

Doc 28

Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and  
Land Reform  
Roseanna Cunningham MSP



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

T: [REDACTED]  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Mr Willie Rennie MSP  
The Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

Your ref: [REDACTED]  
Our ref: 20170003371  
1 February 2017

*Dear Willie*

Thank you for your letter of 20 January 2017 on behalf of one of your constituents about the remaining prohibition on the shortening of the tails of terrier type dogs unless for the purposes of medical treatment.

Your letter notes that the consultation did not include considering an exemption for terriers. When considering the breeds whose tails might be shortened the Scottish Ministers took an evidence-based decision in order to promote the welfare of those working dogs most at risk of tail injuries. This evidence was gathered from research commissioned by the Scottish Government from Glasgow University and from a 12 week period of public consultation between 10 February and 3 May 2016.

The evidence suggested that only certain breeds of working dogs - working spaniels and hunt point retrievers - were at significantly increased risk of tail injury in later life. The relaxation of the ban on tail shortening will affect only those two types of dogs and will only allow the removal of up to one third of the end of the tail. An additional safeguard will be that shortening will only be allowed where carried out by a veterinary surgeon that is of the professional opinion that a dog is likely to be used for working and will be at risk of serious tail injury in later life. The Scottish Government has no plans to permit the shortening of the tails of breeds other than working spaniels and hunt point retrievers.

I hope this reply is helpful.

*Yours*

*Roseanna*

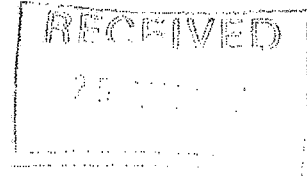
**Roseanna Cunningham**

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
www.gov.scot





The Scottish  
Parliament



Willie Rennie  
Member of Scottish Parliament, North East Fife  
Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

Roseanna Cunningham MSP  
Minister for Environment, Climate Change & Land Reform  
St. Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh, EH1 3DG

RECEIVED 26 JAN 2017

20 January 2017

Ref: [REDACTED]

Dear Roseanna

**Re: Docking of Working Terriers' Tails**

I am writing on behalf of one of my constituents who is concerned about the continuing ban on the docking of working terriers' tails.

My constituent points out that in addition to the consultation which took place in October 2016 on exempting working spaniels and hunt point retrievers from the total ban on tail docking in Scotland in the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, it was suggested that a similar exemption would be considered for working terriers. My constituent is concerned that no such exemption has been announced and was not included in the aforementioned consultation. Like many others, my constituent is concerned about their ability to breed working terriers, as they cannot breed these dogs until legislation is in place allowing for the docking of their tails, and they point out that this is a time-sensitive issue, given the rules of the Kennel Club for breeding.

I would be grateful if you could provide an update on the Scottish Government's plans to exempt working terriers from the ban on tail docking.

Yours sincerely

Willie Rennie

Liberal Democrat Member of the Scottish Parliament for North East Fife

Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and  
Land Reform  
Roseanna Cunningham MSP



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

[Redacted]  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Email: [Redacted]

Our ref: 2017/0004420  
9 February 2017

[Redacted]

Thank you for your e-mail of 4 October 2016 about my announcement of that date that the Scottish Government intended to relax the ban on tail shortening for working spaniels and hunt point retrievers. Your e-mail had unfortunately been overlooked and I am sorry for only replying now.

The Scottish Ministers took an evidence-based decision in order to promote the welfare of those working dogs most at risk of tail injuries. This evidence was gathered from research commissioned by the Scottish Government from Glasgow University and from a 12 week period of public consultation between 10 February and 3 May 2016. The evidence suggested that only certain breeds of working dogs - working spaniels and hunt point retrievers were at significantly increased risk of tail injury in later life. The relaxation of the ban on tail shortening will affect only those two types of dogs and will only allow the removal of up to one third of the end of the tail. An additional safeguard will be that shortening will only be allowed where carried out by a veterinary surgeon that is of the professional opinion that a dog will be used for working and is likely to be at risk of serious tail injury in later life.

It is expected that legislation to permit the shortening of the tails of working spaniels and hunt point retrievers, on the terms mentioned above, will be presented to the Scottish Parliament for scrutiny and approval in early 2017.

I hope this reply is helpful.

*Yours*  
*Roseanna*

Roseanna Cunningham

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 03 February 2017 10:44:38  
To: Public Engagement Unit  
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, [REDACTED]  
Subject: FW: Dog Tail Docking

Hi,

Please can this be put on MACCS for an urgent response.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Assistant Private Secretary  
Roseanna Cunningham, MSP Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change  
and Land Reform  
2N.08 - St Andrews House - Regent Road ? Edinburgh - EH1 3DG

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
From: [REDACTED]  
Date: 4 October 2016 at 22:45:02 BST  
To: "roseanna.cunningham.msp@scottish.parliament.uk<mailto:roseanna.cunningham.msp@scottish.parliament.uk>"  
<roseanna.cunningham.msp@scottish.parliament.uk<mailto:roseanna.cunningham.msp@scottish.parliament.uk>>  
Subject: Dog Tail Docking  
Reply-To: [REDACTED]

Dear Ms Cunningham,

For the first time in my life I have been moved to write to my MP/ MSP. I was absolutely appalled to read on social media tonight that the Scottish Government has decided to relax the law on dog tail docking. And to add insult to injury ScotGov is somehow, by including this [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] calling this an improvement in animal welfare!

As one of your local veterinary surgeons working in a rural practice I can assure you that I have seen no increase in working dog tail injuries since the tail ban came into effect (as I stressed when completing the online consultation). The most frequently injured tails we see belong to labradors and no one ever suggests docking labradors. I have, in the last ten years, delighted in seeing the large number of dogs coming through my doors with waggy full tails. I've also been very happy not to be asked to mutilate litters of puppies needlessly. I had thought that Scotland was leading the way in animal welfare but not anymore. It appears that ScotGov has been bullied into making this decision by a small minority of the Scottish population. This minority clearly are not educated as to how important the dogs tail is as a communication and

balancing tool, and are living in the past. I just cannot understand how one can justify mutilating the majority of working dogs in case a small minority are injured. Should we also go back to the bad old days of docking working horses tails??

I would appreciate if my thoughts, which all the vets in my practice share, could be passed on to some of your colleagues. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on the matter.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted text]

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[Redacted text]

[Redacted text]

The information in this email may be confidential. If you think you have received this email in error please delete it and do not share its contents.

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[Redacted text]

[Redacted text]

The information in this email may be confidential. If you think you have received this email in error please delete it and do not share its contents.

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[Redacted text]

has been swept for the presence of computer viruses.

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Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and  
Land Reform  
Roseanna Cunningham MSP



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

[REDACTED]  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Mr John Swinney MSP  
The Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

Our ref: 2016/0035454  
3 November 2016

Dear John,

Thank you for your e-mail of 20 October 2016 to Fergus Ewing MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity, on behalf of your constituent [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] about the relaxation of the tail docking ban that I announced on 4 October 2016. I am replying as the Cabinet Secretary with overall portfolio responsibility for animal welfare.

[REDACTED] has asked further questions, following on from information produced by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre that was provided to him, on how the Scottish Government decided to take forward the issue of tail docking. I would be grateful if you could ensure that [REDACTED] receives a copy of this letter.

It may be helpful if I explain for [REDACTED] that the Scottish Parliament is tasked with scrutinising and approving both primary legislation, such as the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, and affirmative secondary legislation, such as the regulation that will be used to relax the ban on tail docking. That scrutiny can, and often does, suggest changes to the legislation presented to the Parliament by the Scottish Ministers.

With regard to how this matter came to be on the Scottish Government's agenda, it may be helpful if I reiterate that a ban on all tail docking, except for medical reasons, was introduced by the Scottish Ministers in the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act"). During the customary three stage scrutiny, the banning of tail docking occupied a great deal of time and consideration and a number of witnesses from opposing perspectives were called to provide information to the Parliament. Further information on the passage of the 2006 Act can be found at <http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/39977.aspx>

On 6 March 2007, when regulations to permit docking for the husbandry of farm animals, the Parliament's Environment and Rural Development Committee again commented on the docking of working dogs' tails; and the then Minister for Environment and Rural Development gave an assurance that the position would be reviewed if new veterinary evidence became available.

The Scottish Ministers co-funded research by the University of Bristol and the Royal Veterinary College on tail injuries in working dogs but considered that this offered insufficient conclusive information. The Scottish Ministers then decided that further evidence, in a Scottish context, was required and commissioned research from the University of Glasgow into tail injuries in Scottish working dogs. The Scottish Ministers also decided to publicly consult on the outcome of the University of Glasgow research and, later, to prepare legislation to introduce a tightly defined exemption to the ban on docking the tails of dogs. It is expected that legislation will be presented to the Scottish Parliament for scrutiny and approval in early 2017.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours



**Roseanna Cunningham**

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 21 October 2016 09:20:29  
To: Ministerial Correspondence Unit  
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity  
Subject: FW: Docking of Dogs tails

Good morning,

Please can this be added to MACCS for an MR.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]  
Deputy Private Secretary ? Rural Economy and Connectivity  
Scottish Government, St Andrews House, Edinburgh, ED1 3DG

Tel. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 20 October 2016 20:13  
To: Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity  
Subject: FW: Docking of Dogs tails

Dear Mr Ewing

John Swinney MSP has been contacted by his constituent [REDACTED] regarding the changes to the tail docking of dogs legislation. Mr Swinney's constituent has asked some specific questions regarding the reasons for re-visiting this matter and the evidence gathering that took place.

Mr Swinney would appreciate your assistance in helping to answer his constituent's concerns and looks forward to hearing back from you.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]  
Constituency Assistant to John Swinney MSP

17-19 Leslie Street  
Blairgowrie  
Perthshire  
PH10 6AH

Tel: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 20 October 2016 19:08



To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Re: Docking of Dogs tails

Dear [REDACTED],  
please convey my thanks to Mr Swinney for this information which has answered many of my questions.  
I do however require further clarification on the following section of the explanatory email:

"Development of proposals to make an exception to the ban in Scotland  
Following the ban in Scotland there were calls from the Scottish Gamekeepers Association among others for a similar exemption to allow the docking of working gundogs in Scotland as applies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. They said that undocked spaniels and HPR breeds when used as gundogs were susceptible to a high incidence of tail injuries, which caused more suffering than docking.

The Scottish Government funded work by veterinarians at Glasgow University looking at incidence of tail injury in undocked working dogs....."  
This is the part where my lack of understanding of parliamentary process leaves me bewildered as to how this matter came to be on the Scottish Government's parliamentary business agenda.  
Essentially we have a practise which is banned for very good reason and in spite of the fact that there seems to be a question mark over supporting evidence to the contrary, somehow it has become an issue worthy of the Government's attention.

So was it introduced by some committee, by an MSP or by petition or whatever?  
Can I please have further details regarding the decision making process and by whom, leading up the Scottish Government's decision to fund the research by the University of Glasgow.  
Yours sincerely  
[REDACTED]

On Thu, Oct 20, 2016 at 3:21 PM, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

John Swinney has received the following information from the Scottish Parliament's Information Service regarding your concerns. Mr Swinney hopes that this information and clarification is of use to you. He will also be back in touch once he receives a reply regarding the salmon farming issue.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]  
Constituency Assistant to John Swinney MSP

17-19 Leslie Street  
Blairgowrie  
Perthshire  
PH10 6AH

Tel: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**[7 pages redacted exempt.]**

CABINET SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND LAND REFORM TO ADDRESS THE SGA AGM, PERTH.	
<b>TIMING</b>	09:50 – 10:30 Friday, 3 March 2017
<b>ATTENDEES</b>	Official(s) in attendance: [REDACTED]
<b>AGENDA</b>	No set agenda – you have been invited to address the SGA AGM, please see <b>Annex A</b> for the suggested speaking note.
<b>ATTENDEES</b>	[REDACTED] Chairman, SGA - The event will be attended by approximately 100 members of the SGA, including the Committee of the organisation.

**BRIEFING CONTENTS:**

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- **Item 4 – Tail docking of working dogs**
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

## BACKGROUND

**Performing the Exempt Procedure and Certification**

- The Scottish Government is proposing the use of a simplified form which will not be prescribed by regulations. The form will be discussed with the regulatory for the veterinary profession in the UK.
- The certificate will contain all of the necessary information whilst being shorter than the form used in other UK administrations. This will also facilitate any subsequent changes to the breeds of dogs which might be docked where new evidence suggests that will benefit animal welfare.
- We also expect that it will become common usage for the form to be passed on any new owner in order not to expose that person to potential criminal liability for mutilation under section 20 of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006.
- In order for a veterinary surgeon to be able to perform an exempted procedure he/she will have regard to:
  - Assessment of the puppy as being of a breed exempted by The Prohibited Procedures on Protected Animals (Exemptions) (Scotland) Regulations 2010, as amended, and not more than 5 days old;
  - Consideration of the likelihood of the dog being used in connection with legal field sports. Indicators of this are likely to be knowledge of the owner and dam of the puppy and their involvement in such pursuits; and
  - Consideration of the puppy's later working environment as exposing them to heightened risk of serious tail injury.

**Background on Consultation**

- Ran between 10 February and 3 May 2016, attracting 906 responses which were independently analysed.
- Individuals involved in field sports were almost unanimous in their agreement to the tightly defined exemption; whereas individuals with an interest in animal welfare were unanimous in suggesting that the ban should remain. However a significant minority suggested that a greater length of tail should be removed and that other breeds, such as terriers, should also be included – this was not supported by the research and is not being taken forward. The small number of individual veterinary surgeons who responded to the consultation were divided as to whether shortening should or should not be allowed.
- Field sports stakeholders and breeders' organisations supported the tightly defined exemption; whereas animal welfare groups supported retention of the ban on docking.

- BVA and BSAVA did not consider the Glasgow University research sufficiently robust to support a relaxation of the docking ban. Reasons given for that were then low number of responses and participating vet practices.
- In strictly numerical terms, 92% of all respondents considered that shortening should be permitted – probably partly due to 77% of the respondents identifying themselves as being involved in field sports to some extent. 52% of respondents agreed that shortening should be limited to the end third of the tail, and that the procedure should be carried out by any qualified veterinary surgeon (82%) who should be the same veterinary surgeon that later microchips the dogs (58%).

#### **Scottish Gamekeepers Association Response to the Consultation**

- Considered the evidence presented by Glasgow University research supported the tightly defined exemption proposed by the SG. Did not suggest other breeds for shortening.
- Agree to limit shortening to the end third of the tail, allowing a full range of expression and communication.
- Stated that all vets should be able to shorten, but are comfortable that some vets will have their own reasons for refusing to carry out the procedure.

#### **Lines to take**

- **Tail docking for dogs remains unlawful, except for the purpose of medical treatment, under section 20 of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006.**
- **Scottish Ministers announced on 4 October 2016 that legislation would be changed to permit the shortening of the tails of Spaniel and Hunt Point Retriever puppies where a vet believes they are likely to be for use as a working dog and risk serious tail injury in later life. That decision was taken following public consultation on the findings from research commissioned by the Scottish Government from University of Glasgow.**
- **Regulations amending the Prohibited Procedures on Protected Animals (Exemptions) (Scotland) Regulations 2010 are currently being drafted and are estimated to be laid before the Scottish Parliament in May 2017.**
- **Veterinary Surgeons will be required to complete a certificate to the effect that they have considered both the likelihood of a puppy working and risking serious tail injury as a result of working.**

**SUGGESTED  
QUESTION(S)**

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Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and  
Land Reform  
Roseanna Cunningham MSP



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T: [REDACTED]  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Mr John Swinney MSP  
The Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

Our ref: 2016/0036307 and 2016/0037236  
23 November 2016

Dear John,

Thank you for your e-mails of 28 October and 7 November 2016 on behalf of your constituent [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] has questions about peer reviews of the research commissioned from the University of Glasgow and on who took the decision to permit the shortening of tails for certain dog breeds.

[REDACTED] suggests the commissioned research to have been 'Investigations regarding tail injuries in working gundogs and terriers in pest control in Scotland' by Rose Lederer. While Dr Lederer was involved in the research commissioned by the Scottish Government, the paper referred to appears to be her thesis for a Masters qualification.

However, there were in fact two research papers published following the University of Glasgow research. Firstly, 'Survey of tail injuries sustained by working gundogs and terriers in Scotland' by R Lederer, D Bennett and T Parkin (Veterinary Record, May 2014, Volume 174, Issue 18); and secondly, 'The prevalence of tail injuries in working and non-working breed dogs visiting veterinary practices in Scotland' by N Cameron, R Lederer, D Bennett and T Parkin (Veterinary Record, May 2014, Volume 174, Issue 18). The Scottish Government made these research papers freely available during the consultation period.

These research papers were published in the scientific journal "The Veterinary Record" and were therefore subject to the normal scientific peer review procedure required for papers submitted to that journal. The abstracts of the research papers are at <http://veterinaryrecord.bmj.com/content/early/2014/03/27/vr.102041> and <http://veterinaryrecord.bmj.com/content/early/2014/03/27/vr.102042> respectively and access to the full versions may be arranged with The Veterinary Record.

I, as Cabinet Secretary with portfolio responsibility for animal welfare, took the decision to bring forward legislation to permit the shortening, by no more than one third, of the tails of spaniel and hunt point retriever puppies where the veterinary surgeon believes they are likely to be used as working dogs in future and that the pain of shortening the tail is justified by the reduced risk of more serious injury in later life. This was announced on 4 October 2016.

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[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



That decision was taken on the basis of the University of Glasgow research and on the evidence presented through the public consultation held between February and May 2016. The documentation from the consultation can be found at <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/animal-welfare/proposal-to-permit-tail-docking>

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours

Roseanna

**Roseanna Cunningham**

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 28 October 2016 12:42:34  
To: Ministerial Correspondence Unit  
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform  
Subject: FW: John Swinney MSP - constituent issue

For MACCS please - MR

[REDACTED]  
Deputy Private Secretary to Roseanna Cunningham MSP | Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change & Land Reform | Scottish Government | 2N:08, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | Tel: [REDACTED]  
Mob: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 28 October 2016 12:41  
To: Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform  
Subject: John Swinney MSP - constituent issue

Dear Ms Cunningham

John Swinney MSP has been contacted by his constituent [REDACTED], [REDACTED] regarding the research the government commissioned from the University of Glasgow which informed their decisions to consult on changes to the ban on tail docking. The research was entitled 'Investigations regarding tail injuries in working gundogs and terriers in pest control in Scotland. MVM(R) thesis by Rose Lederer (2014)'.

[REDACTED] has asked if the government are considering a peer review of this research.

Mr Swinney would appreciate your assistance in replying to his constituent and looks forward to hearing back from you.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]  
Assistant to John Swinney  
Perthshire North Constituency Office  
17-19 Leslie Street  
Blairgowrie  
PH10 6AH  
[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



Doc 27

Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and  
Land Reform  
Roseanna Cunningham MSP



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

T: [REDACTED]  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Mr John Lamont MSP  
The Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

Your ref: [REDACTED]  
Our ref: 2016/0041609  
22 December 2016

Dear John,

Thank you for your e-mail of 9 December 2016 to Fergus Ewing MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity, requesting an update, on behalf of a number of constituents, on the Scottish Government's announcement of 4 October 2016 that it intends to relax the ban on tail shortening for working spaniels and hunt point retrievers. I am replying as the Cabinet Secretary with overall portfolio responsibility for animal welfare.

The Scottish Ministers have taken an evidence-based decision in order to promote the welfare of those working dogs most at risk of tail injuries. This evidence was gathered from research commissioned by the Scottish Government from Glasgow University and from a 12 week period of public consultation between 10 February and 3 May 2016. The evidence suggested that only certain breeds of working dogs - working spaniels and hunt point retrievers were at significantly increased risk of tail injury in later life. The relaxation of the ban on tail shortening will affect only those two types of dogs and will only allow the removal of up to one third of the end of the tail. An additional safeguard will be that shortening will only be allowed where carried out by a veterinary surgeon that is of the professional opinion that a dog will be used for working and will be at risk of serious tail injury in later life.

It is expected that legislation to permit the shortening of the tails of working spaniels and hunt point retrievers, on the terms mentioned above, will be presented to the Scottish Parliament for scrutiny and approval in early 2017.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours

Roseanna

Roseanna Cunningham

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 09 December 2016 15:34:31  
To: 'Scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk'  
Subject: to Fergus Ewing re Tail Docking

Fergus Ewing MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity  
Scottish Government

BY EMAIL  
December 2016  
Our Ref: [REDACTED]

Dear Fergus

TAIL DOCKING

I would welcome an update on the Scottish Government's plans to vary the current ban on the tail docking of working dogs.

A number of constituents have contacted me about this matter.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

John Lamont MSP  
Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire  
Scottish Conservatives

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[REDACTED]

Doc 29

Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and  
Land Reform  
Roseanna Cunningham MSP



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

[REDACTED]  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Mr Alex Neil MSP  
The Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

Our ref: 2017/0003963  
6 February 2017

Dear Alex,

Thank you for your e-mail of 30 January 2017 on behalf of your constituent [REDACTED] about the Scottish Government's announcement of 4 October 2016 that it intends to relax the ban on tail shortening for working spaniels and hunt point retrievers.

You may be interested to know that my officials have already replied directly to [REDACTED] and, [REDACTED] one of my veterinary advisers has also corresponded with [REDACTED] to explain the evidential material on which the relaxation of the ban is based.

The Scottish Ministers have taken an evidence-based decision in order to promote the welfare of those working dogs most at risk of tail injuries. This evidence was gathered from research commissioned by the Scottish Government from Glasgow University and from a 12 week period of public consultation between 10 February and 3 May 2016. The evidence suggested that only certain breeds of working dogs - working spaniels and hunt point retrievers were at significantly increased risk of tail injury in later life. The relaxation of the ban on tail shortening will affect only those two types of dogs and will only allow the removal of up to one third of the end of the tail. An additional safeguard will be that shortening will only be allowed where carried out by a veterinary surgeon who is of the professional opinion that a dog is likely to be used for working and to be at risk of serious tail injury in later life.

It is expected that legislation to permit the shortening of the tails of working spaniels and hunt point retrievers, on the terms mentioned above, will be presented to the Scottish Parliament for scrutiny and approval early this year.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours  
Roseanna

Roseanna Cunningham

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 30 January 2017 15:34:16  
To: Public Engagement Unit  
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform  
Subject: FW: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Hi,

One for MACCS please, MR.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Assistant Private Secretary  
Roseanna Cunningham, MSP Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change  
and Land Reform  
2N.08 - St Andrews House - Regent Road ? Edinburgh - EH1 3DG

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] Behalf  
Of Neil A (Alex), MSP  
Sent: 30 January 2017 15:26  
To: Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform  
[REDACTED]

Dear Roseanna,

I am writing on behalf of my constituent [REDACTED], who is a  
veterinary surgeon [REDACTED], regarding recent legislation which reversed  
the total ban imposed on the docking of dog tails.

Please see below correspondence from [REDACTED] which reflects on her 15 years  
of veterinary experience.

I would be grateful if you would carefully consider my constituent's concerns and  
advise accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Neil MSP

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 25 January 2017 13:27  
To: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Cc: Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP

[Redacted]

Subject: Mutilating dogs.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my extreme disappointment and dismay that the Scottish government has bowed to pressure and reversed its regulations on tail docking.

[Redacted]

I am a veterinary surgeon with fourteen years clinical experience. Adding my colleagues experience together we have over one hundred years clinical experience. We all share the same opinion which is that tail docking should be banned.

Cutting the tails off of puppy dogs is barbaric and painful. What evidence has a veterinary surgeon to be provided with that this ENTIRE litter will become working dogs? Why should the entire litter suffer when there is no way they will all be workers?

Is the Scottish government going to bring in a law ensuring all working dogs wear boots? I will see far more cut paws than tail injuries in working dogs.

Corneal penetration injuries are common in working spaniels - should we be passing a law that these dogs are to wear safety goggles?

Taken to extreme we should obviously just amputate their legs to prevent any risk of fractures whilst working.

I realise the last statement is facetious, however I hope it illustrates how ridiculous cutting off a dogs tail "just in case" one of the pups in the litter becomes a working dog which "might" hurt its tail whilst working.

Please explain how as a nation of animal lovers we are allowing this unnecessary mutilation to take place?

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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Doc 26

Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and  
Land Reform  
Roseanna Cunningham MSP



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
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[REDACTED]  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Ms Rona MacKay MSP  
The Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

Your ref: RM0177  
Our ref: 2016/0036662  
23 November 2016

Dear Rona,

Thank you for your letter of 1 November 2016 on behalf of a constituent about the Scottish Government's announcement of 4 October 2016 that it is to relax the ban on tail docking and allow for some tail shortening to take place in very specific circumstances.

The Scottish Government takes animal welfare very seriously; and the Scottish Ministers have taken an evidence-based decision in order to promote the welfare of those working dogs most at risk of tail injuries. This evidence was gathered from research commissioned by the Scottish Government from Glasgow University and from a 12 week period of public consultation between 10 February and 3 May 2016. All of the documentation from the consultation can be found at <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/animal-welfare/proposal-to-permit-tail-docking>

The evidence suggested that only certain breeds of working dogs - working spaniels and hunt point retrievers - were at significantly increased risk of tail injury in later life. The relaxation of the ban on tail shortening will affect only those two types of dogs and will only allow the removal of up to one third of the end of the tail. An additional safeguard will be that tail shortening will only be allowed where carried out by a veterinary surgeon that is of the professional opinion that a dog will be used for working and will be at risk of serious tail injury in later life.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours  
Roseanna

Roseanna Cunningham

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 01 November 2016 11:32:34  
To: Ministerial Correspondence Unit  
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform  
Subject: FW: Animal Welfare

Attachments: Letter Roseanna Cunningham 01.11.16.pdf

Ho,

Please can you add this to MACCS please, MR

Kind Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Assistant Private Secretary  
Roseanna Cunningham, MSP Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change  
and Land Reform  
2N.08 - St Andrews House - Regent Road - Edinburgh - EH1 3DG

Tel: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 01 November 2016 11:28  
To: Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform  
Subject: Animal Welfare

Please see attached.

Kind Regards,

[REDACTED]

Senior Caseworker  
Office of Rona Mackay MSP  
Strathkelvin and Bearsden

78 Townhead, Kirkintilloch, G66 1NZ | Scottish Parliament, MSP Block, M4.15

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Roseanna Cunningham  
Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform  
THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT  
HOLYROOD ROAD  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

**Ref No.: RM0177**

01/11/16

**RE: ANIMAL WELFARE**

Dear Ms Cunningham,

A constituent of mine has recently raised concerns over the recent government decision to lift the tail docking ban. The constituent has raised concerns that this 'cruel practice' causes unnecessary pain and suffering to dogs.

[REDACTED]

If you could provide any information on your decision, it would be very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Rona Mackay MSP  
MSP for Strathkelvin and Bearsden (SNP)

**RONA MACKAY MSP**

PARLIAMENT OFFICE Room m4.15 Scottish Parliament Edinburgh EH99 1SP Tel [REDACTED]

CONSTITUENCY OFFICE 78 Townhead, Kirkintilloch, G66 1NZ Tel [REDACTED]

rona.mackay.msp@parliament.scot www.ronamackay.scot

Doc 25

Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and  
Land Reform  
Roseanna Cunningham MSP



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

[REDACTED]  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Mr Kevin Stewart MSP  
The Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

Our ref: 2016/0036472  
23 November 2016

*Dear Kevin,*

Thank you for your e-mail of 28 October 2016 on behalf of a constituent about the Scottish Government's announcement of 4 October 2016 that it intends to [REDACTED] and to relax the ban on tail docking to allow for some tail shortening to take place in very specific circumstances.

[REDACTED]

The Scottish Ministers have taken an evidence-based decision in order to promote the welfare of those working dogs most at risk of tail injuries. This evidence was gathered from research commissioned by the Scottish Government from Glasgow University and from a 12 week period of public consultation between 10 February and 3 May 2016. All of the documentation from, and responses to, the consultation can be found at <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/animal-welfare/proposal-to-permit-tail-docking>

The evidence suggested that only certain breeds of working dogs - working spaniels and hunt point retrievers - were at significantly increased risk of tail injury in later life. The relaxation of the ban on tail docking will affect only those two types of dogs and will only allow the removal of up to one third of the end of the tail. An additional safeguard will be that tail shortening will only be allowed where carried out by a veterinary surgeon that is of the professional opinion that a dog will be used for working and will be at risk of serious tail injury in later life.

Regulations to bring about these changes will, once drafted, be presented to the Scottish Parliament for its approval. Under this procedure the Devolved Powers and Law Reform Committee and the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee will both have the opportunity to comment on the regulations prior to them being placed before the Scottish Parliament for approval. Those committees might also seek evidence from whoever they choose.



I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours

**Roseanna Cunningham**

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 31 October 2016 09:41:43  
To: Ministerial Correspondence Unit  
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform  
Subject: FW: Dog tail docking and use of electronic collars

Hi,

One for MACCS please - MR

Thank you

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Assistant Private Secretary  
Roseanna Cunningham, MSP Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change  
and Land Reform  
2N.08 - St Andrews House - Regent Road ? Edinburgh - EH1 3DG

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]  
Behalf Of Stewart K (Kevin), MSP  
Sent: 28 October 2016 16:26  
To: Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform  
Subject: Dog tail docking and [REDACTED]

Dear Roseanna,

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about the proposals to  
remove the ban on tail docking and also [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

My constituent is a supporter of a ban on both tail docking and [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

I would appreciate your comments on the matters that my constituent has raised.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Stewart

Kevin Stewart MSP

Aberdeen Central ? SNP  
27 John Street  
Aberdeen AB25 1BT

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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