



26 September 2019

**Re: Draft Dog Control Amendment Bill 2019 – proposed amendments to the Dog Control Act 2000**

The Sighthound Appreciation Society Hobart (SASH) is a local community group that is a member of the Tasmanian Dog Walking Clubs Inc. SASH's overarching objective is to promote responsible socialisation of the canine group known as sighthounds in Hobart, Tasmania. SASH welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft Dog Control Amendment Bill 2019, as part of the Review of the *Dog Control Act 2000* (the Act).

SASH works towards promoting better recognition of the value of dog ownership with particular emphasis on the plight of the greyhound and its difficult position as both livestock and a domestic pet. SASH aims to achieve cultural change by encouraging Councils to cater for all dogs and their families' needs in their planning and design of environments, including through maintenance and improvement of suitable off-lead and on-lead dog walking areas in the Greater Hobart region.

SASH is pleased with the proposed changes to the Act under *Section 18 amended - Effective control of greyhounds*, and sees this amendment as a positive step towards removing unnecessary restrictions on greyhounds, as well as providing additional flexibility for their owners. However, SASH does have some concerns with respect to how Councils will allow for, and set conditions around, the exercise of greyhounds off-lead, in a declared exercise area.

While SASH notes many Councils are now providing fenced, off-lead areas for dogs and their families to enjoy, there is no guidance under Section 18 amended about the intent for greyhounds in a declared exercise area. SASH sees that this lack of detail could lead to inconsistencies among jurisdictions, including through the application of exclusive use areas for greyhounds, with further potential for confusion among dog owners in the absence of an effective policy and communication strategy. SASH strongly encourages government to provide more details about their intent for greyhounds in declared exercise areas as soon as possible. This will ensure a consistent approach can be applied to the implementation of proposed legislative changes.

Additionally, SASH acknowledges potential for budgetary constraints within some Councils, and would like to encourage the use of sports ovals as an alternative to the development of new off-lead areas for dogs where applicable. Sports ovals offer an excellent option for sighthounds, including greyhounds, and could be effectively managed through good communication with dog owners, as well as signage to inform appropriate times for dog use (i.e. outside of sporting events).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to this important process.

Yours sincerely,

Sighthound Appreciation Society of Hobart