

MIN 48941.03

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
CENTRAL DOCUMENT EXCHANGE M29

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for forwarding a copy of a petition lodged in the Legislative Assembly on 23 October 2002 concerning new laws regarding dangerous dogs.

The primary purpose of the legislation is to provide for the regulation of those breeds of dog prohibited from importation by the Commonwealth. The legislation targets those breeds of dog which have been bred for their aggressive characteristics. Other states (South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria) have recognised the increased risk to public health and safety of these dogs, and have enacted similar legislation.

The legislation does not impose an automatic prohibition on the keeping of all restricted dogs in Queensland, but rather provides minimum standards for the regulation of these dogs. In Queensland, local governments are primarily responsible for animal control and management issues. It is intended that the legislation will contribute to the management of dog attacks by complementing existing local government local laws on dangerous dogs.

The legislation sets minimum standards for the keeping of restricted dogs across the State. A Council may impose a higher standard by local law, including an outright prohibition on the keeping of restricted dogs in their area, or a partial prohibition on the keeping of restricted dogs in their area, for example, after a specified date. It is a matter for each Council to determine whether they will seek to impose a higher standard in their area, such as the non-issue of permits after a specified date. Further, it is anticipated that the ban in the State legislation on breeding will eventually lead to a reduction in the population of restricted dogs in Queensland.

The State legislation places the obligation on owners of restricted dogs to apply to the Council for a permit to keep the dog at a specified place. It is a matter for each Council to determine the extent to which it intends to use the discretionary powers for declaring a dog to be restricted.

As I believe the rationale for the legislation has been clearly stated and as the arguments against the legislation were fully considered during its preparation, no amendments to the legislation are being considered at this stage.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Nita Cunningham MP
Minister for Local Government and Planning

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