

26 September 2019

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Local Government Division
Department of Premier and Cabinet
GPO Box 123
HOBART 7001

Dear Sir/Madam

DOG CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL 2019

On behalf of Central Coast Council, I make the following comments on the proposed amendments to the Dog Control Act 2000.

In general, the intent of the amendments is supported, particularly in relation to the protection of native wildlife including Little Penguins. However, Council's experience is that some of the recent attacks have not resulted in enforcement actions against owners. This is due to the difficulty in identifying the responsible dog(s) or the owner, or the difficulty in gathering sufficient evidence to successfully prosecute a Court case.

While increased penalties may act as a deterrent and thus encourage responsible dog ownership, it is only one aspect. Better planning through consultative Dog Management Policy development, increased surveillance, improved community education and more rigorous enforcement including sampling are some of the elements required to achieve success. All of these require both human and financial resources with local government likely bearing additional costs.

The amendments provide welcomed additional enforcement tools such as sampling which will assist in gathering evidence in some circumstances, although at some cost to Local Government.

Declaration of restricted and prohibited areas is part of developing a new Dog Management Policy. Council will rely heavily on input from agencies such as the Parks & Wildlife Service and/or the Tasmanian Penguin Advisory Group to determine these areas. Linkages are therefore required to achieve consistency around the State.

In relation to restricted and prohibited areas consideration should be given to including "assistance" dogs in the provisions relating to guide dogs or hearing dogs.

Yours sincerely



Barry Omundson
DIRECTOR COMMUNITY SERVICES