

# STOP PUPPY FARMING

## Public Submission Form

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Please use this form to provide your feedback on the State Government's proposed methods to stop puppy farming in WA. These questions are taken from the consultation paper released by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries on Thursday, 3 May 2018. The paper can be accessed at [the Department's website](#).

The information you provide will be used by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) to inform policy decisions regarding stopping puppy farming in WA. If you need help completing this form, please telephone DLGSC on (08) 6551 8700 or toll free for country callers on 1800 620 511, or email [puppyfarming@dlgsc.wa.gov.au](mailto:puppyfarming@dlgsc.wa.gov.au).

For a Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) telephone: 13 14 50. To ensure your input is considered, please return your feedback before the consultation period closes at 4pm on **Friday 3 August 2018**.

### Your contact details

Title:	Mr <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs X Ms <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Enter title here.
First name:	Carla
Surname:	van Verseveld
Street or postal address:	██
Telephone (business):	██████████
Mobile telephone:	██████████
██████████	████████████████████

## Stop Puppy Farming Questions

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1. Please indicate if you are any of the following:

- Dog Owner
- Dog Breeder
- Pet Shop Owner
- Pet Business – please specify below
- Local Govt. employee
- Local Govt. elected member
- Shelter organisation employee
- Shelter organisation volunteer
- Rescue group employee
- Rescue group volunteer
- Foster Carer
- Veterinarian
- Other – please specify below

I have been in the Rottweiler breed for over 33 years and have been breeding under the Gelderland prefix since 1991, I am a current member of Dogs West after joining in 1988, with in excess of 30 years of experience I am very strict who I sell my puppies to.

We at Gelderland only breed when we want to keep something ourselves. Therefore we do not breed often and people have to be prepared to wait. When we have puppies available a questionnaire is sent out to all prospective puppy buyers.

The prospective puppy buyer has to ensure that proper safeguards will be taken to insure for the care and comfort of the puppy. The purchaser also has to agree to maintain the puppy at all times in good health with regular veterinary check-ups and will ensure the puppy receives such vaccinations as recommended by a licensed veterinarian. The puppy should have access to fresh water, will be fed a premium quality commercial dog food, shall not be tied or otherwise tethered for primary confinement purposes, when needing to be kept outside shall have access to proper shelter, shall never be permitted to run loose unattended, shall not be used for dog fighting but most of all they need to be part of your family, with love, care, socialisation and training the dog will become the most loving loyal companion.

We decide which homes will be the best match for each individual puppy according to the answers of the questionnaire about them, the family, home/work situation and also watching the puppies with the prospective owners when they come and visit. With our experience, we feel we are most qualified to select the puppy for its new home. It is in the puppies best interest and everyone concerned! We are with the puppies from birth and know their personalities and temperaments better than anyone else. We've been selecting puppies this way for many years now and have an excellent success rate.

All of the relevant health tests are completed on our dogs, long before we contemplate them as suitable candidates for our breeding program. We invest time in exhibiting dogs at conformation shows so that we are getting an independent appraisal on our future breeding stock.

Our puppies do not leave us until they are physically and mentally in condition to do so and they do not go to homes that have not been part of the journey of understanding why we do what we do.

- We offer lifetime breeder support and are available to 24/7.
- We care about where our puppies go and would like to be updated on a regular basis on their progress.
- We can help with any questions or concerns that may arise.
- Our goal has always been to have a long term happy relationship with all our puppy buyers!

It is part of our agreement that if at any time a purchaser is unable to keep the Gelderland puppy for any reason, the dog is to be returned with no questions asked. When contacting us about a future possible Gelderland puppy, we will send out a copy of the Sales Agreement/ Contract of Sale for their perusal to ensure that they are happy with what we have to offer and to protect all concerned.

## Transitioning Pet Shops to Adoption Centres

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2. Would you purchase a behaviour and health checked rescue dog from a pet shop?

Under no circumstances should pet shops be allowed to sell dogs, FULL STOP.

3. What background information would you want on the rescue dog?

Full disclosure of dog's background, breeder, circumstances leading to impound/surrender, temperament check by qualified behaviourist, full health check by non-RSPCA veterinarian, length of time in shelter, has the dog been in shelter more than once, vaccination record/history, proof or origin of dog

4. Do you think transitioning pet shops to adoption centres is beneficial?

Under no circumstances should pet shops be allowed to sell dogs, FULL STOP. This is perpetuating traumatising of vulnerable animals. It is morally reprehensible for any government to be seen to advocating the use of commercial entities to exploit animals in distress. They should not be placed in a position where they become the subject of an impulse buy.

5. If you are a pet shop owner or operator, what impact will this have on your business?

This should not be a consideration. The Pet Industry owners and advocates should simply not be allowed to sell puppies or adult dogs regardless of their source.

## Mandatory dog de-sexing for non-breeding dogs

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6. How do you feel about mandatory dog de-sexing for non-breeding dogs?

This is ill-thought out, poorly researched and entirely unnecessary. The government has by its own admission only referenced academic sources within WA who have publicly stated their own bias on this issue. You define de-sexing as removal of reproductive organs. You quote that this will result in longer lifespan and also reduction in some cancers. This is extremely misleading. You only have to go to google and ask the question about when it's the right time to spay or neuter dogs. Most of these comments are from USA or UK, the majority suggest well after puberty. Early de-sexing is no longer widely embraced. In Europe it is a crime to de-sex an animal without a medical reason. They do not have the problems you suggest in your paper. But include bone abnormalities, incontinence and increased risk of cancer. I ask you carefully consider the needs of Dogs West breeders in relation to this piece of legislation particularly where we have dogs out on breeders terms. These dogs get to live the best of both worlds. I have placed dogs on terms since I started breeding dogs, it has been a rewarding experience for all parties.

I take a very responsible approach with bitches out on terms as I cannot afford any mishaps, this would put my reputation at risk and also result in sanctions from Dogs West. We care for all girls that are on terms when they are in season. If we breed them, they come back to us a week prior to whelping date so we can manage them and get them used to everything. This way we can ensure proper early handling of pups and care for mums.

7. Exemptions from mandatory de-sexing will apply for health and welfare reasons as assessed by a veterinarian, and if the dog owner is a registered breeder. Are there any other reasons why a dog should be exempt from being de-sexed?

- Yes. Exemption for desexing should be given to all Dogs West members. This is necessary to ensure the continuity of pedigree dogs and in many cases the survival and development of rare breeds. Dogs West members are the acknowledged experts with regards to best practice, removing their right to have entire dogs will jeopardise pure bred dogs in Western Australia. Mandatory desexing is direct assault on my civil liberties and is simply an attempt by the government to impose a one sided political agenda on citizens who are simply pursuing their love of dogs.
- I did not vote to have my dogs forcibly desexed
- Mandatory desexing will reduce the number of healthy, pure bred available to the public and will, in many cases, result in the loss of some breeds in their entirety
- The government is assuming I am irresponsible which is an unacceptable assumption
- Mandatory sterilisation will have no measureable impact on puppy farming and outwit the original remit of this proposed legislation
- Not all states have mandatory sterilisation - why must WA follow?
- Mandatory sterilisation has been shown to have serious detrimental effects and is absolutely opposed by many respected veterinarians in WA. Why has the government not consulted those veterinarians opposed to it?
- The proposed age for sterilisation is ludicrous and will result in foreshortened lives and a vast increase in health issues such as bone abnormalities and cruciate ligament failures. In Rottweilers it will increase the risk of bone cancer between 25 and 28%.
- Dogs should \*never\* be sterilised until they have reached full maturity, to do otherwise risks serious injury and life shortening conditions
- The government was elected on a "Stop Puppy Farming" mandate. It was NOT elected with a mandate to impose mandatory sterilisation.
- Mandatory Sterilisation for aged dogs is dangerous and entirely unnecessary. No retired show dog should be subjected to a general anaesthetic that might result in its death, or unnecessary operations that will have no measurable benefit and will definitely result in unnecessary suffering to the animal.

8. Should mandatory dog de-sexing apply to all dogs, including existing dogs, or just dogs born after a particular date?

- Desexing of dogs should not be mandatory. There is NO justification for this medically unnecessary procedure.

## Centralised Registration System

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9. How will a centralised registration system benefit you?

A centralised registration will be of no measurable benefit to society. This will be an unnecessary duplication of existing registries, an invasion of privacy, and a costly, tax wasting exercise that previous experience has shown local governments incapable of administering without losing control of both costs and security. At a time of financial prudence this should be considered an inherently bad idea. This will not stop Puppy Farmers. You have no way of dealing with those people now and this only tightens up the controls over those of us who are already compliant.

I request that you:

- write in exemptions for Dogs West breeders to NOT have to register with their local Government as a breeder. We are already meeting the requirements of our Association and as you rightly recognises – we are the Gold Standard.
- Please make allowances for our members to place dogs out on breeders terms/agreements.
- Please do not use the terminology ‘Registered Breeders’ for anyone other than Dogs West Breeders
- Please be very aware that other registries are popping up. They are virtual registries with no physical address or presence –anywhere, let alone in this state. Dogs West and the Working Dog Registry should be the only registries you recognise for this legislation.
- Please make all Shelters, Rescues, Fosters register all transitioning pets, identifying from where they sourced those dogs.

10. Do you think it is reasonable to increase dog registration fees for dogs that are not de-sexed to encourage de-sexing?

Yes

Unsure

No

11. Do you support increasing dog registration fees to fund a streamlined centralised registration system and to fund enforcement activities?

Under no conceivable circumstances should the financial burden of a fundamentally flawed concept be imposed upon already stretched tax payers

12. Do you think it is reasonable for dog breeders to pay an annual registration fee to cover the cost of monitoring and enforcing dog breeder compliance?

No. There is more than enough monitoring of breeders. Dogs West members already pay to be monitored. The issue, which the government is failing to see, is one of inefficiency and failure to properly implement existing legislation.

13. Are there any other benefits, costs and/or issues associated with breeder registration that are not captured in this table? Please detail.

There are NO benefits to breeder registration. This will do NOTHING to stop back yard breeders

14. Should there be any restrictions on who can register as a dog breeder? If so, what should these be?

ONLY members of Dogs West should be able to register as breeders. Dogs West breeders have to pass examinations, observe waiting periods and are bound by Dogs West Code of Ethics. Only Dogs West members complete the obligatory health checks required of pure bred dogs.



15. Do you think local government is best placed to enforce dog breeder registration?  
Why, or why not?

Under no circumstances should local government be involved in this legislation. They have neither the experience, resources or expertise to effectively manage and coordinate such matters.

## Mandatory Standards for Dog Breeding, Housing, Husbandry, Transport and Sale

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16. Should people who breed dogs have to comply with minimum standards for the health and welfare of their dogs?

Yes

Unsure

No

Please keep in mind that many people have invested in property to be able to breed dogs with peace of mind. We have fitted our properties out to ensure the best outcome for our dogs and our breeding program. Our property is well maintained and kept clean at all times. Our dogs do not cause a nuisance, they are under control.

There is not one size that fits all in this area. Please use common sense when writing this. Please do not tell us how to do what we know how to do and do not tell us how to do it right when most have not done it yourself.

Your lack of consultation in this space is astounding.

I would be pleased to see something that read like my contract and include the following: To maintain the dog at all times in good health with regular veterinary check-ups. The dog should have access to fresh water, will be fed a premium quality commercial dog food, shall not be tied or otherwise tethered for primary confinement purposes, when needing to be kept outside shall have access to proper shelter, shall never be permitted to run loose unattended, shall not be used for dog fighting. And most importantly: **BE RETURNED TO THE BREEDER** when no longer able to care for said dog.

17. Should there be any restrictions on who can register as a dog breeder? If so, what should these be?

Only Dogs West members should be able to register as a dog breeder. Dogs West members are subject to a code of ethics, have to endure waiting periods, undertake examinations and are subject to infringement penalties far more harsh and punitive than anything ever handed down in a court of law.

18. Should the number of litters that a bitch can produce be restricted by law?

Yes

Unsure

No

19. Should people who breed dogs for commercial gain be required to meet additional Mandatory Dog Breeding Standards?

Only those standards as set down by Dogs West.

20. If you said 'yes' to question 19, should this be based on:

- a) keeping a defined number of breeding dogs?
- b) if so, what number?
- c) any other criteria?

Please provide reasons:

Dogs West are clearly best positioned to regulate, supervise and implement standards for its own registered breeders.

\* Attach further documentation if required.

## Confidentiality

Your submission will be made public and published in full on the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries website unless you ask for it to be confidential. Submissions that contain defamatory or offensive material will not be published.

Do you wish this information to remain private and confidential: Yes  No



Department of  
**Local Government, Sport  
and Cultural Industries**



# **STOP PUPPY FARMING**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:03/08/2018 \_\_\_\_\_

## **Please return this form to:**

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**Please return submissions by 4pm on Friday 3 August 2018**

### **Post**

Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

GPO Box 8349

Perth Business Centre WA 6849

### **Email**

[puppyfarming@dlgsc.wa.gov.au](mailto:puppyfarming@dlgsc.wa.gov.au)