

# SPCA Submission

24 March 2025

## **On The Petition of Chained Dog Awareness NZ Trust: *Mandate the Desexing of Dogs in NZ Except Registered Breeders***



# Executive Summary

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- > The unregulated and irresponsible breeding of dogs has significant welfare impacts, contributing to overpopulation, exacerbating community nuisance and danger, and placing pressure on rescues and animal welfare organisations.
- > Desexing is important in addressing these issues, with the most impact through targeting irresponsible breeders, shelter populations and roaming dogs. Rescues, animal shelters and council pounds play a critical role in population control by desexing dogs before rehoming and dogs impounded for repeated roaming.
- > SPCA supports the intent behind the petition to mandate the desexing of dogs in New Zealand except registered breeders. However, we also acknowledge the logistical challenges this could pose including, determining an optimal desexing age, addressing veterinary availability especially in rural areas, overcoming financial and accessibility barriers, and ensuring robust enforcement and compliance.
- > SPCA would support deferred desexing or exemptions from mandatory desexing of specific dogs on the basis of written veterinary advice.
- > Since 2021 we have consistently raised concerns about irresponsible companion animal breeding with MPI and Associate Ministers of Agriculture (Animal Welfare). We have provided preliminary options to address these issues through briefings, meetings, and correspondence.
- > SPCA proposes the following alternative approaches: an updated Code of Welfare for Dogs, introducing breeder regulations (including prolonged confinement regulations), and breeder licensing or registration.
- > Other countries, such as in the EU and the UK, and Australia, have implemented successful regulations for breeder registration, welfare standards, and limitations on breeding practices. SPCA supports similar regulatory approaches to ensure ethical breeding practices in New Zealand.
- > Additionally, we recommend that the New Zealand Veterinary Association (NZVA) is invited to contribute a submission on this petition given their expertise in desexing procedures.



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# Introduction

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The following submission is made on behalf of The Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (trading as SPCA).

SPCA is the preeminent animal welfare and advocacy organisation in New Zealand. The Society has been in existence for over 150 years with a supporter base representing more than 100,000 New Zealanders across the nation. The organisation includes 28 Animal Welfare Centres across New Zealand.

SPCA is an approved organisation under the Animal Welfare Act 1999, with responsibility for enforcing the provisions of the Act and regulations in partnership with MPI. Both agencies employ fully warranted animal welfare inspectors appointed by the Director-General of MPI under the Animal Welfare Act 1999. SPCA currently employs ~60 inspectors.

SPCA welcomes the opportunity to submit on the consultation for the Petition of Chained Dog Awareness NZ Trust: *Mandate the Desexing of Dogs in NZ Except Registered Breeders*.



# Submission

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## Mandatory desexing of dogs except for registered breeders

The current petition requests that the House of Representatives mandate the desexing of dogs in New Zealand except for registered breeders. SPCA broadly supports the mandatory desexing of dogs in New Zealand, with exemptions for registered breeders, however we note this could present logistical challenges, including;

- ***Setting a specific age for mandatory desexing***

The optimal age of desexing of dogs is unclear from the scientific literature, and may differ between individuals due to breed, age of puberty, sex, and pre-existing health conditions (see section [Impacts of Dog Desexing on Health and Behaviour](#) for overview). Considering these factors, the determination of a single mandatory desexing age is not straightforward. Therefore, we consider that flexibility based on individual circumstances (e.g., breed, age, and health status) should be integrated into any legislative framework. SPCA would support deferred desexing or exemptions from mandatory desexing of specific dogs on the basis of written veterinary advice.

- ***The availability and awareness of veterinarians***

New Zealand, like many countries, faces a shortage of veterinarians, especially in rural and underserved areas (Boehringer Ingelheim, 2024; Steele, 2024). This shortage could complicate the implementation of a mandatory dog desexing law, as it may not be feasible for all dog owners to easily access a veterinarian. This issue is compounded by the fact that many veterinarians may already have limited availability due to existing workloads. Therefore, a legislative mandate that increases demand for veterinary services could place significant strain on an already overstretched profession.

- ***Financial and accessibility barriers***

The cost of desexing procedures can be a barrier for some dog owners, particularly for those in lower socio-economic groups. Even if desexing is mandated, this cost may deter some owners from complying unless there is financial assistance or subsidised desexing services available. Without ensuring that access to services is geographically and financially accessible, the law could disproportionately affect certain groups, such as low-income or rural dog owners. [SPCA offers discounted desexing initiatives and mobile desexing](#) to improve access in lower socioeconomic and rural areas, in addition to offering funding to support other rescues desexing initiatives. However, scaling up these services would require substantial additional funding.

- ***Enforcement and compliance***

The mandatory desexing of dogs would require robust enforcement mechanisms. However, there are several challenges to ensuring compliance. For example, there could be a large number of unregistered



or unknown dog owners who may not adhere to the law. Estimates of the dog population from the Companion Animal New Zealand surveys are consistently higher than the numbers of registered dogs reported by the Department of Internal Affairs, suggesting a proportion of dogs are unregistered (Companion Animals New Zealand, 2024; Department of Internal Affairs, 2024).

Incentives for desexing can also be offered. For example, many local Councils may offer incentives for desexing, such as reduced dog registration fees.

## Other approaches to address irresponsible breeding of dogs

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There are a range of potential approaches to address irresponsible companion dog breeding in New Zealand. An international comparison reveals most countries require breeders to adhere to animal welfare standards and have some form of breeder registration or licensing, though the criteria (e.g., number of litters or puppies bred) and processes vary (for an overview see [Appendix 1](#)).

The below approaches have been proposed by our organisation to MPI in multiple briefings, meetings and other communications since 2021. SPCA believes a combination of these approaches would be effective in addressing the issues associated with irresponsible breeding of dogs.

### Updated Code of Welfare with Minimum Standards addressing breeding

Codes of Welfare for animals provide minimum standards, recommendations for best practice, and guidance for owners and people in charge of animals. [Codes of Welfare](#) are created under the Animal Welfare Act 1999. [NAWAC](#) (National Welfare Animal Welfare Committee) is responsible for detailing minimum standards for specific species and activities in Codes of Welfare. NAWAC then advises the Minister responsible for Animal Welfare.

SPCA advocates that [Codes of Welfare](#) must remain up-to-date and based on the latest scientific evidence. However, the current [Code of Welfare for Dogs](#) has not been updated for over 15 years and there is only one Minimum Standard that relates to breeding.

**NB:** *The current Code of Welfare for Dogs has a 2018 date as this was when the Animal Welfare (Care and Procedures) Regulations were inserted but there was no change to content. The 2018 Codes were not publicly notified nor subject to public submissions.*

Frustrated by lack of progress on the companion codes, SPCA formed an agreement with MPI and NAWAC; SPCA would lead updating the Code of Welfare for Dogs on the condition that this would be accepted into NAWAC's work plan.



A writing group comprising seven national animal welfare stakeholders drafted an updated Code of Welfare for Dogs. This group included: [Companion Animals New Zealand \(CANZ\)](#), [Companion Animal Veterinarians \(NZVA-CAV\)](#), [Dogs New Zealand \(Dogs NZ\)](#), [New Zealand Institute of Animal Management \(NZIAM\)](#), [New Zealand Veterinary Association \(NZVA\)](#), [New Zealand Veterinary Nursing Association \(NZVNA\)](#), [SPCA New Zealand \(SPCA\)](#), and [Veterinarians for Animal Welfare Aotearoa \(VAWA\)](#).

SPCA completed the required consultation with representatives of people likely to be affected by the code, requesting feedback from over 400 organisations and individuals. The updated proposed draft code and accompanying report were passed to NAWAC for consideration in October 2023.

- > Read the [draft Code of Welfare submitted to NAWAC](#)
- > Read an [abridged version of the explanatory report submitted to NAWAC](#)

The proposed draft code introduces several proposed minimum standards which aim to set clear expectations for dog breeding, such as maximum number of litters across a female dog's lifetime, minimum and maximum age for breeding, and for socialisation and care of puppies.

## Regulations to address prolonged confinement of dogs

Where dogs are kept in large numbers for the purpose of breeding large numbers of puppies for profit, they are often confined to small pens or cages for extended periods.

SPCA proposed regulations to address prolonged tethering and confinement of dogs in a briefing provided to MPI and then Minister responsible for Animal Welfare, Meka Whaitiri in 2021.

Tethering or chaining a dog describes the tying of a dog with a rope, line, or chain to a fixed stationary point (also referred to as 'life chaining' when prolonged). Close confinement of a dog describes a situation where a dog is contained in an enclosure that provides insufficient space to meet their physical, health and behavioural needs. As described in the Code of Welfare for Dogs, prolonged confinement or tethering can have a significant negative impact on the physical and mental health of dogs.

SPCA also submitted in support of a previous petition from Chained Dog Awareness: Ban life chaining of dogs in New Zealand (SPCA, 2022). In our submission we proposed the introduction of regulations to specifically address both prolonged tethering and prolonged confinement. In their report, the Petitions Committee recommended that the Government amend the Animal Welfare (Care and Procedures) Regulations to create a new offence of lifetime or prolonged tethering or confinement of a dog (Petition Committee, 2022).

SPCA has provided considerable support to MPI to progress prolonged tethering and confinement regulations. MPI has committed to exploring regulations to address prolonged tethering but has communicated to SPCA that they will prioritise progressing prolonged tethering regulations separately, citing their belief that it made more sense to address prolonged confinement as part of breeder regulations. At this point in time, this work has not been prioritised by MPI.



## Breeder regulations

SPCA proposes Regulations could be one option to address the behaviour of irresponsible breeders. Regulations would allow Animal Welfare Inspectors to intervene before problems escalate to the level requiring a prosecution.

Regulations could, and should, be proposed that would serve the purpose of preventing the unreasonable and unnecessary distress caused by the practice of unregulated companion animal breeding. Namely, regulations should:

- > Make minimum age requirements for animals at sale and rehoming directly enforceable;
- > Require mandatory microchipping and desexing at point-of-sale or rehoming except for breeding animals owned by registered breeders;
- > Set minimum and maximum age requirements for breeding animals, and maximum number of litters per year and in total (e.g. Dogs New Zealand recommends no more than 4 litters from any bitch in her lifetime);
- > Require breeders to disclose known or potential health issues to prospective owners in a way that is directly enforceable;
- > Set a maximum number of animals on the property per person/staff member (e.g. Dogs New Zealand recommends a maximum of 10 breeding bitches per full time adult);
- > Prohibit or restrict selling of animals at pet shops or via third party sales;
- > Require that there is a separate area for each breeding female which is of sufficient size, contains a suitable bed for giving birth, and has a divider that allows the mother space away from the litter; and
- > Require entire adult males and females to be kept separately if there is a risk of accidental mating.

## Breeder licensing

A mandatory licensing, reporting, and auditing scheme could be implemented for commercial companion animal breeders. Licensed breeders would be required to submit an annual register of births, deaths, transfers, and movements and pay an annual auditing fee.

To ensure effective enforcement, a centralised register of licensed breeders should be established and made publicly accessible. This will promote transparency and help New Zealanders source puppies from reputable breeders. Licensing must apply to all breeders of purebred and mixed-breed dogs, as well as working dogs as defined by the Dog Control Act 1996. Breeders who fail to comply with regulations should have their licenses revoked.



# Existing legislative tools

SPCA is concerned that the current approach to dealing with irresponsible dog breeders is adhoc and does not result in good welfare outcomes. Problems arise not only from the direct animal welfare impacts but also from the fact that our Inspectorate sometimes faces challenges in addressing poor breeding practices with the regulatory tools currently available. This increases the risk of ‘vigilante’ action by concerned members of the public. Despite the existence of some minimum standards and regulations related to cats and dogs in a general sense, the current framework often limits SPCA’s ability to alleviate the suffering of animals in poorly run breeding establishments, except in the most severe cases where a prosecution under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 may be pursued.

As an organisation, we are concerned that there is a diminishing level of trust in the effectiveness of warranted Animal Welfare Inspectors, coupled with an increasing risk of ‘vigilante’ action. We believe this situation has arisen because the current Regulations and Codes of Welfare are not adequately addressing key animal welfare issues, including irresponsible breeding.

SPCA receives approximately 125 complaints per year relating to breeders (Table 1). While the number of complaints related to breeders is small relative to the total complaints received by SPCA annually, the number of animals involved in individual cases can be large. Of the complaints about breeders, the large majority relate to dog breeders (72%).

**Table 1 – Breeder complaints data reported to SPCA by year**

Establishment type	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Animal breeder – pedigree/backyard	101	106	100	151	157	139

## SPCA’s work to support desexing of companion animals

In May 2023, we launched our [desexing website](#) to provide accessible, multilingual educational resources and answer common questions about the benefits of desexing. The website also offers downloadable materials and lists upcoming dates for our Snip ‘n’ Chip campaigns, which provide heavily subsidised desexing vouchers (currently limited to cats). Additionally, we offer a community voucher system to further support desexing efforts for dogs and cats.

To reach rural communities with limited access to veterinary care, SPCA’s Mobile Desexing Vehicle delivers vital desexing services. At the end of March, we launch our first South Island campaign through



this initiative, [SPCA's Mobile Desexing Clinic ready for first South Island campaign](#). Through our desexing partnership with Kāinga Ora, we cover the cost of cat and dog desexing surgeries, addressing overpopulation challenges in Kaitaia and Whangārei. Our partnerships with veterinary clinics in high-need areas are ongoing, and since launching our Northland desexing partnership in 2023, [a total of 2,711 cats and dogs have been desexed through Bay of Islands Veterinary Services](#).

To further combat pet overpopulation, we have established and administer the SPCA Desexing Grant for rescue organisations. By working collaboratively with these groups, we can make a lasting impact on reducing the number of unwanted animals in our communities. Since the launch of our National Desexing Programme in early 2022, SPCA has desexed 54,572 animals across the country - including 7,374 dogs. We estimate that this initiative has prevented the birth of approximately 185,251 unwanted kittens and puppies (including 18,435 puppies).

## Impacts of unregulated and irresponsible breeding of dogs

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Unregulated and irresponsible breeding of dogs is a significant issue in New Zealand which can lead to short and long term welfare impacts and contribute to pressure on rescues, animal welfare organisations, and council pounds. SPCA is concerned about the oversupply of companion dogs. The majority (85 %) of dogs in New Zealand are desexed (Companion Animals New Zealand, 2024). However, dogs may be desexed after one or more litters, which may be planned or accidental, contributing to oversupply.

The excessive, uncontrolled breeding of dogs is an important contributing factor in creating New Zealand's widespread stray and unwanted dog problems, which leads to negative welfare impacts, negative impacts on the environment, community nuisance and danger, and the euthanasia of healthy dogs. Recently, some pounds have reported unprecedented numbers of incoming dogs, with Auckland Council reporting euthanising an average of 11 dogs a day in their 2023/2024 report (Leahy & Knox, 2024). Desexing is an important component of population control and has welfare benefits for the desexed animal.

The animal welfare impact of irresponsible dog breeding can include the following:

1. An unsuitable environment, including the use of prolonged confinement in unregulated commercial breeding establishments and hoarding cases;
2. A lack of veterinary care for animals used in commercial breeding establishments;
3. A lack of opportunities to display normal patterns of behaviour for animals used in commercial breeding establishments, which can lead to negative affective states including fear, boredom and anxiety;



4. An increase in inherited disorders in the offspring that can affect animal health and cause pain and suffering, and close inbreeding;
5. The selling of sick and underage animals;
6. The selling of poorly socialised animals, who can go on to be more likely to be dangerous or aggressive, or display other severe behavioural problems;
7. An increase in unwanted animals abandoned or relinquished to shelters;
8. An increase in health issues in breeding animals due to excessive or inappropriate breeding (e.g. number of litters per year, number of litters per lifetime, minimum and maximum breeding ages).

The COVID-19 pandemic saw a sharp increase in the demand for companion animals. This surge in demand drove up prices, creating lucrative incentives for unscrupulous breeders and scammers (Better Business Bureau, 2020).

While the number of complaints about breeders has remained consistently higher since 2020, the size of New Zealand’s dog population appears to have reduced from the peak of 850,000 dogs as recorded by Companion Animals New Zealand (Companion Animals New Zealand, 2020, 2024). The most recent Companion Animals New Zealand report indicates an estimated companion dog population of 830,000 (population estimated margins of error: 780,000-885,000) and 31 % of New Zealand households share their home with at least one dog. The number of registered dogs as reflected by Dog Control statistics from the National Dog Database peaked in 2022 at 605,834 (Department of Internal Affairs, 2024), however this does not capture unregistered dogs.

Reported desexing rates have increased from 71 % in 2020 to 85 % in 2024, with “prevent unwanted litters/offspring” cited as the main reason for desexing by 67 % of dog owners (Companion Animals New Zealand, 2020, 2024). For the minority of dog owners in this survey who had not yet desexed their dog, key reasons cited for not having done so were, keeping them for breeding (27 %) and not having had the time to do it yet (23 %).

## Impacts of dog desexing on health and behaviour

Responsible dog ownership includes desexing dogs not registered for breeding to prevent accidental mating and reproductive health issues (American Veterinary Medical Association, 2016). Routine desexing is widely recommended to improve dog welfare, reduce the incidence of certain medical conditions, and minimise contributions to the unwanted dog population (Houlihan, 2017). Veterinarians play a key role in advising on the optimal age for desexing to minimise associated risks (British Veterinary Association, 2019; New Zealand Veterinary Association, 2018).



SPCA was concerned to note the New Zealand Veterinary Association (NZVA) was not included in the list of targeted stakeholders invited to provide a submission on this petition. Given their expertise in desexing procedures, we strongly recommend that they be invited to contribute.

## Medical benefits of desexing

- **Increased lifespan:** Desexing is associated with longer life expectancy, although this may reflect better overall care rather than a direct causal relationship. It also eliminates common life-limiting reproductive diseases (Houlihan, 2017; Urfer & Kaeberlein, 2019).
- **Prevention of False Pregnancies:** False pregnancies, which commonly occur after each season, can cause distress, appetite loss, and adverse behavioural changes (British Veterinary Association, 2019).
- **Elimination of Reproductive Infections and Cancers:**
  - > **Pyometra:** A potentially fatal uterine infection requiring emergency surgery, affecting 19-55% of intact bitches over 9-10 years old (Howe, 2015; Urfer & Kaeberlein, 2019). The mortality risk for therapeutic desexing due to pyometra is 10%, compared to 0.009% for elective desexing (Shoop-Worrall et al., 2022).
  - > **Mammary Tumours:** Mammary neoplasia is linked to hormone exposure. While some debate exists regarding the strength of evidence (Beauvais et al., 2012), most research supports a significantly reduced risk with early desexing (BeauduLange et al., 2021; Edmunds et al., 2023; Howe, 2015; Stavisky & White, 2022; Urfer & Kaeberlein, 2019; Varney et al., 2023). There is no scientific evidence supporting delaying spaying until after the first season (British Veterinary Association, 2019) or allowing a litter before desexing (England, 2012).
  - > **Testicular Tumours and Prostatic Hyperplasia:** Desexing eliminates the risk of testicular tumours and reduces the incidence of perianal adenomas and benign prostatic hyperplasia (British Veterinary Association, 2019; Urfer & Kaeberlein, 2019).
- **Prevention of Oestrus (Heat) and Associated Issues:**
  - > Oestrus occurs approximately every six months in intact bitches, requiring careful management to prevent mating (British Veterinary Association, 2019).
- Desexing may limit straying, particularly in response to bitches in season, which contributes to nuisance behaviour and unwanted litters (British Veterinary Association, 2019; Urfer & Kaeberlein, 2019).
- It may reduce excessive sexual behaviour directed at bitches, people, or objects (Urfer & Kaeberlein, 2019).



## Potential medical risks of desexing

Desexing can be safely performed as early as six weeks of age and is associated with shorter recovery times (Howe, 2015). Early desexing before three months is generally reserved for shelter situations where population control is a priority (American Veterinary Medical Association, n.d.; DeTar et al., 2022; Griffin et al., 2016). There is no clear evidence that early desexing causes serious health consequences, and the British Veterinary Association states there is insufficient scientific data to establish a position on early neutering (British Veterinary Association, 2019). However, emerging research suggests that breed and sex should be considered when determining the optimal age for desexing the owned pet population, as early desexing may increase the risk of certain conditions although further research is needed. New evidence in this field is continually emerging and may change the risk/ benefit assessment over time (Romagnoli et al., 2024).

## Controversies and considerations

Conflicting information exists regarding the risks of early desexing. Some studies suggest potential health risks, but reviews indicate these findings are inconsistent, often limited by small sample sizes, confounding variables (e.g., breed, weight, prepubertal status), and study design flaws (Houlihan, 2017; Moxon et al., 2023a). Key concerns include:

### • *Skeletal Development and Joint Disorders*

Desexing before growth plate closure (8-12 months) may delay closure, leading to increased limb length (Kilborn et al., 2002). The desexing of larger breeds of dogs is often recommended to be delayed until 12-18 months of age after growth plate closure. However, delaying desexing does not prevent developmental joint diseases such as hip and elbow dysplasia, which are primarily influenced by genetics and overfeeding (Bliss et al., 2002; Lawler et al., 2008). Similarly, no causal link has been established between early desexing and cruciate ligament injuries, which are strongly associated with excess body weight (Adams et al., 2011).

A study comparing shelter dogs desexed before or after 24 weeks found no significant association between age at desexing and musculoskeletal issues over four years. The few cases of hip dysplasia observed did not require surgical or prolonged medical management, supporting the case desexing at an earlier age is safe (Houlihan, 2017; Howe, 2015).

### • *Urinary Incontinence*

Ovariectomy and ovariohysterectomy have been linked to increased risk of urinary incontinence, but the role of age at which desexing occurs remains unclear (British Veterinary Association, 2019; Howe, 2015; Moxon et al., 2023a; Pegram et al., 2019). Desexing has been directly linked to urinary incontinence, regardless of the age at which it occurs. Research suggests desexing between 4-6 months does not significantly increase the risk compared to those desexed after the first oestrus (de Bleser et al., 2011; Spain et al., 2004).



### • **Cancer Risk**

Some studies suggest desexing may increase the risk of certain cancers, but as desexed dogs generally live longer, age remains the primary risk factor for cancer development. Caution is needed when interpreting these findings.

### • **Behavioural Impacts**

While desexing reduces libido and sexual behaviours in male dogs (Roulaux et al., 2023; Urfer & Kaeberlein, 2019), its effect on other behaviours is less clear. Research on aggression, anxiety, and other traits is inconsistent, often based on correlations rather than causation (D’Onise et al., 2017; McGreevy et al., 2018; Urfer & Kaeberlein, 2019). Behavioural studies frequently rely on owner surveys, which may introduce bias. Some desexed dogs may have already exhibited problem behaviours before surgery, leading to misconceptions about causality. A recent review of the existing literature on this topic in female dogs identified a lack of evidence to document the impact of neutering bitches before or after puberty on behaviour (Moxon et al., 2023b).

## Alternatives to desexing

Although desexing is the preferred option, pharmaceutical alternatives are available. Medications can prevent bitches from coming into heat or induce temporary chemical castration in males. These options are available through veterinary consultation (British Veterinary Association, 2019; Urfer & Kaeberlein, 2019).

# Conclusion

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In principle, SPCA supports the idea of mandatory dog desexing in New Zealand, with exemptions for registered breeders, as a potential approach to address irresponsible breeding, overpopulation, and animal welfare issues. However, for such legislation to be effective and fair, several scientific and logistical challenges must be addressed. These include determining the appropriate desexing age, ensuring veterinary accessibility, providing financial support, and enforcing the law effectively.

Given these challenges, SPCA advocates for a comprehensive regulatory framework, that includes an updated Code of Welfare for Dogs breeding, licensing requirements for breeders, and regulations for companion animal breeding, rather than solely a strict mandate on desexing. These measures would effectively help reduce the negative impacts of unregulated breeding and ease the burden on rescues, shelters, and council pounds.

SPCA appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the Petition of Chained Dog Awareness NZ Trust: *Mandate the Desexing of Dogs in NZ Except Registered Breeders*. Our organisation is happy to discuss this matter if further information is required. We are also more than happy to present orally to the Petitions Committee if that would be helpful in the Committee deliberations.



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# Appendix 1: International Comparisons

Country/ Region	Legislative requirements	Additional information
European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breeders must be registered or licensed in most EU Member States</li> <li>Traders of dogs and cats must be licensed in many countries.</li> </ul>	Licensing requirements vary across countries. In December 2023 the European Commission proposed new regulations and updates to existing legislation (European Commission, 2023)
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breeders exceeding a set number of litters or advertising dogs must be licensed.</li> <li>License number must be displayed in ads.</li> <li>Breeders must follow socialisation and habituation plans for puppies.</li> </ul>	Licensing rules introduced in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales (DEFRA, n.d., 2024; Scottish Government, 2021; Welsh Government, n.d.)
Australia	<p><b>ACT</b> mandates registration of all breeders and sets breeder specific welfare standards.</p> <p><b>Queensland</b> mandates registration of all breeders under a government supplied “Breeder Identification Number” (BIN) and sets breeder specific welfare standards for dogs.</p> <p><b>New South Wales, Tasmania and Western Australia</b> do not require breeder registration but does have a Code of Practice for breeding dogs.</p> <p><b>Northern Territory</b> does not have any breeder-specific requirements. <b>South Australia</b> mandates registration under government-supplied BIN and sets breeder specific welfare standards for companion animals.</p> <p><b>Victoria</b> requires anyone with 3 or more breeding females to register and has two relevant Codes of Practice; one for the operation of breeding and rearing businesses and one for the breeding of animals with heritable defects that cause disease.</p>	Summary available through RSPCA Australia (2024). Breeder regulations differ across states and territories. Recent updates in Victoria and New South Wales to improve breeder regulation and penalties for illegal breeding. National efforts target puppy farming and unethical breeding practices.



<p><b>United States</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some states (e.g., Arizona, Colorado) require breeder licenses based on the number of breeding dogs.</li> <li>• Other states (e.g., California, Illinois, Texas) have specific breeder requirements beyond licensing.</li> </ul>	<p>State laws vary widely, and some include health standards, record-keeping, and inspections.</p>
<p><b>Canada</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some provinces (e.g., Ontario, British Columbia) require breeder registration or licensing.</li> <li>• Breeding must meet animal welfare standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ontario</b> has specific standards for breeding and sale of dogs with penalties for non-compliance.</li> <li>• <b>British Columbia</b> is updating regulations to improve breeder standards.</li> </ul>

