



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



STOP PUPPY FARMING

STOP PUPPY FARMING

Supplementary Paper

May 2018

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May 2018

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Having your say

This paper is designed to:

- be read in conjunction with the Stop Puppy Framing Consultation Paper;
- identify areas of implementation that need further consultation; and
- pose further targeted questions about the implementation of the provisions from specified stakeholders.

The feedback provided will assist in informing the Government on how the stop puppy farming provisions should be implemented.

In conjunction with general questions, questions for particular stakeholders have been specified and are identifiable by different colours. **If you are not a specified stakeholder, you are still welcome to answer the question and provide your feedback.**

This paper supplements, rather than replaces, the Stop Puppy Farming Consultation Paper. We would also appreciate your feedback on the questions posed in the Consultation Paper.

Submissions

You can provide feedback by:

- Completing the online survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GT9HPVW>
- Completing feedback in this paper and emailing it to puppyfarming@dlgsc.wa.gov.au
- Submitting a written submission to:

email:

puppyfarming@dlgsc.wa.gov.au

post:

Stop Puppy Farming
Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
PO Box 8349
Perth Business Centre
Western Australia 6849

Submissions close Friday, 3 August 2018.

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 Submissions that contain defamatory or offensive material will not be published.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

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
Postcode:	██████
██████████	██████████████████

Please indicate whether you are any of the following:

- X Dog Owner
- X Dog Breeder
- X Member of a dog breeder association
- Pet Shop Owner or Operator
- Pet Business – please specify below
- Local Govt. employee or elected member
- Local Government
- Other Government authority or agency employee
- Shelter or Rescue organisation employee or volunteer
- Dog Foster Carer
- Veterinarian
- Livestock Working Dog Owner
- Microchip database company
- Other – please specify: I own a busy dog walking company

Transitioning Pet Shops to Adoption Centres

1.1 Introduction

As detailed in the Stop Puppy Farming Consultation Paper, it is intended to amend the Dog Act 1976 (the Dog Act) so that pet shops will only be able to source puppies and dogs for sale from 'properly accredited' rescue organisations or shelters.

The areas of implementation on which further input is sought are:

- the accreditation of rescue organisations or shelters;
- the assessment of the health and behaviour of dogs;
- the period to transition pet shops to adoption centres;
- the arrangements that will need to be developed between pet shops and rescue organisations and shelters; and
- enforcement, including who will be responsible and how enforcement will be undertaken.

1.2 Accreditation of rescue organisations and shelters

Under the new proposals, pet shops will only be able to source puppies and dogs for sale from 'properly accredited' rescue organisations or shelters. Dog rescue organisations and shelters will be accredited by the State Government.

Questions – All

1. What information should a rescue organisation or shelter provide when applying for accreditation?

X Information on the standard in which animals in their care are kept

• X **Information on operational policies**

I would like to know how they assess their dogs as 'fit for purpose'. Most of these dogs will be sold as pets, how can traditional shelters provide an assurance that a dog in their care is fit to be a family pet?

• I have been advised that a number of shelters are spending vast amounts of donated money for surgeries on dogs that Vets have advised are not mentally sound. I want

Questions – All

rescues and shelters to be accountable for the money donated.

- Some rescues in WA are actively sourcing dogs from pounds and shelters in other states. Why are they doing this if the dog does not have a designated home to go to. Lisa Baker MLA says no dogs should be bred until shelters are empty - how can that happen if they are bringing in dogs from other States to go into shelters?
- How can a dog be properly assessed for its fitness to be adopted if shelters do not see the dog until after it arrives in WA. What assurance do we have that those dogs are not dangerous dogs being moved from state to state to avoid euthanasia?
- Shelters should have to show some connection to the breed if they are breed specific shelters. For example, a long term understanding of the breed and a willingness to work with registered breeders, offering return of the dog to the original breeder in the first instance. This will ensure that the agreements that many breeders have to take dogs back are adhered to.
- Shelters should not be keeping dogs for ever and a day. They should have a policy that outlines how long dogs can stay in shelters and what measures are underway to mitigate long term stays for dogs. Dogs that cannot be re-homed safely and to suitable homes should not be kept in shelters long term.
- Shelters should never place dogs in a situation where the dogs can be purchased on an impulse. All prospective buyers should have lodged an interest to adopt and then should have a 72hour cooling off period in which time regular interaction with the dog of choice should be encouraged.
- Shelters should have the same duty of care and disclosure as registered breeders. They must have truth in advertising. If they do not know the parentage of the breed they must stipulate same. Unless they have proof of breed either through registered pedigrees or DNA then dogs should not be represented as particular breeds. Cross bred dogs must not be advertised as a mix of particular breeds unless the shelters have proof.
- Shelters should be offering free ongoing support and training for the dogs they place.
- Shelters should provide comprehensive care instructions for the dogs they are placing - including grooming, feeding, possible health issues, return policy, meeting local by-laws and legislative requirements.
- Shelters should be investigating people's experience with dogs then matching them appropriately with the dogs on offer. Many dogs in shelters have high needs as they have been poorly socialised as youngsters or have had limited training. These dogs are not usually suitable for first time owners or people with physical limitations.
- Some shelters have dogs in foster care until they are adopted. How will you cater for the number of dogs in care in that situation?
- What happens when Shelters become multi-faceted i.e. Shelter and pound or Shelter and boarding kennel, or shelter and puppy production?
- No puppies should ever be born in a shelter environment. It would be very rare cases where shelters could provide a consistent 24/7 hands on experience from people skilled in raising puppies. A shelter environment is not the place for puppies to be

Questions – All

born and raised.

- The number of dogs crossing the borders to go into shelter should be limited and subject to permits. There is potentially a huge bio-security risk from dogs, with little background or history, travelling in the same transport devices as family pets. Recently in the USA there was a deadly outbreak of Canine influenza that spread rapidly via the pet rescue networks.
- Staff indicates people who are paid to work at shelters. Most people working at these establishments are volunteers, they need to have minimum training and or experience that is tested in the workplace prior to them gaining a position. They need to keep their knowledge up to date with current improvements in animal welfare.

X Information on rehoming policies

X Evidence of compliance with relevant laws, including the Dog Act, Animal Welfare Act and any relevant local laws or by-laws

X Information on the number of animals in their care

X Staff training

Other – please specify: _____

2. What should the Government consider when accrediting a rescue organisation or shelter?

- Rescues should not be breeding establishments
- Rescues should meet standards for keeping of dogs
- Rescues should temperament test all dogs by an accredited assessor
- Dogs that are not suitable for rehoming should not be kept on a “no-kill” basis as they may be a risk to their carers and end up being passed around from rescue to rescue – a lady in Southern River was killed by a dog being kept on a no-kill philosophy.
- There needs to be minimum requirements in regards to record keeping maintained by shelters. This would include dogs coming in, training given, Veterinary attention given, assessments conducted, history of the dog, where the dog goes.
- Shelters need to be accountable regarding funds donated and spent – they should be ‘not for profit’.
- Shelters need to be accountable for the dogs they place in homes for a minimum period of three months.
- Dogs West Clubs and Members offer breed specific advice and rescue to many breeds and should be accredited under any scheme as they operate within the Regulations and Code of Ethics of Dogs West.

3. Should these organisations be monitored?

X Yes

Questions – All

- No
- Unsure
- Depends on the following factors (please specify): _____
- **Organisations should have to provide a business model prior to being approved for establishment.**
- **Shelters should not be permitted to set up without prior approval and demonstration of how they can meet minimum standards as set down by Government**
- **Breed specific rescue that is conducted by Dogs West Registered breeders should be exempt as they operate under the Regulations and Code Of Ethics of Dogs West who have a proven compliance system in place.**

4. How should they be monitored?

- X Audits
- X Inspections
- X Annual reporting
- Unsure
- Not applicable – they should not be monitored
- Other: _____
- **Yes. There should be random audits completed on records and facilities as well as the dogs that are in their care.**
- **If a rescue fails an audit there should be a stringent follow up process**

Questions – Animal Rescue Organisations and Shelters

5. Is your organisation likely to apply to be an accredited rescue organisation or shelter that can provide dogs to pet shops?

- Yes
- X No
- Unsure
- Depends on the following factors (please specify): _____

6. What would prevent your organisation from applying to be an accredited rescue organisation or shelter?

- **Members and Club who run breed specific rescues must abide by Dogs West Rules and Regulations, so they cannot supply any dog, for any reason, to a pet shop.**

Questions – All

Questions – Government and non-Government agencies

7. Do you believe your agency should have a role in accrediting rescue organisations and shelters?

Yes

No

Unsure

Depends on the following factors (please specify): _____

Please specify reasons for your response: _____

- Dogs West could accredit rescue organisations run by their Members and affiliated Clubs as many do offer breed specific rescue and have done for many years.
- Yes, as many Dogs West affiliated breed clubs and breeders run rescue operations for their breed of interest – not only for the dogs bred by a Dogs West breeder, but for dogs of that breed from any source.
- Yes, as many many Members and Clubs use their breed experience and expertise which makes them ideal for doing this work, when they can, and some rescues have waiting lists of people who are looking for an older or second dog.
- Yes. Dogs West has rules and regulations that require a certain level of care, responsibility and ethics in relation to the dogs our members breed. If they wish to 'rescue' or rehome the dogs they have bred, or assist other breeders or the breed in general, then they should be exempt from accreditation.

8. If you answered yes, what would this role be?

- Dogs West could play a role in accrediting these breed specific rescues, run by Dogs West affiliates by a reporting process, which would also assist in presenting a true picture of where these dogs come from.
- It is hard to answer this question, because it is dependent on the standards that may be adopted for Rescues, but I am sure Dogs West will assist its Members to continue their work.
- Many Rescues rely on the goodwill of individual Dogs West members who foster and care for dogs to ensure they are suitable for their breed for rehoming. Dogs West could monitor their activities, but I would not like to see that monitoring or government standards make it impossible for Members to continue to play this vital role.
- Any regulations around the good work being done already by such rescue groups should not be hampered by onerous regulations, reporting should be simple and Dogs West could monitor this.

Questions – All

1.3 Assessment of the health and behaviour of dogs

The origins of dogs in rescue organisations and shelters is generally unknown. To provide confidence to potential new owners, it is intended that every dog supplied to a pet shop must pass a health and behavioural assessment. Pet shops will need to ensure that each dog has a health and behavioural certificate.

Questions – Pet Shop Owners and Operators and Animal Rescue Organisations and Shelters

9. Should it be the responsibility of the pet shop or the rescue organisation or shelter to have a dog submitted to a vet for a health and behavioural assessment?

- Pet Shop
- Rescue organisation or shelter
- Unsure

- **The estimated cost of a behavioural assessment by a suitably qualified Veterinarian is \$350. This cost would be a burden to the rescues. It should be paid by the Pet Shops who are offering the dog for sale.**
- **No dog sourced from pounds, shelters or rescue organisations should cross the border into or out of WA without a proper behavioural (and physical) assessment that shows the dog is fit for purpose as a pet.**

10. Who should be responsible for bearing the cost of that assessment?

- Pet Shop
- Rescue organisation or shelter
- Unsure

- **The cost would be ultimately paid by the new owners who should only be charged for the cost associated with that assessment.**
- **Nobody should be making a profit from that assessment, it should only be cost recovered.**
- **The person buying the dog should be paying for this in the cost of the dog – and it should be on a cost-recovery basis only.**
- **I think the new owner should pay – only the actual cost – should not pay more than covering the cost of the assessment.**

11. Who should be responsible for carrying out the health and behaviour assessment?

- Veterinarian
- Dog behaviouralist
- Dog trainers

Other – please specify: _____

Unsure

- The number of Veterinarians who have studied canine behaviour as a specialty is limited but it is important that either those Vets or Qualified Canine Behaviourists only are used. There needs to be a list of 'Authorised Assessors' approved by Government.
- I am not sure because I do not know who is best – but they must be trained, qualified and have working knowledge to be able to do this assessment.
- Only a trained animal behaviourist can do this – are there going to be enough of them to do this work on every dog?
- Will there be a capped fee for this assessment – otherwise this could become very expensive and people will avoid doing it.
- I think this should only be done by someone who is trained and qualified to do it.

Questions – Veterinarians

12. What aspects of a dog's health and behaviour should be assessed by a veterinarian?

X Physical health

X Temperament

X Response to adverse situations (noise etc.)

X Ability to be trained

X Interaction with other animals

Other – please specify: _____

- All of the above are important but the most important, which is not listed is 'safe around humans of all ages'.
- I think a dog should be checked for overall health, and any issues or long-term health issues made known.
- I think a full health check, with disclosure of any issues, should be standard. Behaviour should be assessed, both with other dogs and most importantly with people. After all, they are going to live with people.
- A dog may not like other dogs, but may be perfectly fine with people. This needs to be a known factor for every dog – dogs can be managed around other dogs if the right home is found, but they will always live with people.
- Safe around people is more important than reaction around other animals. Responsible dog ownership will manage the interactions around other animals. The right people need to be matched to dogs, especially when they are dog aggressive. Being dog aggressive needs management but not necessarily loss of life.

13. What would this cost?

- This would be very costly and would be anything from \$350 upwards.
- I don't know how much this might cost – but the cost of a child or person being

bitten, or a dog badly wounding another dog, is much higher.

1.4 Transition period

Pet shops will be gradually transitioned into adoption centres to allow time for pet shops to make arrangements with dog rescue organisations and shelters.

Option 1 – Two year transition

Under this option, pet shops will be transitioned within two years of the legislation coming into effect.

In the interim, pet shops will be able to source puppies and dogs as they currently do.

Option 2 – Five year transition

Under this option, pet shops will be transitioned within five years.

From date of amendment to the Dog Act	Where pet shops can source dogs:
0 to 2 years	Pet shops can source dogs from a dog breeder registered as such on the centralised database.
2 to 5 years	Pet shops selling dogs will be required to source dogs from accredited dog rescues and shelters, but can still also source dogs from registered breeders.
5 years onwards	Pet shops can only source dogs from accredited dog rescues and shelters.

Questions – All

14. Please indicate your preference for the following:

- Option 1 – Two year transition of pet shops to adoption centres.
- Option 2 – Five year transition of pet shops to adoption centres.
- Other transition period – please specify: _____

Please indicate reasons for your preference: _____

- I do not believe Pet Shops are the place for the selling of dogs under any circumstances. Rescue dogs can have a host of unknown past experiences and already be under stress from living in a Rescue situation. Taking that dog to another strange situation simply puts the rescue dog under even more stress and could lead to impulse buying from an inexperienced person or family.
- Pet shops should only be selling commodities that support the comfortable life of dogs. They should not be selling dogs or cats. No transition period.
- Pet shops are the primary cause of this legislation. The smart ones have moved away from trading in live pets. The rest of them need to update their business models and also move away from live pets.
- Perhaps a compromise could be that Pet Shops can assist in rehoming dogs by displaying dogs that are available in shelters either by streaming a video loop or photos with contact details.
- Pet shops can transition by being adoption centres for two years then move to no cats or dogs.

Questions – Pet Shop Owners and Operators

15. What support can be provided to transition pet shops into adoption centres?

- Government could provide some funding towards training staff who may lose jobs due to change in structure
- Some people may lose their jobs if their job is to look after dogs/puppies for sale – what assistance will they get?
- Government could provide support, workshops or training via SBDC in relation to Pet Shops transitioning away from trading in Pets and towards similar models as the bigger pet shops.

1.5 Arrangements between pet shops and rescue organisations and shelters

It is likely that pet shops will need to form arrangements with accredited dog rescue organisation and shelters to ensure the responsible supply of dogs.

Questions – Pet Shop Owners and Operators

16. At the end of the transition period, is your pet shop likely to source dogs from accredited dog rescue organisation and shelters?

- Yes
- No, our pet shop will cease to sell dogs
- Unsure

17. Why or why not?

18. Would a template agreement that could be used by pet shops and dog rescue organisations and shelters be helpful?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

19. Arrangements between pet shops and dog rescue organisations and shelters should cover the following aspects:

- Housing of dogs on premises
- Responsibility for the behaviour and health check
- Liability
- Other – please specify: _____

Not Applicable

Questions – Animal Rescue Organisations and Shelters

20. Would a template agreement that could be used by pet shops and dog rescue organisations and shelters be helpful?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

21. Arrangements between pet shops and dog rescue organisations and shelters should cover the following aspects:

- Housing of dogs on premises
- Responsibility for the behaviour and health check

- Liability
- Other – please specify: _____
- Not Applicable

1.6 Enforcement

It is estimated that there are approximately 15 pet shops in Western Australia that sell puppies and dogs. After the transition period, pet shops will need to be monitored to ensure they are only sourcing dogs from accredited dog rescue organisations and shelters.

Furthermore, during the transition period pet shops would need to be monitored to ensure they are only sourcing dogs from registered dog breeders (following the introduction of dog breeder registration).

Pet shops could be monitored in a number of ways:

Option 1 – Public monitoring

Pet shops would be required to display a certificate confirming the source of the dog is from an accredited rescue organisation or shelter. The public could report pet shops to an enforcement agency that are not providing a certificate verifying the dog's source.

Option 2 – Inspections

An enforcement agency would be responsible for inspecting pet shops that sell dogs, whether randomly or periodically, and require the pet shop to provide information upon request.

Option 3 – Audits

Pet shops would be required to be audited by a particular enforcement agency, whether periodically or randomly.

Option 4 – Audited and inspected upon complaint

The enforcement agency would inspect and audit a pet shop only where concerns were raised about the pet shops compliance with the laws.

The type of enforcement undertaken will assist in informing what agency is best placed to undertake enforcement. The capacity and resources of the agency would also need to be considered.

Questions – All

22. Should pet shops have to register with a relevant authority if they sell dogs?

- Yes
 No
 Unsure

- Yes they should have to register with the DPIRD and they should have a license that needs to be renewed subject to assessment.
- I am surprised that they don't already have to do this, as they are a business – don't they have to have a licence already?
- Only legal entities can hold a permit or register.

23. Should it be an offence to fail to register?

- Yes
 No
 Unsure

24. What information and records should a pet shop maintain to ensure compliance with the pet shop provisions can be monitored?

- Records of where dogs have been sourced from
 Details of new owners
 Details of health and behaviour checks
 Other – please specify: _____

- Length of time dog has been in rescue, breed description and photo. Age of dog when sold, microchip number and any conditions of sale.
- I also believe a cooling off period of say, 72 hours, would be useful.
- They should be 'required' under the Act to provide open and transparent access to records.
- They should be required to keep certain records (such as where they sourced their dogs from along with contact details).

25. What information and records should a rescue organisation and rescue maintain to ensure pet shops can be monitored and information verified?

1. History of dog while in their care
2. Date dog sold from pet shop
3. Date/s dog is taken to pet shop
4. Microchip, breed description, photos for identification
 - All records should be matched to microchip details
 - photographs of dogs taken from all angles to show colours and colour

Questions – All

patterns

- Any other identifying marks should also be recorded such as scars and tattoos

26. How should a pet shop be monitored for compliance?

- Option 1 – Public monitoring
- X Option 2 – Inspections
- X Option 3 – Audits
- X Option 4 – Audited and inspected upon complaint
- Other – please specify: _____

- Twice yearly returns outlining dogs in and out should form part of the process. This information should be recorded on a central database with a permit number matching to the shop and the animal sold identified by microchip
- Random Audits to match data provided. Penalties to be applied if errors or non-compliance is identified
- Records should be kept of dogs coming and going, so that dogs can be tracked if they end up in another rescue
- How will customer complaints about dogs be managed/recorded to stop a dog going from home to home
- Customer complaints should all be recorded in a central database and should generate some form of action – either a visit or at least a phone call.

Questions – Local Governments

27. If enforcement was cost recovery, what would local governments' capacity be to enforce these provisions?

Recovery of all costs involved and punitive damages set at the highest level of deterrence up to and including incarceration.

Mandatory Dog De-sexing for Non-Breeding Dogs

2.1 Introduction

Currently, dogs are not required to be de-sexed in Western Australia. Owners are encouraged to de-sex their dogs, and owners of de-sexed dogs pay a lower dog registration fee than owners of other dogs.

A recent survey of Western Australian local governments, with 43 out of 137 local governments responding, found that 82% of registered dogs were de-sexed.

The additional consultation in this document focuses on the following elements of implementation:

- Age of mandatory de-sexing
- Age for registration and microchipping
- Additional exemptions
- De-sexing vouchers
- Enforcement

This paper supplements, rather than replaces, the consultation paper. Please also answer the questions in that paper.

2.2 Age of mandatory de-sexing

The Dog Act will be amended to require all dogs to be de-sexed by the time they reach a particular age.

Option 1 – By three months of age

This would be consistent with the current requirement for registration and microchipping and with the age for de-sexing dangerous (restricted breed) dogs. Dogs are generally unable to breed before the age of three months so this age eliminates the risk of unwanted puppies being born.

Exemptions issued by veterinarians are proposed for dogs that are too young to be de-sexed. Dogs to be used for breeding would also be exempt.

Option 2 – By six months of age

Opinions differ on the best age for de-sexing with many veterinarians preferring not to de-sex a dog until it is close to six months old.

Both male and female dogs are generally able to breed by six months, with the females of smaller breeds becoming sexually mature by four months. Larger breeds may not be sexually mature for a year or more.

South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory have introduced mandatory dog de-sexing by six months old.

Questions – All

1. Please indicate your preference for the following:

- Option 1 – mandatory de-sexing by three months of age, unless an exemption applies.
- Option 2 – mandatory de-sexing six months of age, unless an exemption applies.
- Another age – please specify: _____

Please provide reasons for your preference: _____

- **I voted to try to Stop Puppy Farming. I did not vote to be forced to have my dog desexed nor anyone else's for that matter.**
- **It takes away my rights.**
- **If too many dogs are sterilised as a result of this law it will be very hard for the public to be able to obtain a healthy, well-bred dog from a responsible breeder because there will not be enough dogs being bred by the right type of breeders. There will still be plenty around from the Puppy Farmers because I have read that mandatory sterilisation does not stop THEM.**
- **I am a responsible dog owner and a member of DogsWest. I have no intention of breeding from my dog. I just want him to be healthy and strong for as long as possible**
- **A Dogs West Member has spent a lot of time talking to rescue organisations. Turns out, dogs are being shipped in from interstate to top up numbers in some Rescues when they run low. Not to designated homes – to join a shelter. So how will mandatory sterilisation lower numbers in shelters?**
- **You say that mandatory sterilisation will reduce numbers of dogs in shelters – what about the dogs that are being shipped in from interstate to come into shelters here and then found homes for – why are they not managed in the State they are coming from where populations are greater?**
- **Why is mandatory sterilisation being considered in WA when the major Australian states do not have it – only the ACT and South Australia have this in place.**

Questions – All

- Why does WA need compulsory sterilisation when biggest States do not?
- I have read that mandatory sterilisation has not effectively reduced the problem of puppy farmers anywhere in the world where it has been legislated. I have read that the AVA is not in favour of mandatory sterilisation for this reason.
- This legislation is based on welfare of dogs, yet the mandatory sterilisation of dogs creates its own set of health and welfare issues. I don't see how passing a law requiring mandatory sterilisation, which can be seriously detrimental to the health of dogs, is justified while trying to fix another health and welfare issue. Replacing one problem for another does not make sense.
- I do not believe in a set age for the sterilisation of dogs. There are many studies about sterilisation of dogs, with more studies coming out all the time. Many are against sterilisation.
- Any legislation proposed by government should be on a "no-harm" basis. Many studies show the effect of sterilisation on dogs in relation to diseases, such as cancer, behavioural issues and incorrect growth, such as elongated bones and joint disorders.
- If a dog needs to be sterilised it should be at a time and age suitable for the type of dog and the circumstances, with advice from a Vet and a breeder.
- I do not believe in mandatory sterilisation – and advise my puppy buyers not to sterilise, if required, before 12 months of age. Larger breeds should be later.
- Not until it was both physically and mentally fully developed.
- When recommended by the breeder as there is not a one age fits all approach.
- My dog does not wander without supervision and I do not have two dogs. I don't want to de-sex my dog.
- My breed of dog needs to remain intact as it is a breed with a small gene pool and my breeder wants to assess their quality for possible breeding at a later date.
- My breed of dog is well known for not being receptive to artificial breeding practices. Mandatory de-sexing would severely limit our already small gene pool.
- My research into scientifically backed information suggests early de-sexing is detrimental to canine behaviour and also physical wellbeing. I do not want to de-sex my pet until it is a more mature age.
- When I voted to Stop Puppy Farming, I believed that the Government intended to act in the best interests of all dogs. From what I have learned, forcing dogs to be sterilised when they are too young is seriously detrimental to their long term health. I feel bad now, that I have voted for something that I did not intend to happen, and that it could seriously impact on the health of dogs that I only wanted to help.
- I am a Dogs West member and I am the owner of a number of older dogs that have retired from my breeding program. I do not want to put these aged dogs through major surgery when they are going to be at risk due to General Anaesthesia. Please do not make dogs over the age of 7 years required to have this surgery. We are not permitted to breed from them as per Dogs West Code of Ethics. Please give dogs that

Questions – All

are involved in a Dogs West breeding program an exemption for life.

- I am a Dogs West breeder and I place dogs in pet homes where I retain the breeding rights to the dog. Those dogs should be linked to my registration number so I can keep their records up to date in relation to breeding and desexing.
- I am a Dogs West member, when someone registers an intact dog that is being kept intact for my purposes there should be a link from the database to my record and I can go in and confirm that dog is on my list of intact animals. If I change my mind I can take the dog off the list and it can then may be subject to de-sexing regulations/legislation.
- As a Dogs West member I need to keep some dogs intact for future breeding. I would like and exemption to de-sexing for those dogs. The new owner's record could link with mine as a co-owner for breeding purposes. That way I am still the breeder, not the new owner.
- I am a Dogs West, ANKC registered breeder. I have several dogs placed out in pet homes as loved companions. These dogs are still available to me to use for breeding (on breeder's terms). Under this legislation these dogs may have to be sterilised. This will be a great loss to my breeding programme and will significantly reduce the available gene pool and affect the genetic diversity of the breed in this state.

2. If you have a de-sexed dog, at what age was it de-sexed?

- I have never desexed a dog under 12 months of age, and only ever on medical grounds.
- What relevance does this question have? Are you saying if I say Yes, that I agree to mandatory sterilisation?

2.3 Age for registration, microchipping and de-sexing

Currently dogs are required to be registered and microchipped by the time they are three months old.

The following addresses possible ways to deal with registration and microchipping if the requirement for de-sexing is set at six months.

Option 1 – Registration, microchipping and de-sexing by six months

Under this option, the Dog Act would be amended so that registration, microchipping and de-sexing must be completed by the time a dog reaches six months of age.

The benefits include:

- enabling local governments to sight evidence of microchipping and de-sexing at the time of registration
- administrative efficiency for local governments
- less confusion for owners, which would increase compliance
- convenience for dog owners in being able to have their dog microchipped and de-sexed in the same veterinarian visit.

The key disadvantage is the inability to identify dogs (either by registration records or microchips) before six months. This may result in dogs not being returned to owners and being sent to the pound and/or a dog rescue or shelter.

Option 2 – Limited registration at three months; full registration on de-sexing

This option proposes the following:

- the retention of the current provisions under the Dog Act requiring dogs to be registered and microchipped by three months of age, and
- a short-term registration (three months) for dog owners registering a dog that has not been de-sexed.

This allows dogs to be identified from three months of age but provides an additional administrative burden on both the owner and the local government in having to register a dog twice.

Option 3 – Registration at three months; onus on owner to advise when dog de-sexed

Under this option, the owner would be responsible for notifying the relevant local government once their dog was de-sexed. The owner would need to provide a copy of the sterilisation certification to the local government – this could be done by email or attached to an electronic form.

The local government would then update the registration database. This would create an additional administrative burden on local governments.

Questions – All

3. Please indicate your preference for the following:

- Option 1 – registration, microchipping and de-sexing by six months
- Option 2 – limited registration at three months; full registration on de-sexing
- Option 3 – registration at three months; onus on owner to advise when dog

de-sexed

Please provide reasons for your preference: _____

- Options 1 and 2 are promoting early sterilisation – why is this the focus?
- Option 3 would allow for the dog to be sterilised at an age agreed by the owner and their vet on the best age applicable to that dog - if it is to be desexed at all.

Questions – Veterinarians

From 1 July 2018 South Australian veterinarian practices will be responsible for updating a centralised dog registration database when a dog is de-sexed. This would replace the need to issue a sterilisation certificate.

4. Would you support this approach?

- Yes
 No
 Unsure

Please provide reasons for your response: It serves no realistic purpose, is an invasion of privacy and a cost to the tax payer. It will do NOTHING to stop back yard breeders

2.4 Additional possible exemptions from de-sexing

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.

Livestock working dogs

Livestock working dogs require particular traits, with dogs that demonstrate these traits being bred to ensure that future working dogs also have these particular traits. Livestock working dogs are generally only used for breeding once the dog has a proven ability as a working dog, usually by two to three years of age.

If a primary producer is required to de-sex their dog at an early age, they will not be able to assess whether a dog has the desirable traits and should be used for breeding. Mandatory de-sexing could reduce the working dog gene pool.

On the other hand, unintended breeding could result in unwanted dogs.

Questions – All

5. Should livestock working dogs be exempt as a class from mandatory dog de-sexing?

- Yes
 No
 Unsure

Please provide reasons for your preference: _____

- **There should be no mandatory sterilisation.**
- **I think people with livestock working dogs should be exempt – they need to be able to breed dogs that can do the job.**
- **I understand that people with working dogs need time to assess the working ability of a dog before that dog could be used in a future breeding program. They should therefore be exempt from mandatory sterilisation until those decisions are made.**
- **Livestock working dogs are bred to work – and it takes time to ensure that a dog has good working ability and may then be used for breeding. They should not be sterilised before they know if they are good working dogs.**

6. If working dogs are required to be de-sexed by a particular age, at what age should working dogs be required to be de-sexed?

- **Not until they are old enough to be assessed on their working ability to decide if they will be used to contribute to future generations of working stock.**
- **No working dog should be desexed before it is known if it is to be part of a breeding program.**
- **I don't think they should have to be desexed unless they are no longer to be a dog that is working, or is part of a working dog breeding program.**
- **Only to be desexed if not to be a working dog or part of a working dog breeding program.**

7. How could this be enforced?

- **I cannot see how this can ever be enforced – the State is just too big and many areas**

Questions – All

quite remote.

- Working dogs are located all over this very large state. I cannot ever see inspections or compliance being used on properties which cover enormous physical areas.
- It is simply not possible. How could enforcement cover the entire State?
- I question what role working dogs play in puppy farming?

Dogs held by persons registered with recognised breeding associations

Dogs that are intended to be used for breeding purposes will be exempt from de-sexing. Owners of dogs intended to be used for breeding purposes will be required to register as a breeder for their dog to be exempt.

Alternatively, a dog could be exempt from de-sexing on the basis that their owner is a member of a 'recognised' organisation. In this situation, a member would need to provide evidence of their membership to the local government for their dog to be exempt.

Dogs West, as an example, is a pedigree breeding association in Western Australia whose members are required to abide by a Code of Ethics.

While members of these associations and organisations could be exempted as a class from de-sexing dogs in their care and ownership, it would not follow that they were also exempt from the requirement to register as dog breeders. Under the dog breeder registration requirements each member that bred dogs would still be required to register as a dog breeder, register each dog in their care and pay the appropriate registration fees. Dog breeder registration allows for the traceability of puppies so action can be taken against unscrupulous breeders. Dog breeder registration is discussed in more detail in section 3.7 to 3.9.

If organisations were recognised in this way, they would be required to update the State Government on each change to membership within seven days of the change occurring.

Questions – All

Questions – All

8. Should members of recognised breeding associations be exempt from the mandatory de-sexing requirement through their membership status?

- Yes
 No
 Unsure

- **All Members of Dogs West should be exempt from mandatory sterilisation, whether they are a breeder or not.**

9. What criteria should be considered by the State Government in approving recognised organisations?

- Only organisations that have proven standards, including the oversight of their members breeding activities, with demonstrated outcomes where these standards are breached, should be considered.
- Dogs West, an affiliate of the Australian National Kennel Council (ANKC) is the only organisation based in WA which meets this criteria.
- In other States, other Affiliates of the ANKC have been recognised in this way.
- In South Australia, DogsSA collects the breeder registration fee from breeder Members and forwards this to the relevant SA State Government body.
- Dogs West should be approved and their Membership number used as the State Government number – this is what is done in South Australia. This gives transparency between the two Registers.

10. Are there any other class of dogs that should be exempt from mandatory de-sexing?

- Yes
 No
 Unsure

Please provide reasons for your preference: _____

- There should be no mandatory sterilisation.
- Dogs owned as companion animals but still connected to their Breeder.
- Dogs held on breeders terms from a Dogs West breeder, should be exempt – they are part of the wider Dogs West community of dogs and may be crucial to maintaining a wide gene pool for the breeding of healthy dogs.
- Many dogs live full and happy lives as companion animals in a loving home, and are occasionally used by their breeder in their breeding program, they should be exempt.
- Restrictions under the WA Dog Act make it very difficult for many Dogs West breeders to maintain a breeding program, without the ability to have dogs in their wider community.

Questions – All

- Some dogs are also shown from that wider community, with the dog living in a companion home, but shown by the breeder of the dog. They must be exempt.
- I am a Dogs West breeder and I place dogs in pet homes where I retain the breeding rights to the dog. Those dogs should be linked to my registration number so I can keep their records up to date in relation to breeding and desexing.
- I am a Dogs West member, when someone registers an intact dog that is being kept intact for my purposes there should be a link from the database to my record and I can go in and confirm that dog is on my list of intact animals. If I change my mind I can take the dog off the list and it can then may be subject to de-sexing requirements.
- As a Dogs West member I need to keep some dogs intact for future breeding. I would like an exemption to de-sexing for those dogs. The new owner's record could link with mine as a co-owner for breeding purposes. That way I am still the breeder, not the new owner

2.5 Transferring dogs

Dog breeders and dog owners will be required to de-sex any dog transferred to another person unless:

- the new owner is a registered breeder
- the new owner is a member of a recognised association or organisation that is exempt from the mandatory de-sexing requirement
- the dog is exempt by a veterinarian from being de-sexed on health grounds (unless the exemption is because the dog is too young to be de-sexed)
- the dog is too young to be de-sexed and is accompanied by a prepaid de-sexing voucher.

Requiring dog owners and breeders to de-sex a dog before it is transferred will ensure there is compliance with the de-sexing requirements.

In cases where a dog is too young to be de-sexed, it is proposed that a breeder or owner transferring a dog provide the new owner with a pre-paid voucher that will at least partially cover the cost of de-sexing. This aligns with the requirements in the Cat Act.

The cost of having a dog de-sexed varies greatly, depending on such factors as the age and weight of the dog. The voucher could be set at a particular amount with the new owner paying any additional amount.

One of the matters to be considered is how these vouchers could be used at veterinarian practices other than the issuing one. This is important for owners who source their dogs from places far from their homes.

Questions – All

11. Do you support the provision of a pre-paid voucher by the dog breeder if the dog is not de-sexed?

- Yes
 No
 Unsure

- I have concerns over how this will work for a puppy sold to someone who lives nowhere near me, or the person moves before the voucher is used. What then?
- Will vets have an arrangement that they will recognise a voucher from another vet – what if someone lives too far away or does not want to use my vet?
- What happens if a voucher is never used?
- If I sell a dog interstate – what happens then – how would this work?
- Will there be exemptions – how is the sale of a dog to another Dogs West Member, or a Member of another ANKC Member body?
- What happens when a dog is sold interstate?
- If a new owner lives a significant distance from my vet – how will the voucher be used?
- New owner moves interstate before the voucher is used – what happens to the value of that voucher?

12. What should be the value of the voucher?

- Less than \$100
 \$100 - \$149
 \$150 - \$199
 \$200 - \$249
 Over \$250
 Other – please specify: _____

- No mandatory voucher

Questions – Veterinarians

Questions – All

13. How much does your practice charge for the de-sexing of a female dog?
Please specify the circumstances that this price is dependent on, and what is included in this cost (for example, fluids, pain medication etc.).

Female dog under 10kg	
Female dog between 10kg – 25kg	
Female dog over 25kg	

Please indicate what is included in this cost: _____

14. How much does your practice charge for the de-sexing of a male dog? Please specify the circumstances that this price is dependent on, and what is included in this cost (for example, fluids, pain medication etc.).

Male dog under 10kg	
Male dog between 10kg – 25kg	
Male dog over 25kg	

Please indicate what is included in this cost: _____

15. How could pre-paid vouchers be transferred between veterinary practices?

16. How many prepaid cat sterilisation vouchers have you issued since the introduction of mandatory de-sexing of cats?

17. How many prepaid cat sterilisation vouchers have you accepted since the introduction of mandatory de-sexing of cats?

18. What methods do you currently use at your practice to de-sex a dog?

- Spaying
- Castration
- Other – please specify: _____

19. Is it likely your practice will use other methods to de-sex dogs in the future, including non-temporary means?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please provide reasons for your response: _____

Questions – All

20. Is there a potential role for the Australian Veterinary Association? For example, to issue pre-paid sterilisation vouchers that can be used at any veterinarian practise. The practise can then cash in the vouchers with the AVA.

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please provide reasons for your response: _____

2.6 Enforcement

It is necessary to consider how mandatory dog de-sexing will operate alongside the current requirements under the Dog Act; and how local governments can efficiently monitor compliance.

Currently, local governments are responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the following requirements under the Dog Act:

- dogs to be registered with the local government by the age of three months
- dogs to be microchipped by the age of three months.

Local governments check compliance with the microchipping requirement at the point of registration. A local government can refuse to register a dog that is not microchipped and it is an offence for a person to keep a dog over the age of three months if it is not registered. Effectively, an owner must have their dog microchipped before they can register a dog with their local government.

Owners of certain dangerous dogs are currently required to de-sex their dogs. A dog owner is required to provide a dog sterilisation certificate issued by a veterinarian as evidence that the dog is de-sexed. Alternatively, a dog's de-sexed status can be checked by the local government by viewing a sterilisation tattoo on the dog's ear, although this method of marking a dog is now rare.

Local governments would appear to be the relevant authority responsible for monitoring and enforcing the compliance of mandatory dog de-sexing, especially at the point of registration.

Currently, owners who register de-sexed dogs with their local government pay a lower registration fee than owners of dogs that are not de-sexed, creating an incentive for owners to de-sex their dog. It is proposed to maintain a lower registration fee for de-sexed dogs to further incentivise de-sexing.

Questions – All

21. Who do you believe is best placed to monitor compliance with de-sexing?

- Local Governments
- Other – please specify: _____

Please provide reasons for your preference: _____

- **When a dog is registered with Council now – you say it is desexed or not – so what will change?**
- **Can be managed as part of dog registration – same process as exists now**
- **Local Government already records this information – and people get reduced registration fees for sterilised dogs – this should stay**
- **What have you done to determine what the level of risk of puppy farming is in this state?**
- **Do you have any intelligence to back your claims that there is in fact puppy farming in WA and to what extent does it exist?**
- **How will you determine that you are only targeting the people that this legislation is aimed at?**
- **This legislation is a bit like setting shark nets, not many of us are Apex predators but we might get caught in your net.**
- **Enforcement can only follow months of research into who should be targeted. You have said this is all about stopping puppy farming but do you have any risk assessments in place that indicate how great the risk is.**
- **Do you have any benchmarks in regards to what a successful outcome of this legislation will look like?**
- **You have already told us that you don't know where the puppy farmers are and you have also mentioned that you will not stop everyone. Just how much of a difference are you hoping to be able to make?**
- **Why not just use your current legislation? Make a few amendments if it is failing.**
- **Have you completed a risk assessment on doing nothing? The legislation is meant to**

stop puppy farming but in doing so you are introducing a package that will stop puppy production or at least limit it.

- How do you plan to improve compliance when you have such a small target (by your own admission you don't know who or how many, you can't find them - a needle in a haystack maybe).
- Nobody would ever expect 100% compliance but if you are going to introduce this bill it is only fair that you can demonstrate success by showing a measurable shift in compliance.
Will you be able to do that? Can you provide an accurate figure on the numbers of offenders now?
- Most of the people currently get it right, there are some people who are trying to get it right but might slip due to error or ignorance and then there are people who are never going to comply and will re-invent themselves to avoid you. What is your plan in relation to educating the people who are trying to get it right. Can you guarantee that enforcement action will only be against those deliberately operating outside the legislation. We do not want to see people who try to get it right being used to prop up stats that this proposal was warranted.

Questions – Local Governments

22. What costs do you currently incur in registering a dog? Please provide as much detail as possible.

Item _____	Cost \$ _____
Item _____	Cost \$ _____
Item _____	Cost \$ _____

23. What additional costs would you incur if you also checked a sterilisation certificate or exemption certificate at the time of registration?

Item _____	Cost \$ _____
Item _____	Cost \$ _____
Item _____	Cost \$ _____

24. What other costs would mandatory de-sexing impose on a local government?

Item _____	Cost \$ _____
Item _____	Cost \$ _____
Item _____	Cost \$ _____

25. What benefits would be gained by your local government with mandatory de-sexing? Please provide as much detail as possible.

Item _____	Cost \$ _____
------------	---------------

Item _____ Cost \$ _____
Item _____ Cost \$ _____

26. At what level would the registration fee need to be set for your local government to recover costs?

For de-sexed dogs? \$ _____

For non-de-sexed dogs? \$ _____

Centralised Registration System

3.1 Introduction

A key element of the McGowan Government's Stop Puppy Farming commitment is the introduction of an online centralised dog registration system in Western Australia.

The centralised registration system will be used to identify every dog or puppy by recording:

- dog registrations
- dog breeder registrations
- any change in ownership of dogs or puppies.

The Dog Act will be amended to make it a requirement to register on the system and update particular information on the system within seven days of the change occurring.

The additional consultation in this document focuses on the following elements of implementation:

- General
 - Access to the system
 - Additional information to be included in the system
- Dog Registrations
 - Dog registration information to be included in the system
 - Updating dog registration information in the system
 - Transitioning existing dog registers
- Dog Breeder Registrations
 - Application and approval of dog breeder registrations
 - Conditions of dog breeder registration
 - Exemptions
- Transferring a dog

Current situation

Local Governments

Currently under the Dog Act, the local government is responsible for keeping a record of dogs registered in their district. The dog register is specific only to that local government district (unless two or more local governments work together to maintain a joint system). This can create difficulties in identifying lost dogs from different local government districts,

particularly if a dog’s microchip information has not been updated with the current owner’s details.

The local government is responsible for processing dog registration applications and can refuse to register a dog on specific grounds, such as when a dog is not microchipped.

The local government issues each dog registered in their district with a registration number and a registration tag.

Dog breeders

Dog breeders in Western Australia are not currently required to register as ‘dog breeders’. They are, like all dog owners, required to register their dogs with their local government. They are also required to obtain an exemption or kennel establishment licence if they keep more dogs on any one premises than is permitted.

3.2 Access to the System

	View and update own information	View and update all information	Limited dog breeder verification information*	Search for dogs on the system
Dog owners	X			
Dog breeders	X			
Local governments and State government authorities	X	X	X	X
Members of the public			X	
Dog management facilities and recognised dog shelters and rescues	X		X	X

*As a minimum, the information on the dog owner that will be shown to a member of the public will include:

- their name;
- their postcode;
- their unique dog owner number; and

- their dog breeder registration status.

Questions – All

1. Are any other authorities or groups that should have access to the system?

- Yes – please specify below.
- No
- Unsure

Please specify: _____

- **Until the scope and use of the proposed central registry is known I can not comment on who should have access. However the basic principles of privacy and a valid need to know must be applied at any party being considered for access.**
- **What safeguards will be in place to ensure the information contained in the registry will only be accessed for legitimate and approved activities.**

2. What type of access should they have?

- View their own records
- Update their own records
- View all records
- Update all records
- Approve changes to records

3.3 Additional information

The breadth of information recorded on the centralised registration system will affect how it can be used, and by whom it can be used. It is also likely to affect the cost.

There is the potential to record additional information on the centralised registration system, including the following:

- A register of approved kennel establishments in Western Australia (including the ability to apply for a kennel establishment licence on the system)
- A register of dog management facilities in Western Australia
- A register of pet shops transferring and selling dogs in Western Australia
- A register of dangerous dogs (declared and restricted breed)
- Information on particular dog owners, such as dog owners that are subject to a court order or have been convicted of offences under:
 - the Dog Act
 - a dog local law or by-law
 - the Animal Welfare Act
- Information on dogs:
 - that have been seized by the local government at any time
 - that have been involved in a dog attack
 - that have not been controlled by their owner in accordance with the Dog Act
 - that have caused a nuisance or are subject to a nuisance complaint
 - that are subject to a destruction order
- Information to inform compliance with the standards for dog breeding, housing, husbandry, transport and sale.

The benefit of keeping this information is that these facilities, businesses, dogs and dog owners could be more readily identified and monitored by relevant authorities.

The inclusion of this additional information could result in additional costs, including:

- costs associated with creating a system that included and stored this additional information
- costs to particular stakeholders who would be responsible for uploading this information
- costs to local governments in processing this information
- costs to relevant enforcement authorities in monitoring this information.

Dog registration fees, and dog breeder registration fees would need to accommodate these costs.

Cat Registration

Currently under the *Cat Act 2011*, local governments are responsible for:

- processing cat registration applications;
- approving cat breeder applications; and
- maintaining a register of cats in their district.

As with dog registers, cat registers are specific only to that local government district (unless two or more local governments work together to maintain a joint system).

Questions – All

3. Do you think the system should also be expanded to include cat registrations and cat breeder registrations?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

4. Do you think any of the following additional information should be included on the centralised registration system (you may select more than one option):

- Approved kennel establishments
- Dog management facilities
- Pet shops that sell or transfer dogs
- Dangerous dogs
- Dog owner's subject to Court orders or convicted of particular offences
- Dogs that have been seized by the local government
- Dogs involved in a dog attack
- Dogs that have not been controlled by the owner
- Dogs that have caused a nuisance or are subject to a nuisance complaint
- Dogs that are subject to a destruction order
- Other information – please specify: _____

Please indicate reasons for your preference/s: _____

5. Would you support a larger increase in dog registration fees to include additional information on the system?

- Yes

- No
 - Unsure
6. How much *extra* would you be prepared to pay for an annual dog registration to cover these costs?
- \$1 - \$5
 - \$6 - \$10
 - \$11 - \$15
 - \$16 - \$20
 - More than \$20
7. Who do you think should have access to this additional information?
- Only local governments
 - Animal welfare agencies
 - Other – please specify: _____

Questions – Local Governments

8. Would it be beneficial for your local government if cat and cat breeder registrations were also transitioned to the centralised registration system?
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
9. How would transitioning cat and cat breeder registrations to a centralised registration system be beneficial to your local government?
- Administrative efficiency
 - Consistency with centralised dog registrations
 - No requirement to maintain own register
 - Other – please specify: _____
 - It would not be beneficial – please specify: _____
10. Would any of the additional information outlined above be useful for your local government?
- Approved kennel establishments
 - Dog management facilities
 - Pet shops that sell or transfer dogs
 - Dangerous dogs
 - Dog owner's subject to Court orders or convicted of particular offences
 - Dogs that have been seized by the local government

- Dogs involved in a dog attack
- Dogs that have not been controlled by the owner
- Dogs that have caused a nuisance or are subject to a nuisance complaint
- Dogs that are subject to a destruction order
- Other information – please specify: _____

Please indicate why you think it would be useful: _____

11. What additional costs would including this information in the system create for your local government?

- Processing the additional information
- Monitoring the additional information
- Other: _____

12. How much *extra* do you estimate this would cost your local government per annual dog registration?

- \$1 - \$5
- \$6 - \$10
- \$11 - \$15
- \$16 - \$20
- More than \$20

13. Would it be easier for your local government to process and record kennel establishment licences through the system?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please give your reasons: _____

3.4 Dog registration information

The breadth of information recorded on the centralised registration system will affect how it can be used, and by whom it can be used. It is also likely to affect the cost.

General information

Dog registration information that will be kept on the centralised registration system will include:

- Current information requirements: the information a dog owner must currently provide to register a dog in Western Australia is set out under Form 4 of Schedule 1 of the *Dog Regulations 2013*. This includes information on the following:
 - dog owner details, including their address and contact details
 - **whether the dog can be effectively confined to the premises**
 - dog details, including age, breed, microchip details, whether the dog is a commercial security dog or a dangerous dog
 - the number of dogs on the premises
 - information on any previous convictions for offences against the Dog Act, Cat Act or Animal Welfare Act
 - a declaration that the information in the application is true and correct
- In addition, dog owners will be required to provide:
 - further information on their dog's sterilisation status
 - their unique dog owner number (if known, otherwise they will be issued with one)
 - the dog owner number of the dog's breeder (if known).

This is the minimum level of dog registration information that will be stored on the centralised registration system.

Questions – All

14. Please indicate if you think any of the additional information should be included on a dog's registration:

- information on whether the dog is used as a livestock working dog
- information on whether the dog is used as an assistance dog

Please indicate why you think this information will be beneficial:

3.5 Updating dog registration information

The online centralised registration system will have the capacity to allow a range of users to register and update information recorded on the system in Western Australia.

Verification of some of the information recorded on the system will need to be undertaken to ensure the information is accurate, such as the sterilisation status of a dog.

The following users will be able to register a dog on the centralised registration system:

- dog owners
- local governments on behalf of dog owners (registrations made in person or hard copy form)
- dog shelters and rescue organisations
- dog management facilities.

The following stakeholders will be able to use the system to register as a dog breeder on the centralised registration system:

- dog owners (who wish to breed from their dog)
- local governments on behalf of dog breeders (registrations made in person or hard copy form)
- dog shelters and rescue organisations
- dog management facilities.

Local governments will be responsible for approving dog and breeder registrations in their district. The registration will not be complete until approved by the local government. In the process of approving dog registration applications, local governments can verify the microchip and de-sexing details through, for example, examining the dog's sterilisation certificate.

Potential Role for Veterinarians

Another possible option is that veterinarians use the system to update the system with a dog's de-sexed and microchip information. In South Australia and New South Wales, veterinarians are able to update their centralised system with a dog's microchip details. The advantages of this are:

- a veterinarian can verify the de-sexing and microchipping of the dog without a local government having to examine a sterilisation certificate
- this is likely to be a more accurate and reliable method
- local governments can quickly process dog registrations as they do not have to confirm the microchip and de-sexing details (unless not already entered)
- the information is verified and entered in the system at the point of microchipping and de-sexing, meaning there is no delay in updating this information.

This will create a cost to veterinarian practices who will need to expend time and resources on undertaking this function.

Veterinarians will not be responsible for ensuring dog owners comply with the microchipping and de-sexing requirements. They will also not be obliged to notify a local government of a dog owner's non-compliance with the requirements.

Under this proposal, a veterinarian will be able to update a registered dog's details. If the dog is not registered prior to the veterinarian undertaking the microchipping and/or de-sexing, the veterinarian will still be able to enter the dog's microchip details and sterilisation status into the centralised registration system.

Owners will then be responsible for searching the system for the microchip details of their dog, and completing their registration.

Questions – All

15. Do you think veterinarians should be able to update and input dog's microchip and sterilisation details into the system?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please indicate why it would be useful: _____

16. Should it be a mandatory requirement for veterinarians to input this information into the system, or optional for veterinarians to input this information?

- Mandatory
- Optional
- Not applicable

Please provide reasons for your preference: _____

Questions – Veterinarians

17. Would you or your practice be willing to undertake this function to ensure the accurate recording of dog microchip and de-sexing details?

- Yes

- No
- Unsure

18. What costs would you or your practice incur by undertaking this role?
Please quantify where possible.

- Administrative costs involved with inputting information
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

Please identify and quantify costs where possible: _____

19. Do you perceive any benefits in undertaking this role?

20. Please indicate what other information you think veterinarians should be able to update or access on the system?

- Enter a dog registration on an owner's behalf
- Search for the identity of a dog and its owner
- Enter vet specific information on any registered animal
- Report and enter details of animal incidents such as dog attacks
- Report dog deaths
- Other – please specify: _____

3.6 Transition existing dog registers

Introducing a centralised registration system will mean the information in the existing local government dog registers will need to be transferred to the central register. This could be phased in over a number of years.

Local governments currently use at least five different registration systems, ranging from a sophisticated purpose-built database to a spreadsheet. A survey of local governments, with 53 local government respondents, found that 68% used Synergy, 13% used Civica, 8% used TechnologyOne, 8% used Pathway and 2% used an Excel spreadsheet.

Annual dog registrations

It is proposed that annual dog registrations will be transferred to the centralised system from the local government systems on renewal. Under the Dog Act, annual dog registrations expire on 1 November of every year.

Once the centralised registration system is developed and launched, annual dog registrations will be incorporated into the centralised registration system by requiring dog owners to renew their annual dog registration through the centralised system.

Essentially, dog owners that have registered their dogs annually will be captured when they renew their dog registration.

Three year dog registrations

Similar to annual dog registrations, owners that have registered their dog for a period of three years will be transferred to the centralised system when they renew their dog's registration. As for annual registrations it will be the owner's responsibility to enter their data into the new system at the time of re-registration.

This means that it will take the centralised system three years to incorporate the three year period dog registrations.

Lifetime dog registrations

Lifetime dog registration means the owner never has to renew their dog's registration. As such, their dog's registration cannot be recorded on the centralised dog registration system through the renewal of the registration.

There are three options to capture lifetime dog registrations on the centralised system:

Option 1: Software

Data migration software could be created to transfer the information in each local government's register to the centralised system.

Software created to transfer dog registration information from local government systems to the centralised system would need to be specific to each type of software system the local governments currently use. It is not known if local governments using the same registration system have it configured in the same way. The expense of creating data migration software for each system would be significant, and adequate time would be needed to develop the data migration software for each type of registered software used by local governments.

Dog registration fees would have to increase to cover the costs of funding the data migration software or a one off registration charge apply for registrations on the new system.

Option 2: Manual entry

Another option is to manually transfer the lifetime dog registrations to the centralised system. This would require local government staff to enter the information.

It would also mean that local government resources would be used on transferring information as opposed to undertaking other local government duties. It would, however, mean that local governments would no longer have to manage a dual system of registrations so there would be time and cost savings in the medium and longer term.

Sufficient time would also need to be provided to allow local governments to transfer the information – this could be three years in line with the transition of the three year registrations.

Option 3: Owner's responsibility

Another option is to make it the responsibility of existing owners to re-register under the new centralised system.

Local governments could identify lifetime registrations on their system and send letters and information to owners with lifetime dog registrations instructing them to re-register their dog on the centralised system. There would be no charge for this process.

Upon re-registering online, owners would complete a specific registration form identifying them as a dog owner with an existing lifetime dog registration. Local governments could confirm this against their existing register and waive the registration fee.

If a person does not have online access, the local government could process the re-registration on the owner's behalf.

Currently, owners with a lifetime dog registration are not required to update a local government when their dog dies. Local governments are likely to therefore have active registrations for dogs that have passed away. One advantage of owners re-registering their lifetime dog registrations is that the register will not be updated with deceased dogs.

There is a risk that owners will not undertake the re-registration and may not re-register their dog.

Questions – All

21. Please indicate your preference for the following:

- Option 1 – Develop and provide data migration software to transfer lifetime dog registrations to the centralised registration system.
- Option 2 – Local governments manually enter lifetime dog registrations into the centralised registration system.
- Option 3 – Owners re-register their lifetime dog registration on the centralised registration system.

Please indicate reasons for your preference: _____

22. Are there other options for transferring existing dogs onto the centralised system?

23. Which of the following would you support to cover the costs of migrating existing data?

- an increase in the registration fee
- a one-off payment by dog owners
- other
- none

One option is that existing lifetime dog registrations are not transferred to the new system and local government registers would need to be retained for at least a 15 year period following the launch of the centralised system and authorities would

have to refer to both the centralised system and individual local government dog registers.

24. Should lifetime dog registrations be transferred to the new system?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Questions – Local Governments

25. Please indicate your local government district and the software you currently use for your dog register:

- a) Local Government district: _____
- b) Dog register software: _____

26. Please indicate if the software used for your local government dog register is the same as the software used for your local government's cat register:

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

27. Have you modified the software you currently use?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

28. Is your local government easily able to identify lifetime dog registrations in your dog register?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

29. How many lifetime dog registrations does your local government currently have?

30. Does your local government have the capacity to extract data from your dog register software and provide the extracted data in an Excel spreadsheet?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Questions – Dog Owners

31. Would you prefer:

- dog registration fees to increase to cover the cost of transferring dog registrations to the centralised system;
- a one-off \$5 fee for an automatic transfer of the data; or
- to re-register your own dogs online?

32. If you are a dog owner with an existing lifetime dog registration, would you be willing to re-enter your details in the centralised registration system online?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

3.7 Application and approval – dog breeder registration

A dog breeder will be broadly defined under the Dog Act, and will include any owner who has a dog that is not de-sexed, except if the dog is not de-sexed on health grounds.

The requirement to register as a dog breeder will come into effect once the centralised registration system is operational.

While it is envisaged that a majority of breeders will be registered prior to their dog having puppies, dog owners that are not registered will need to register as a breeder within seven days of the birth of puppies. This will ensure the local government has adequate time to process and approve the dog breeder registration application before the puppies are potentially transferred to another owner.

The information supplied by dog breeders at registration will impact the ability of the local governments to make an informed decision on approval of dog breeder registration.

The information cat breeders must provide when applying for approval to breed cats includes:

- the breeder's details, including address and contact details
- the cat's details, including microchip details and sterilisation status

- questions in relation to the breeding of the cat, including the number of cats being kept on the premises, a description of the facilities, and whether they are a member of one of the listed organisations
- the requirement to provide details of any previous convictions against the Cat Act, Dog Act or Animal Welfare Act
- a declaration that the information provided is true and correct.

It is proposed that similar information is provided when dog breeders apply for dog breeder registration. Instead of providing information on the premises and facilities, it is proposed that dog breeders would need to indicate and certify that they were compliant with any minimum standards for dog breeding, housing and husbandry (once they came into effect).

Breeders will be required to renew their dog breeder registrations annually. Registered breeders will also be required to update any change to their information within seven days.

Questions – All

33. What information do you think a dog breeder should provide when applying for breeder registration or renewal?

- The number of dogs being kept on the premises
- A description of the premises where the dogs are being kept
- A description of the facilities
- The breed of dogs
- Whether a person has been convicted of an offence under the Dog Act, Cat Act, Animal Welfare Act or a dog or cat local law.
- Certification that they comply and will continue to comply with animal breeding, housing and husbandry standards
- Other – please specify: _____

34. What do you think local governments should take into account when considering a dog breeder application or renewal?

- The number of dogs being kept on the premises
- The breed of dogs
- Convictions under the Dog Act, Cat Act, Animal Welfare Act, or a dog or cat local law
- Other – please specify: _____

The Dog Act allows a dog registration officer from the local government, with the consent of the owner or occupier, to enter and inspect premises to ascertain

Questions – All

whether a dog will be effectively confined on the premises. It is a condition of dog registration that a dog must be effectively confined to the premises in which it is kept.

35. Should local governments have the power to enter and inspect premises of a dog breeder, or premises that are subject to a dog breeder application or renewal?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

36. In what situations should a local government be able to enter and inspect premises of a dog breeder of that are subject to a dog breeder application or renewal?

- Where the dog breeder owns more than a certain number of dogs, or owns a kennel establishment. If yes, how many?
- No
- Unsure

3.8 Conditions – dog breeder registration

Dog breeders registered with the government will be required to comply with particular conditions. This will include legislative requirements relating to information that must be provided when transferring a dog and the requirement to update a dog's microchip database details with the breeder's dog owner number.

Dog breeders will also be required to comply with the requirements under the Dog Act, Cat Act and Animal Welfare Act and the mandatory dog breeding standards and guidelines when they are introduced under the Animal Welfare Act.

Registered dog breeders will also be required to notify the local government if any details of their dog registration changes.

Questions – All

Questions – All

37. Please specify any additional conditions with which dog breeders should comply:

38. On what grounds do you believe a local government could cancel a dog breeder registration?

- The dog breeder is convicted of an offence under the Dog Act, Cat Act, Animal Welfare Act, or a dog or cat local law
- The dog breeder is convicted of an offence under Australian Consumer Law in relation to dogs they have sold or transferred
- Failing to provide their dog owner number on the microchips of the puppies that they breed
- Failing to provide their dog owner number when advertising or transferring a dog
- Other – please specify: _____

3.9 Exemptions – dog breeder registration

Livestock working dogs

In Queensland, primary producers that own and breed livestock working dogs are exempt from registering as dog breeders where they sell or transfer puppies they have bred to other primary producers.

If a primary producer sells or transfers a puppy they have bred to someone who is not a primary producer, then they are required to register as a dog breeder, and supply their dog breeder registration number.

Questions – All

39. Should primary producers in WA be exempt from registering as dog breeders where they breed and transfer livestock working dogs to other primary producers?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please provide reasons for your response: _____

40. Should primary producers in WA be exempt from registering as dog breeders where they breed and transfer livestock working dogs to any person?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please provide reasons for your response: _____

Dog breeders registered with recognised breeding associations

There are dog breeders in WA that are members of non-Government dog breeding organisations and associations.

Dogs West, as an example, is a pedigree breeding association in Western Australia whose members are required to abide by a Code of Ethics.

Following the introduction of the centralised registration system, members of Dogs West will be required to register as a dog breeder with the Government.

Questions – All

41. Should particular dog breeders that are members of particular dog breeding associations be exempt from registering with the Government as dog breeders?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please provide reasons for your response: _____

In South Australia, dog breeder registration has recently been introduced.

Members of Dogs SA (the Dogs West equivalent) are not exempt from registering as dog breeders, but Dogs SA are responsible for inputting and maintaining their member's details into the dog breeder register.

The membership number issued by Dogs SA is also used as the Government dog breeder registration number.

42. Should recognised dog breeder associations in WA be responsible for inputting the details of their members into the Government's dog breeder register on the centralised registration system?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please provide reasons for your response: _____

43. What do you perceive to be the benefits of recognised dog breeder associations inputting their members details into the Government's dog breeder register? (You may select more than one option)

- Creates consistency between registers
- Avoids duplication for dog breeders who would otherwise need to register with both associations
- Potentially lessens the administrative burden on local governments

Questions – All

- Ensures that dog breeders registered with dog breeder associations are also registered with the Government and can be traced on the Government system
- Other – please specify: _____

44. What obligations should there be on recognised dog breeder associations that input their members details into the Government's dog breeder register? (you may select more than one option)

- Recognised dog breeder associations must update any change of their member's details within seven days of being notified of the change
- Recognised dog breeder associations must notify the relevant local government when a dog breeder is no longer a member of their association
- Recognised dog breeder associations must notify the relevant local government if a member's membership of their association is cancelled by the association
- Recognised dog breeder associations must notify relevant enforcement agencies where they find evidence that one of their members is not complying with the requirements under the Dog Act, Animal Welfare Act or a relevant dog local law
- Other – please specify: _____

45. What criteria should be considered when approving a dog breeder association to be a 'recognised' dog breeder association that can input their member's details into the Government's dog breeder register?

- Privacy and confidentiality policies of the association
- Compliance with minimum standards for dog breeding, housing, husbandry, transport or sale
- Other – please specify: _____

46. If you are a member of a dog breeder association, would you like your association to be responsible for completing your Government dog breeder registration?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please provide reasons for your response: _____

47. Should the membership number of a member of a recognised dog breeding association be used as their Government dog owner number?

Questions – All

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please provide reasons for your response: _____

48. What do you perceive to be the benefits of members of breeding associations using their membership number as their dog owner number?

- Creates consistency
- Ensures a dog breeder is easily identifiable in both the association's register and the Government's register
- Avoids confusion on what number members should quote in advertisements for the sale of dogs
- Other – please specify: _____

3.10 Transferring a dog

Dog breeders and dog microchip information

Under the new centralised registration system, every owner that registers a dog will be issued with a 'dog owner number' that is unique to the owner. Effectively, every dog owner will have an identification number.

A dog breeder will be required to record their details and their unique 'dog owner number' alongside the microchip details of every puppy bred from their dog/s. This will ensure that the breeder's details are permanently recorded for each dog.

Microchip implanters will be required to provide the following information to the microchip company:

- Information on the dog breeder that owns and bred the dog's mother:
 - Their 'dog owner number'
 - Their name, address and contact details
- If known, information on the dog breeder that owns the dog's fathers:
 - Their 'dog owner number'
 - Their name, address and contact details

Microchip database companies will be required to record and retain this information alongside the microchip information of a dog.

Questions – Microchip Implanters and Microchip Database Companies

49. Is it possible to include additional fields of information on your microchip database?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

50. Will this have an impact on the cost of recording information on the microchip database? If so, how so?

51. Please indicate the name of your microchip database company:

Providing information when transferring a dog

Any person who sells, gives away, transfers or advertises a dog will be required to provide their 'dog owner number' and the dog's microchip number. Both numbers must be provided in any advertisement that advertises dogs or puppies for sale.

This will assist in tracking a dog, and identifying where a dog has come from.

Furthermore, if the person selling, giving away, transferring or advertising a dog alleges to have bred the dog, a consumer can verify if they are a registered breeder on the centralised registration system by searching the 'dog owner number' provided by the breeder.

Consumers will be educated about only sourcing dogs from dog owners that provide their dog owner number and the dog's microchip number. This will help members of the public source dogs and puppies from registered dog breeders that can be identified and held accountable.

If a person has not bred a dog and transfers a dog, they must still provide their dog owner number and the dog's microchip number, to ensure authorities can identify and trace where a dog has been sourced from.

To monitor compliance with this requirement, members of the public will be encouraged to report non-compliant advertisements to an enforcement agency.

Questions – All

52. Are there other ways to monitor or ensure dog advertisements comply with the requirement to provide both the dog owner number and dog's microchip number? Please specify:

- **Currently provision of dog owner numbers and dog microchip numbers are not a requirement for the sale of a dog. Dogs West regulations stipulate that Dogs West Members must advertise their MEMBERSHIP number when advertising dogs. However, this has seen other people copying these Numbers are using them fraudulently.**
- **The same thing will happen with any system put in place – dishonest people will continue to do dishonest things, and this will not stop them.**

53. What agency could be responsible for prosecuting dog owners and breeders that do not comply with the transfer and advertisement requirements?

- **Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development**

Questions – Government and non-Government agencies

54. What is your agencies capacity (considering benefits, issues and costs) to enforce these requirements?

Questions – Consumer Protection WA

Consumer Protection WA is currently responsible for enforcing Australian Consumer Law. If a person advertises a dog for sale and provides a dog owner number and/or dog microchip number that is intentionally incorrect, then they would be making a misleading statement and would be breaching Australian Consumer Law.

55. Would Consumer Protection WA be able to prosecute someone who provided incorrect details when advertising or transferring a dog under Australian Consumer Law?

- Yes

Questions – All

- No
- Unsure

56. Would there be any issues in enforcing these requirements?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Please specify any potential issues: _____

Jurisdictional issues

Dog breeders and dog owners outside of WA are not subject to the requirement to have a dog owner number. If they sell, advertise or transfer a dog to a person in WA, they will not be able to comply with the requirement to provide a dog owner number.

If the transaction occurs outside of WA, then the transaction is not subject to WA law and the requirement to provide such details.

If the transaction occurs within WA, then this will be an issue. The Department will continue to identify ways to address this issue.