



Department of
Local Government, Sport
and Cultural Industries



STOP PUPPY FARMING

**Local Government Community Safety
Network**

27 November 2019



The Department's role

WHO ARE WE

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries:

- **regulates local governments in WA.**
- **progress changes to, and conduct reviews into, certain pieces of legislation, including the Dog Act.**

OUR ROLE IN THIS PROJECT

Progress the 'stop puppy farming' project on behalf of the Minister for Local Government.

What this presentation will cover

- **What's being proposed**
- **What the project seeks to achieve**
- **What we heard in consultation**
- **Process**
- **Timeline and next steps**



What is puppy farming?

- **Also known as 'puppy mills' or 'puppy factories'.**
- **RSPCA defines puppy farming as:**
'an intensive dog breeding facility that is operated under inadequate conditions that fail to meet the dogs' behavioural, social and/or physiological needs'.
- **So essentially:**
 - **Breeding dogs in inadequate conditions.**
 - **Can be large-scale or small-scale operations.**
- **Why is it an issue?**
 - **Dog welfare issues; costs for owners; costs for dog shelters and rescues**

How is it able to occur?

Dog breeders



Dog suppliers



Dog owners



Project background

- **The Government made an election commitment to ‘stop puppy farming’ through the introduction of four provisions:**
 - **mandatory dog de-sexing for non-breeding dogs**
 - **a centralised registration system to identify every dog at the point of sale or adoption**
 - **the transition of pet shops into adoption centres**
 - **mandatory standards for dog breeding, housing, husbandry, transport and sale**
- **To note: Other States in Australia have introduced various provisions to assist with stopping puppy farming in their jurisdictions.**

Amending existing legislation

Government Election Commitments:	Relevant Legislation:	Relevant Department:
Centralised registration system (including dog breeder registration)	Dog Act 1976	Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
Mandatory dog de-sexing	Dog Act 1976	Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
Transition pet shops to adoption centers	Dog Act 1976	Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
Mandatory standards for dog breeding, housing, husbandry, transport and sale	Animal Welfare Act 2002	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

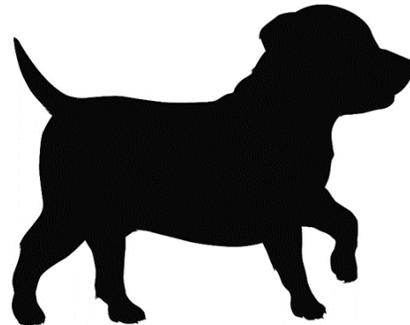
The Process

Stop Puppy
Farming
Implementation
Working Group

Consultation
3 May –
3 August 2018

Compiled
feedback and
provided it to
Government
Late 2018

Bill introduced
to Parliament
November
2019/ Early
2020*



Mandatory Dog Standards

Overview of proposal:

- **Introduce mandatory standards for dog breeding, housing, husbandry, transport and sale.**
- **Proposed to be introduced as regulations under the *Animal Welfare Act 2002*.**
- **The Animal Welfare Act is enforced by inspectors that are appointed under the AW Act, this includes:**
 - **RSPCA inspectors; and**
 - **Rangers that are general inspectors.**

What will introducing this proposal achieve?

Currently puppy farmers are:

- breeding excessively to maximise the number of puppies they can sell;
- breeding in conditions that require minimal maintenance or care to minimise costs of maintaining the environment in which dogs are bred and reared; and
- providing minimal sustenance (food, water and shelter).

Standards will mean this is illegal; will ensure dogs are being bred in conditions that ensure their health, behavioural and social needs are met.

Dog breeders



Dog suppliers



Dog owners



What will introducing this proposal mean for...

Local governments

- **Unless they decide to have rangers that are animal welfare inspectors, potentially nothing.**
- **If someone is guilty of an offence under the Animal Welfare Act, the local government can refuse to approve their dog breeder registration.**

The community

- **Dog breeders: costs of complying with the standards**
- **Community: confidence that the laws reflect their expectations of how a dog should be bred**
- **Consumers: confidence that there is some recourse if there are issues with a dog**

Consultation

Question:

Overall support

Submission type:

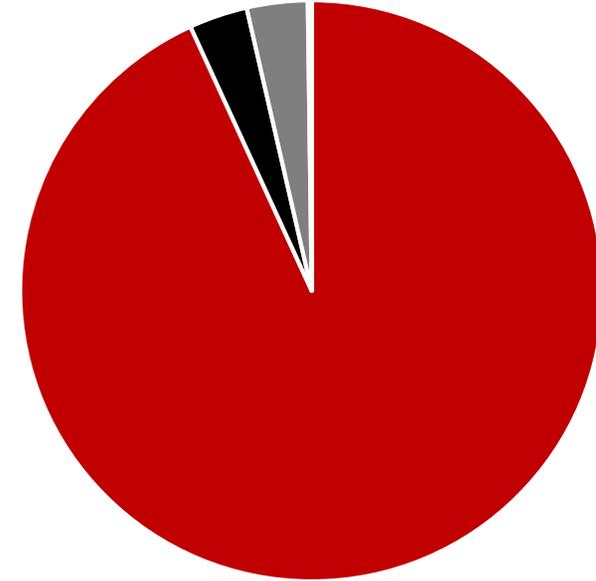
All (online survey and written submissions)

Interest Group:

All

Number:

3,705



■ **93% Supportive**

■ **3% Unsure/ neutral**

■ **3% Opposed**

■ **0.2% DW already have standards**

Mandatory dog de-sexing

Overview of proposal:

- **Dogs will be required to be de-sexed by the time they reach a specific age unless they are exempt.**
- **Proposed exemptions:**
 - **Vet exemption**
 - **Dog's owner is registered as a dog breeder with their local government (new proposal)**
 - **Other exemptions being considered.**
- **If a dog is not de-sexed, they will be required to be registered annually (no lifetime registrations or 3 year registrations).**

Dog breeder registration

Overview of proposal:

- **Dog owners will be required to register as a dog breeder with their local government if:**
 - **They want to breed from their dog/s;**
 - **They do not want to de-sex their dog, but their dog is not otherwise exempt from being de-sexed;**
 - **Their dog breeds.**
- **Local governments can refuse a dog breeder's registration application in certain circumstances.**
 - **For example: they have been convicted of an offence against the Animal Welfare Act 2002.**

What will introducing these proposals achieve?

Mandatory dog de-sexing

- Reduce the number of dogs being indiscriminately bred
- Ensure authorities can require irresponsible dog breeders to de-sex their dog

Dog breeder registration

- Identify who is breeding dogs
- Prevent irresponsible dog breeders from legally breeding dogs

Dog breeders



Dog suppliers



Dog owners



What will introducing these proposals mean for...

Local government

- **Administration (approving registrations)**
- **Enforcement (identifying non-compliance, issuing infringements, seizing dogs, caring for seized dogs)**

Community

Dog owners:

De-sex their dog

Register as a dog breeder

Rescues/ shelters:

Reduction in the number of dogs abandoned

Consultation

Question:

Support of mandatory dog de-sexing

Submission type:

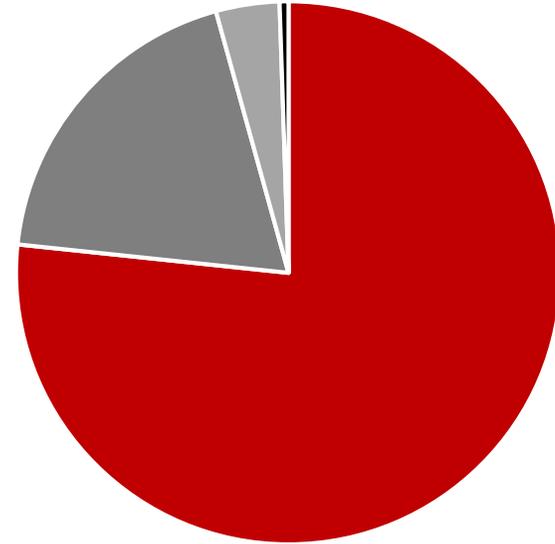
Online survey and written submissions

Interest Group:

All

Number:

3978



■ Supportive - 77%

■ Oppose - 19%

■ Neutral / Unsure - 4%

■ Support upon conditions - 0.6%

Consultation

Question:

Should there be restrictions on dog breeders?

Submission type:

Online survey

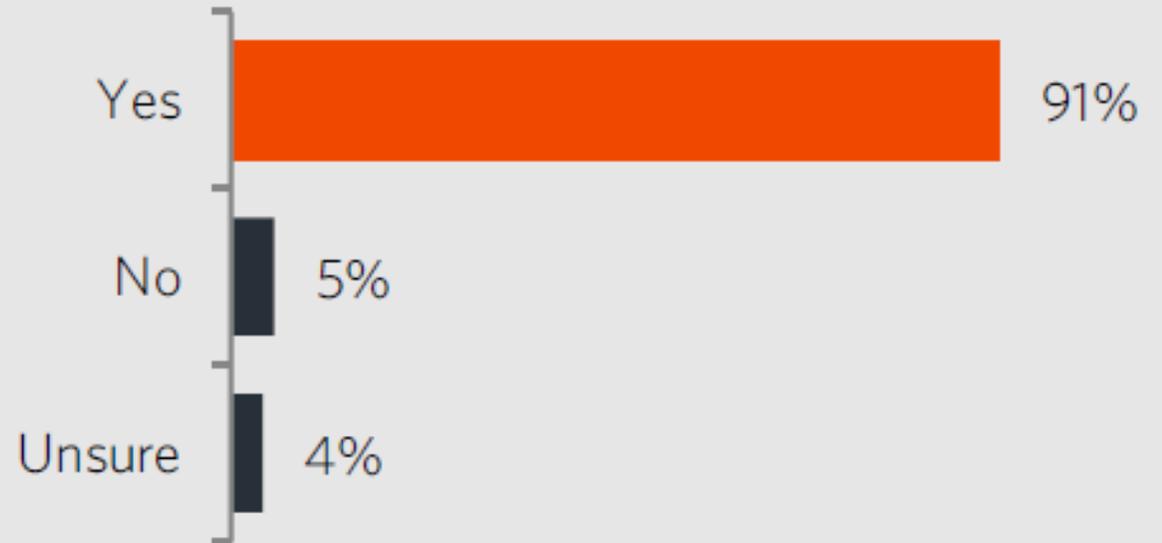
Interest Group:

All

Number:

3,533

SAMPLE AVERAGE



Overview

Centralised Registration System

Overview of proposal:

- **Introduce a centralised registration system to ‘identify every dog at the point of sale or adoption’.**

Current situation:

- **All dogs (over 3 months) must be registered with their local government.**
- **All local governments must maintain their own record of dog registrations.**
- **137 local governments maintaining separate dog registers (some share registers).**

Overview

Centralised Registration System

To achieve this, we have proposed to:

- 1. Centralise all local government dog registers.**
- 2. Introduce dog breeder registration.**
- 3. Introduce the requirement to issue every registered dog owner with a unique number to identify them.**
- 4. Introduce a requirement to record the unique dog owner number alongside the microchip details of a puppy that they have bred.**
- 5. Introduce the requirement to provide the dog's microchip number and the owner's unique dog owner number when advertising, selling or transferring a dog to a new owner.**

What will introducing this proposal achieve?

- **Traceability!**
- **Record of information on a dog – not just benefits for ‘stopping puppy farming’**
- **Consumers ability to confirm if a person that has bred a dog, is registered as a dog breeder with their local government**

Dog breeders



Dog suppliers



Dog owners



What will introducing this proposal mean for...

Local government

- **New system; initially training and integration of existing data**
- **Ability to share information with other local governments**
- **Streamline transfer of ownership**
- **Local governments: history of a dog**

Community

- **Dog owners will be able to register their dog online, update details online, etc.**
- **Consumers can check to see if a person is a registered dog breeder**
- **Rescues/ shelters/ vets: history of a dog**



Consultation

Question:

Overall support of proposal

Submission type:

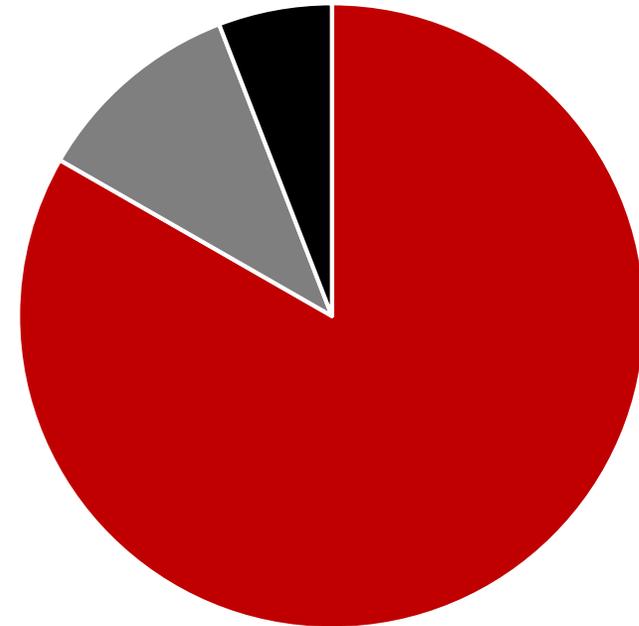
All

Interest Group:

All

Number:

3792



■ **83% Supportive**

■ **11% Opposed**

■ **6% Neutral/ Maybe/ Unsure**

Transitioning Pet Shops to Adoption Centres

- **Currently, pet shops are not restricted on where they can source dogs.**
- **Under this proposal, pet shops will only be to source dogs from ‘accredited’ rescue organisations and shelters.**
- **Rescue organisations and shelters will need to be accredited by the State Government.**
- **The dogs provided by rescues/ shelters to pet shops will need to be health assessed.**

What will introducing this proposal achieve?

This proposal will encourage consumers to either:

- **adopt a stray or abandoned dog from either a pet shop or rescue or shelter organisation; or**
- **purchase a dog directly from the dog's breeder.**

Dog breeders



Dog suppliers



Dog owners



What will introducing this proposal mean for...

Local government

- **Administrative and enforcement responsibilities**



Community:

- **Pet shops: uptake low.**
- **Rescues: uptake low.**
- **Consumers: will need to go to a dog breeder or rescue to source a dog.**

Consultation

Question:

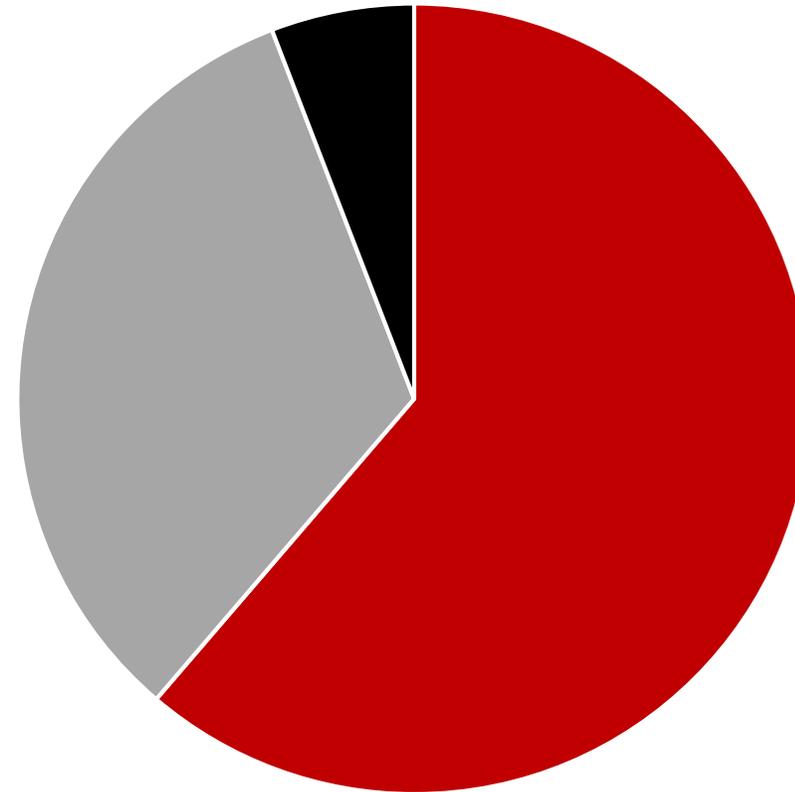
Overall support

Submission type:

- **Online survey (3,655)**
- **Written feedback (358)**
- **Petition (954)**

Number:

4,967

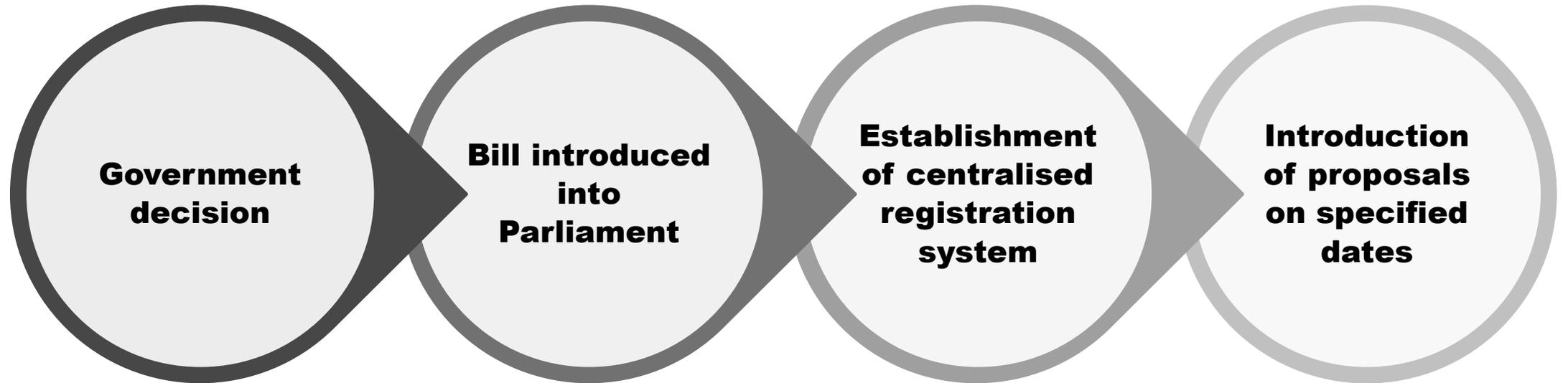


■ **61% Supportive**

■ **33% Oppose**

■ **6% Neutral**

Next steps



More information

Website:

www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/stoppuppyfarming

Email:

puppyfarming@dlgsc.wa.gov.au



Thank you!

