry input and not be high-jacked by extreme animal welfare advocates. There are also concerns that Local Government will end up with the responsibility for monitoring and enforcing the Standards, therefore as already highlighted, the breeder registration fee needs to adequately cover the expenses incurred by Local Government.

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:

N/A in the circumstances of the respondent.

\* 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 August 2018

## Please return this form to:

**Please return submissions by 4pm on Friday 3 August 2018**

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