

Strong support for compulsory desexing law change

Animal welfare and management organisations have welcomed State Government's plans to introduce compulsory desexing in line with recommendations from a recent citizens' jury on dog and cat management.

The proposed change was one of seven recommendations made by the jury, which was tasked with finding ways of reducing the number of unwanted dogs and cats being euthanised in South Australia every year.

Dog and Cat Management Board Chairperson Felicity-ann Lewis said the board was pleased with the proposed change to the Dog and Cat Management Act, which would cover all new puppies and kittens acquired after a certain date.

"The Dog and Cat Management Board has advocated for mandatory desexing and microchipping for many years," Dr Lewis said.

"Desexing will significantly reduce the large number of unwanted litters of kittens born in South Australia each year, many of whom are sadly euthanised or left to fend for themselves on the streets.

"Dog attacks have increased over the past few years, and research shows that mandatory desexing and education on responsible ownership are important factors on reducing dog bite incidents, helping to make our communities safer."

RSPCA South Australia Chief Executive Officer Tim Vasudeva said they were pleased that the government was supporting compulsory desexing.

"This system will assist in reducing the number of future unwanted animals," Mr Vasudeva said.

"By not applying compulsory desexing to currently owned pets, there should not be an influx of surrendered animals from people who are concerned they cannot afford to desex their pet.

"The adoption of dogs, puppies, cats and kittens from RSPCA SA, Animal Welfare League SA or one of SA's many reputable rescue groups is always the most affordable option to acquire a pet that has already been desexed."

Animal Welfare League Chief Executive Officer Richard Mussell said they supported the phasing in of compulsory desexing.

"Since the jury's announcement, the AWL has received an overwhelming number of positive responses from the community and we look forward participating in any collaborative efforts for desexing education and microchipping promotion," he said.

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Feline Association of South Australia President Judith Jordan also applauded the move.

“Our organisation already recommends that no registered breeder allows a pedigree kitten to leave before 12 weeks, and that at point of sale it is de-sexed unless it is going into a breeding program, as well as being microchipped and vaccinated,” Ms Jordan said.

LGA President Mayor Dave Burgess said the LGA supported the initiative, which would continue to encourage responsible pet ownership.

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