

Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Cùisean Dùthchail, Biadh agus an Àrainneachd
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment
Ridseard Lochhead BPA
Richard Lochhead MSP

F/T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Rob Gibson MSP
Convener
Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee
Room T3.40
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP



27 August 2015

Dear Rob

I am replying to your letter of 24 June asking for an update on the position regarding a possible exemption from the ban on tail docking for working dogs.

As you know, there are strongly held views on both sides of the debate about what is best for the welfare of working dogs in Scotland and I have been considering the full range of views from key interested parties and their arguments for and against any potential change to the legislation. At the same time, I have been considering the evidence from the published research, and the further information I requested from Scotland's Chief Veterinary Officer on how any exemptions may work in practice and also the experiences in other countries.

What is clear is that this is a very finely balanced and emotive issue, but one that does need clarity in order to move the debate forward. As such, the Scottish Government is very close to being able to set out its position on the issue and I will seek to write to you again in the next week or so with a more substantive reply.

Yours sincerely

RICHARD LOCHHEAD

