



Hon Paul Lucas MP



Queensland
Government

Our ref: MC11/1447

LG11/0975

Your ref: Petitions

27 APR 2011

Deputy Premier and Attorney-General
Minister for Local Government and
Special Minister of State

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Cnr Alice and George Streets
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 5 April 2011 about petition number 1659-11 requesting the removal of the requirement for cats and dogs in rural areas to be registered.

The *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* (the Act) was passed by the Legislative Assembly in December 2008 with bipartisan support. The Act provides for the identification and registration of cats and dogs, promotes responsible pet ownership and gives Councils around the State the mandate to enforce the legislation.

Compulsory registration of cats and dogs is one of the primary purposes of the Act and aims to provide Local Governments with the tools needed to identify and reunite lost animals with their owners, thereby reducing both the burden on Local Government pounds and the unacceptably high euthanasia rates of unwanted cats and dogs. On this latter point, I would mention that not only is there widespread community support for action in this regard, but that the Act's policy intent is supported by research evidence which indicates that compulsory identification of all cats and dogs is the single most effective strategy for reducing euthanasia rates.

It is also considered that compulsory registration will allow Local Governments to develop a clearer sense of animal ownership in their areas to better plan for initiatives, such as responsible animal ownership education programs and appropriate local laws for animal control.

The Act further provides a registration fee must be fixed to give an incentive to owners to de-sex their animals. For example, an incentive would be to fix a lower registration fee for a de-sexed cat or dog.

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It is also important to note that the Act does provide some exemptions from compulsory registration such as for working dogs. Under the Act, a working dog is a dog usually kept on rural land by an owner who is a primary producer, or a person engaged or employed by a primary producer, for the purpose of droving, protecting, tending, or working stock or is being trained for these purposes.

While registration is compulsory, each Local Government has discretion to determine the amount of the registration fee. Revenue collected from registration fees must be used by a Local Government for the purposes of the Act and to administer local laws relating to the management of cats or dogs.

Removing the requirement for cats and dogs in rural areas to be registered would defeat one of the main objectives of the Act.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Lucas', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

PAUL LUCAS MP

Deputy Premier and Attorney-General,

Minister for Local Government

and Special Minister of State