



27 September 2019

As a 21 year-old lobby group and member of Tasmanian Dog Walking Clubs Incorporated (TDWC), and promoter of responsible dog ownership, the Kingborough Dog Walking Association is pleased to offer comment on the proposed amendments to the Dog Control Act 2000 through the draft Dog Control Amendment Bill 2019.

We agree in general with the proposed amendments and are supportive of ensuring dog owners are responsible, particularly when it comes to wildlife (Sections 19AB, 19AC and 22). We note, though, that sometimes clauses about wildlife are used without evidence to ban dogs, as was the case recently regarding a bid to be granted access to Tarooma Beach for dogs.

In regard to the Section 18 amendment, we know that greyhound owners whose dogs have passed the muzzle-free assessments are excited at the potential to use off-lead designated dog areas – we feel reference to effective recall is important for all breeds who share spaces, including greyhounds, therefore a policy should reflect this and be explicit in meaning. Greyhounds who have been rejected from a racing life because of their lack of prey drive have likely had little opportunity for practicing effective recall given the law has kept greyhounds on lead at all times. Support and education programs may need to be funded to help greyhound owners meet the training responsibility of effective control when using shared designated dog areas.

We have some small concerns around how different councils will allow for, and set conditions on, the exercise of greyhounds. Uniformity across the state would be preferable. Different approaches can lead to confusion and supplying separate dog parks for greyhounds may be costly and difficult to police. Our hope is that greyhounds are treated in the same manner as all other dog breeds as is stated in the spirit of the amendment. If the amendments are passed, greyhounds will add to the number of dogs using the current off-lead areas. Many dog parks and off-lead areas are already well-subscribed. We suggest that to help spread the load, fenced sports areas could be used as designated off-lead dog areas, with good management and signage to restrict access to when the ovals are not otherwise in use.

We support the submission from the TDWC, especially with regard to compliance and assisting councils. We maintain a good relationship with Kingborough Council, having recently completed a co-written dog handbook for the benefit of our municipality. We are committed to the promotion of welfare and training of dogs and the responsible behaviour of owners.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Bill.

Dr P C McIntosh – President of Kingborough Dog Walking Association