

Restricted Breed Inquiry



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Summary

- RSPCA is opposed to Breed Specific Legislation (BSL) in any form
- Any dog may be dangerous and dogs should not be determined as being dangerous on the basis of breed
- The current regulatory framework and the way it is implemented has not been effective in reducing dog attacks and keeping the community safe
- Dog bite incidents can be greatly reduced through evidence based dog management strategies
- Compulsory greyhound muzzling is another form of BSL that should be repealed

Key points

- There is a high risk that the current framework has led to dogs not being identified and registered as a restricted breed
- Interpretation of the standard is difficult and subjective
- The current framework is weighted towards punitive measures for dogs that attack rather than relying on evidence based models that have a preventative focus
- Using mandatory educational training as a response to minor misdemeanours is a more positive punitive measure with more likelihood of rehabilitation success

Key points

There are five interacting factors that can lead to a dog's propensity to bite:

1. Heredity (genes, breed)
2. Early experience
3. Socialisation and training
4. Health (physical and psychological)
5. Victim behaviour

RSPCA recommendations

Legislative change

- Compulsory registration and micro-chipping of all dogs
- Control of unrestrained and free roaming dogs
- Provisions for the control of menacing dogs
- Mandatory desexing
- National registry of declared dangerous dogs
- Mandatory reporting of dog bites
- Calgary model as a basis for changed Victorian legislation

RSPCA recommendations

Investment in education & behaviour modification

- Community education, particularly children
- Positive reinforcement training
- Early socialisation

Incentivise good behaviour

- Reduced registration fees for attendance at responsible pet ownership courses
- Impounded entire dogs:
 - Discounted fee to voluntarily desex prior to release
 - Mandatory desexing on second offence