

**Submission  
No 96**

## **INQUIRY INTO ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Organisation:** Pet Professional Guild Australia

**Date Received:** 28 February 2022

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## PET PROFESSIONAL GUILD

[www.ppgaaustralia.net.au](http://www.ppgaaustralia.net.au)

[www.facebook.com/PetProfessionalGuildAustralia](https://www.facebook.com/PetProfessionalGuildAustralia)

### Submission

#### NSW Animal Welfare Bill 2022 – Public Consultation Draft

#### NSW – Draft Government Bill

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The Pet Professional Guild Australia (PPGA) is a membership organisation representing pet industry professionals who are committed to science-based, force-free training and pet care. We are an official branch of the Pet Professional Guild, a worldwide organisation committed to advocating, educating and encouraging improvements in companion animal welfare through the use of fear free techniques. Currently we have over 350 professional members and around 700 other pet owners around Australia, many of these professional trainers in the animal industry, mostly with companion animals such as dogs, cats, horses, birds and pocket pets. The Pet Professional Guild Australia members and affiliates focus on a pet's physical, mental, environmental and nutritional well-being, a holistic approach to the care and training of family pets. It is heartening to see in the bill that animal's behavioural needs will be considered as part of minimum care requirements.

Here is our input related to following Bill sections:

#### **Part 3) Requirements for care of animals**

##### Division 1) Minimum care requirements

##### 18. Appropriate exercise

(1) in the case of a dog: how are you going to enforce a dog owner to walk a dog at least every 2<sup>nd</sup> day? Is a simple run on the backyard considered enough stimulation for a dog in a 2 hr period? Who is going to check on that (e.g. local council rangers)?

(2) What is the definition of exercise under the proposed Act?

(3) In the case of a stable horse, this animal would need to be exercised daily without fail.

(4) In the case of elderly/injured dogs, will there be exemptions to the requirement for exercise?

(5) What is the definition of 'meeting the animals behavioural needs? How will an owner know what is the appropriate behavioural needs for their pet?

Additional Notes: We note that the discussion paper indicates there will be mandatory standards developed to help to establish more detailed welfare requirements that may explain how the minimum care requirements apply in different situations. Non-legislated educational and guidance material is also a useful resource to support people in meeting the minimum care requirements.

Particularly in regards to behavioural needs of pets, we would like to offer our expertise in helping to provide information to assist owners meet these requirements. In many cases, we will have resources already that can assist owners in understanding their pets behavioural and physical needs and how to appropriately and safely meet these needs. PPGA is currently developing educational resources for local councils and would be happy to extend this project to assist the implementation of better welfare outcomes for companion pets.

### Division 3) Prohibited and restricted procedures

(1) The Bill would need to include:

- Docking a dog's tail as prohibited practice, unless for prescribed medical reasons.

### Division 3 - **Tethering**

#### 34 – General prohibition on inappropriate or unreasonable tethering of animals

(1) The animal is not tethered for an unreasonable period of time

- Tethered dogs could feel highly stressed if tethered for few hours on end, even if they have access to water, food and shelter
- To tether a dog for a period of 24 hrs would be extremely cruel to a dog
- A horse can't be tethered for a period of 24 hrs even if having access to water, food and shelter
- The horse will need to exercise, if tethered he won't be able to move, he'll be standing all day, feel sore and not be able to lay down and rest. An act of cruelty.

### Division 4 – **Transport of dogs**

#### 37 – Requirements for transporting dogs

(2) The transportation of dogs in the back of a ute or open back vehicle on a public street, even when the dog is restrained or enclosed in a way that prevents the dog from falling from the vehicle

- This practice can be stressful for dogs, therefore it should be considered that better education on appropriate transportation of dogs should be considered.

### Division 5 – **Animal cruelty material**

#### 39 – Offences including animal cruelty material

- Who checks You Tube material involving animal cruelty acts in Australia?
- Can we get clarification on where to report animal cruelty acts in NSW, particularly in regards to animal cruelty acts seen on social media?
- You Tube is full of dog fights, cock fights, animals been put down inhumanely, hunting scenes footage – many times these hunting scenes are part of documentaries and programs aired by alternative Tv channels, hunters tape their acts and sell programs to Tv stations

#### Division 6 – **Offences involving prohibited items**

- (1) (a) In this items: it should be included more specific items for Dogs such as: shock collars, prong collars, electric fences to keep a dog in the perimeters of its home and backyard when house owner doesn't have a proper fence protecting the property's boundaries
- These items listed above, should be listed as prohibited items as they are inhumane

#### Division 5 – **Functions in relation to seize things**

- Do you refer here to a seized thing to be an animal? Because if you do, you'd need to make clear that you are talking about a domestic animal or livestock or other animal species here and to list the type of species that would be included and considered : 'things'
- If the 'seized thing' is an animal and if there's animal neglect involved, the animal welfare needs to be taken into account
- To whom would the animal be passed on in the case – if it does become a legal matter and the animal is seized?
- An animal that is impounded by prolonged periods of time will suffer severe stress and anxiety
- During all legal Court proceedings, where is the animal to be kept safely? Keeping the animal welfare in mind...(Approved boarding facilities for companion animals)

#### Division 3 – **Court Orders**

126 A Court may order destruction of animal

- (1) (b) the court is satisfied the animal is so diseased or severely injured, or so poor physical or psychological condition, that's cruel to keep the animal alive
- In the case of 'psychological condition' – it should be in the regulations that a qualified Veterinary Behaviourist should assess the animal first before this animal is to be euthanised by the Court as some can still be rehabilitated

We note the regulations and standards associated with the Bill are still to be developed. We would appreciate the opportunity to have input into these documents as well. Our members include some of most well renowned veterinary behaviourists and trainers, many of which have worked with rescues and councils in the past and have a wealth of knowledge in behavioural modification.

The Pet Professional Guild Australia thanks for the opportunity to provide some feedback on the Animal Welfare Bill Reform and would like to be considered in the near future as 1 of the NSW Government Stakeholders for consultation in future Animal Welfare laws, Bills reviews and draft bills from scratch.

If you would like to contact us further to discuss,

Yours Sincerely

Barbara Hodel

President

Pet Professional Guild Australia

NOTE: Attached below are our Position Statements on key things like shock collars etc, as these have good scientific studies to back them up.

<https://www.ppgaaustralia.net.au/shockcollars>

<https://www.ppgaaustralia.net.au/chokeandprongcollarpositionstatement>

<https://www.ppgaaustralia.net.au/Statement-on-the-Use-of-Pet-Correction-Devices>

<https://www.ppgaaustralia.net.au/DominanceTheoryPositionStatement>