

Our ref: R95/0160-09 Sub-534
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Companion Animals Regulation Review
Office of Local Government
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NOWRA NSW 2541

Draft Submission on Draft Companion Animals Regulation 2018

Local Government NSW (LGNSW) is the peak body for local government in NSW, representing all NSW councils and related entities. LGNSW facilitates the development of an effective community based system of local government in the State.

LGNSW welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the draft Companion Animals Regulation 2018. Note that this is a draft submission awaiting review by LGNSW's Board. Any amendments will be forwarded in due course.

LGNSW understands that the Regulation was developed in light of responses to the Discussion Paper that was issued for comment in mid 2017.

The proposed areas for change include:

- Changes to registration fees to reflect annual inflation adjustments,
- Extending the definition of eligible pound or shelter operator to allow animals adopted from rescue groups to access subsidised registration fees, and
- Changes to penalty notice offences to reflect inflation, and increases to penalties for some offences in an effort to reduce the high rate of offending.

LGNSW is generally supportive of the draft Regulation, however we would like to raise the following issues:

- Clause 14 of the draft Regulation requires a companion animal to be registered from the time the animal is 12 weeks old or is first sold. Clause 18 requires the registration fee to be paid in connection with the registration of an animal by the time the animal reaches 6 months of age. Clause 18 allows a discounted registration for desexed animals. There is potential for a situation whereby the registration fee must be paid before the animal is desexed. While in practice there is likely to be some discretion given by the registering agent to desex the animal within the next 2-3 months, the Regulation currently creates an impractical expectation.
- Clause 37 of the draft Regulation (cl 32 of current Regulation) relates to the payments out of the Companion Animals Fund to registered agents from amounts collected as registration fees under the Act. The note to this clause states that arrangements can be made by the Departmental Chief Executive under section 85(4) of the Act for an agent to

deduct an amount payable to that agent at the point of payment of registration fees. The current process is that councils, as registration agents, receive payments quarterly in arrears.

A resolution of the 2017 LGNSW Annual Conference was that the Office of Local Government be asked to make arrangements with all NSW councils to deduct the determined amount for local councils from the payment required to be made to the Companion Animals Fund, at the point of payment of registration fees, in accordance with the Act. The draft Regulation should be revised to formally provide for the above to occur.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Companion Animals Regulation. We would be pleased to discuss the issues raised in this submission further. Please contact Susy Cenedese at LGNSW on 9242 4080 or susy.cenedese@lgnsw.org.au.

Yours sincerely



Donna Rygate
Chief Executive