



# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE (Legislation and References)**

## **Terms of Reference 58<sup>th</sup> Parliament**

### **Inquiry into the Legislative and Regulatory Framework Relating to Restricted Breed Dogs**

On 26 May 2015 the Legislative Council agreed to the following motion:

Economy and Infrastructure Committee to inquire into, consider and report, no later than 31 March 2016, on the current legislative and administrative arrangements (regulatory framework) for restricted breed dogs in Victoria, including the benefits and challenges of the regulatory framework and, in particular, the Committee should —

(1) review the current regulatory framework in Victoria, including the Domestic Animals Act 1994 (DAA), concerning restricted breed dogs and its effectiveness in achieving the purposes of the DAA, in particular —

- (a) responsible dog ownership;
- (b) protection of the environment; and
- (c) protection of the community;

(2) the review under (1) should —

- (a) holistically consider the entire current regulatory framework in the management of dogs;
- (b) include a review of —

- (i) data on dog attacks, including attacks involving humans, attacks involving other animals, breeds of dogs involved in attacks, and the nature of the injuries sustained;

- (ii) statistics on compliance with the regulatory framework;
    - (iii) the science and current methods used to identify restricted breed dogs; and
    - (iv) the responsible dog ownership program;

- (c) take into account any limitations in the data;

(3) review and compare the effectiveness of historical (regulation by deed) and current (regulation by breed) legislative frameworks in Victoria for the management of restricted breed dogs and promotion of community safety;

(4) review and compare the effectiveness of other current regulatory frameworks in other Australian and overseas jurisdictions and where relevant, the costs and funding models required to support these frameworks;

(5) take submissions from interested persons that have had interaction with the current and previous regulatory frameworks, including —

(a) local councils;

(b) veterinarians;

(c) dog breed experts;

(d) animal welfare organisations;

(e) Victorian schools and kindergartens, antenatal hospitals and maternal child health centres, that have access to the free government education program;

(f) victims of dog attacks;

(g) dog owners; and

(h) the medical profession;

(6) review outcomes of other relevant reviews, coronial investigations and inquests in relation to deaths from dog attacks in Victoria under both the previous and current regulatory regimes, in particular, the Inquest into the death of 4 year old Ayen Chol;

(7) review civil and criminal case law in Victoria in relation to the current and previous regulatory frameworks for restricted breed dogs;

(8) make recommendations in relation to potential improvements or alternatives to the current regulatory framework for restricted breed dogs to better achieve the purpose and outcomes of the DAA, in particular, responsible dog ownership and protection of the environment and the community. These should include both responsive and preventative measures, such as improvements to controls and education programs;

(9) any recommendations should have regard to the costs of implementation of any proposed changes to the public, government and businesses.