

Margie Murray

24 September 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

Submission on Dog Control Amendment Bill 2019 - Section 18. Effective control of greyhounds

The proposed changes to the *State Dog Control Amendment Act 2000* are being spoken of in parts of the community as guaranteeing that greyhounds will be able to exercise leash-free in declared “off lead” dog exercise areas.

I write to seek further clarification of an issue in the proposed Amendment Bill.

I write as a three time rescue greyhound adopter, and former lawyer.

Issue One

Your associated Fact Sheet states that:

“Section 18 will be amended to allow greyhounds to be exercised in a declared off-lead area”.

However, the existing provisions of the *Dog Control Act 2000* already permit greyhounds to be exercised in a declared off-lead area so long as they are:

“...secured and restrained by means of a lead that is not more than 2 metres long held by hand by a person able to control the dog...”

If it is your intention to provide that greyhounds will be permitted to be exercised **off-lead** in an off-lead area, could I suggest that you delete Section 18(1)(a)(ii)?

Otherwise, on any accepted reading of the Act, greyhounds will continue to need to be on a lead not more than 2 metres long in an off-lead area.

This would permit no change, then, to the local councils’ current Dog Management Policies.

Issue Two

Your Fact Sheet also states that:

“This will provide councils with the **discretion to allow for, and set conditions around, the exercise of greyhounds in the same manner as all other dog breeds (with the exception of dangerous dogs and restricted breeds)”.** (My emphasis)

However, “effective control of greyhounds” is proposed to be dealt with in the Amendment Act by insertion of new paragraph s18(b)(1)(ba):

“(ba) where the greyhound is in a declared area – only if the conditions, in relation to all dogs *or* to greyhounds, that are specified in the declaration of the area under Division 2 of Part 3 are not being contravened in relation to the greyhound;” (My emphasis)

The words “discretion” and “or” appear to provide for local councils to continue to be able make rules defining “**under effective control**” with respect to greyhounds differently to how it is defined for “all dogs”, for example, as still needing to be on a leash in an off-leash exercise area.

Could you please confirm that it is your intention to leave it to local councils’ discretion whether any change whatsoever will be made to local councils’ Dog Management Policies with respect to greyhounds exercising **off-lead** in declared off-lead exercise areas?

If this is your intention, then potentially no change from the current regimes in place, for the greyhounds.

Thank you for responding to these queries.

Yours faithfully

Margie Murray