



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

RURAL AFFAIRS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Richard Lochhead MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food
and Environment
Scottish Government

c/o Clerk to the Committee
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4 November 2015

Dear Richard

Re: Tail docking in working dogs

Thank you for your letter of 26 October, responding to the Committee's correspondence on Government policy in relation to tail docking in working dogs.

In your letter you sought our opinion on the potential for a public consultation on proposals for a very tightly defined exemption to the tail docking ban in Scotland, which would allow vets to exercise their professional judgement and dock specific breeds, namely Spaniel and Hunt Point Retriever pups.

The Committee would support a full Scottish Government public consultation based solely on the terms as you have outlined them. However, we are of the view that any such consultation must be appropriately broad and wide-ranging so as to ensure that the widest possible number of people in Scotland can have their say on the issue of tail docking.

This being the case, we would request you write to us detailing how such a consultation would operate, how you would ensure the widest possible level of public engagement, and what potential timescales you propose for such a consultation. We would appreciate your response to this request by Friday 11 December 2015.

Yours sincerely

Rob Gibson MSP
Convener