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## Inquiry into the Domestic Animals Amendment (Puppy Farm and Pet Shops) Bill 2016

DOGS Victoria Submission

### Impact of the Bill on DOGS Victoria members - DABs

- Many DV breeders are unlikely to be granted DABs under this proposed Bill, particularly those in residential, residential/rural and greenwedge areas
- Others may not be able to afford the planning requirements set by local councils for DABs (e.g. fees, insurance, permits, expert reports, construction costs etc)
- DAB fees vary considerably and regulations and processes are opaque and not consistent between councils
- Only course of appeal is through VCAT

## Impact of the Bill on DOGS Victoria members – the Code

- The Code of Practice for the Operation of Breeding and Rearing Businesses (2014) (the Code) which was written as a minimum standard for large, commercial breeding operations
- More than 5 dogs (including desexed, puppies over 12 weeks and rescue/foster dogs) will result in a DAB holder being classed as a 'large breeding establishment' (even with only one fertile female)
- Code has a number of requirements not suited to small, hobby breeders - for "large" DABs, this includes requiring dogs to be housed in separate commercial standard kennels and recommends that dogs no longer in 'breeding programs' be rehomed or euthanized
- The Code is inconsistent with the Code of Practice for the Private Keeping of Animals

## DOGS Victoria Member Survey 2016

- A survey of over 1200 DOGS Victoria members with a current prefix asked members what impact the Bill may have on them
- Over 97% of respondents were not currently DABs, those that were DABs were for the most part registered as commercial boarding kennels
- The majority (77%) lived in residential, residential-rural (lifestyle) or greenwedge zoned areas. Only 18% lived in farming zoned areas
- Over 42% felt their chances of obtaining a DAB for the purposes of breeding to be poor. Many stated that their councils has already stated that would not approve a breeding permit unless zoned for farming. In some cases, these also required minimum acreage – eg more than 20 acres)

## DOGS Victoria Member Survey 2016

- Majority of respondents were small, hobby breeders
- Over 77% owned between 1-3 fertile females
- Just over half of respondents had registered a litter in the last 12 months
- Of these, than 90% had between 1-3 during that time
- Majority of respondents did not have any puppies returned; of those that did, most were rehomed successfully (a small number are still with their breeder)

## DOGS Victoria Member Survey 2016

- Only 24% of respondents thought they would be able to continue to breed under this proposed Bill
- More than 45% were unsure, as they were not able to find out from their councils if/how a DAB would be granted
- However, almost 20% said they thought they would no longer be able to breed pedigree dogs should the Bill be introduced

## Other Impacts of the Bill

- Potential impacts on foster care/rescue arrangements by Breed Clubs
- Not for profit dog obedience and sporting clubs will need to be registered as DABs and adhere to the commercially based Code for Code of Practice for the Operation of Dog Training Establishments. This will impact on eligibility for community grants, access to council facilities, sponsorship etc. The result will be the loss of community based dog training groups that currently provide low cost dog training for members of the public