

CAT ACT AND DOG ACT — REVIEW

Statement by Minister for Local Government

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Local Government) [2.07 pm]: It is my pleasure to announce that I have recently launched a consultation paper, “Pause for Paws: Feedback on Dog and Cat Laws in WA” to review the operation and effectiveness of the Cat Act 2011 and amendments made to the Dog Act in 2013. Over 850 people have already filled out the survey. Dogs and cats are members of many Western Australian families. As shown in the tremendous response to the stop puppy farming initiative, we love our dogs; and I suspect we love our cats, too, even if that love is not always reciprocated!

We need sensible laws to protect our animal companions and ensure responsible dog and cat ownership. The current legislation is tasked with keeping the community and other animals safe, reuniting lost pets with their owners and reducing the number of animals that are admitted to shelters and euthanased. Dog and cat laws should be of interest to the broader community, not just to breeders, animal welfare organisations or households with dogs and cats. In respect of the two pieces of legislation, the aim of the Cat Act is to reduce the impact of unwanted cats on the community and environment and to encourage responsible pet ownership. The act introduced mandatory microchipping and sterilisation of all cats aged six months and over, as well as registration of cats with the relevant local government. Amendments to the Dog Act made in 2013 included compulsory microchipping of all dogs and stricter control of dangerous dogs to improve community safety. The “Pause for Paws: Feedback on Dog and Cat Laws in WA” consultation paper will gather feedback about how the changes are working and whether they have been effective, and identify any areas that could be improved. The McGowan government is committed to supporting responsible pet ownership and the contribution that dogs and cats make to our families and community through sensible and modern legislation that is fit for purpose. I encourage community members, local governments, stakeholders, members of Parliament and others to get involved and have their say during the community submission period, which closes on 4 August 2019.