

Friends of Little Penguins
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Local Government Division
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To whom it may concern

The Friends of Bicheno Penguins hereby submit the following comments with regard to the new amendments to the Dog Control Act 2000 as follows:

Given the escalating situation with regard to Penguin attacks in this state we fully support the amendments and in particular those as follows which include penalties for dog attacks on wildlife:

1. Section 19AB – Dogs must not injure or kill wildlife - A new offence provision for instances where a dog injures or kills wildlife, which would carry a fine of up to 30 penalty units (at \$168 per unit, equivalent to \$5,040);
2. Section 22 amended - Prohibited areas an increased penalty for taking a dog into a prohibited area containing sensitive habitat for native wildlife;
3. 19AC - Collection of a sample by authorised officer – This to streamline the process for the collection of a sample from a dog and allow an authorised officer act quickly to gather evidence to identify any dog involved in the attack.

With regard to 2. Section 22 amended, as above, this seems to imply that the penalty is only made if the dog is with a human. This should be changed to include “if a dog is found in a prohibited area” as well as “taken in”.

We would also like to suggest that the government consider increasing penalties under Section 16 of the Act that states -

- (1) The owner or person in charge of a dog must ensure that the dog is not at large.
Penalty: Fine not exceeding 5 penalty units.

As Incidents of attacks on native wildlife may occur when a dog is able to escape an owner’s control, we believe a stronger message to dog owners that losing control over your dog, particularly on a frequent basis, is not acceptable. As such, we believe that the current penalty of 5 penalty units is insufficient and should be increased.

Finally, we also believe that, even though increasing penalties is important to ensure maximum adherence to the law, it is important to note that, as we understand it, no dog

responsible for killing penguins has ever been caught in relation to existing offences, and no owners have been charged.

Therefore, we respectfully suggest that the Government must commit to increasing resources to Councils for monitoring and policing around colonies as well as to ensure they have sufficient funds to provide staffing and equipment to carry out these responsibilities.

Signed

Lyn Hatton - Chairperson
Friends of Little Penguins

