

## Inquiry into the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022

**Submission No:** 483  
**Submitted by:** [REDACTED]  
**Publication:** Make my submission public but keep my name confidential  
**Attachments:** See attachment  
**Submitter Comments:**

29<sup>th</sup> of May 2022

State Development and Regional Industries Committee

Dear Parliamentary Committee,

**Submission on proposed amendments to the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*** Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the proposed amendments.

My name is [REDACTED], I participate in a range of group-based activities with my 2 year old German Shepard.

I am strongly against the proposed amendments to the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001* (detailed below).

**There are some major points of concern for myself and my family. These include:**

- a) The government has not consulted key stakeholders and the wider community have not been afforded the opportunity to be consulted on the proposed amendments to the Act.
- b) Lack of community consultation means the impacts on the community have not been adequately assessed.
- c) Conclusions drawn regarding restraint-based tools, specifically the prong collar, have been made based on unsubstantiated research and without consultation of key stakeholders.

The following outlines my thoughts on the matters outlined above.

The government has not consulted those whom these amendments will affect and in doing so have made a decision which may be detrimental to those who use these restraints appropriately. People up the top making decisions without seeing first-hand the positive affects these collars can have. People who are taking responsibility for

their dogs ensuring they have control of their dog and adequate training being used to support this not being given the opportunity to have their say.

**The government has not consulted key stakeholders and the wider community have not been afforded the opportunity to be consulted on the proposed amendments to the Act.**

Evidence that the government has not followed its own best practice guidelines:

I refer to the "REVIEW OF THE ANIMAL CARE AND PROTECTION ACT 2001 CONSULTATION OUTCOMES REPORT", prepared by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and published in October 2021.

I refer to page 37 of the report, section titled "Relevant E-Petitions". It is acknowledged that

*"there were six animal welfare related e-petitions that were tabled in the Legislative Assembly during the consultation period. Issues raised in these e-petitions (listed below) are also being considered as part of the ACPA review process".*

Of these six petitions, the relevant subject matter of three of these petitions was also included as part of the initial discussion paper; as such, stakeholders and the community were provided the opportunity to give feedback on these matters. There remains three relevant e-petitions, for which there was no correlating subject matter in the initial discussion paper:

- Ban the use of shock collars on dogs (Petition no. 3526-21)
- Illegal to import - Prohibit the use of prong collars in Queensland (Petition no. 3530- 21)
- Prohibit the use of choke collars in Queensland (Petition no. 3531-21)

All three petitions listed above closed on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2021. The closing date for feedback on the review of the *Animal Protection and Care Act (2001)*, as detailed in the Outcomes Report, was 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021.

With reference to the "*Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022 Explanatory Notes*", page 33, section titled "*Consultation*". The use of prong collars or any other restraint based tools is in fact missing from the key consultation outcomes of the discussion paper.

**Lack of community consultation means the impacts on the community have not been adequately assessed.**

The proposed banning of restraint-based training tools presents a number of adverse impacts on the community, which have not been considered due to insufficient community consultation (as evidenced above). To quote from The Queensland Government Guide to Better Regulation May 2019, these include:

The **lack of community consultation means the impacts on the community have not been adequately assessed.** This will have social and environmental impacts on the dog communities throughout Queensland. *It will impact **public safety** in terms of safe management of dogs in the community and it will impact members of the community who are unable to provide adequate mental and physical **fulfilment for their dog without said safe equipment**, which is a **welfare concern**.*

**Conclusions drawn regarding restraint-based tools, specifically the prong collar, have been made based on unsubstantiated research and without consultation of key stakeholders.**

I refer to page 25 of the bill, which states:

*“Imposing restrictions on the use of prong collars and other devices is justified as they are considered to be inappropriate as a training aid because they cause pain and fear in dogs which is used as a punishment. Research has shown that using aversive training methods including the use of prong collars can cause pain and distress and can compromise the dog’s welfare”*

I would request a more comprehensive review of tools be considered prior to drawing such conclusions, as the above statement demonstrates a lack of understanding of behavioural science and the means in which training tools are most commonly used as a means of Negative Reinforcement (guiding the dog towards the correct behaviour), not Punishment.

The training tool used correctly does not instil pain and fear into your dog rather encourages them to perform the desired behaviour. My dog had never experienced injuries sustained by using training aids such as prong collars. He now no longer requires a training aid to support him on community outings as he has become a dog who is aware of the desired behaviours and has an awareness of threats around him including snakes, toads, cars etc. This is thanks to a range of training aids including the prong and shock collars supporting our extensive training to keep others and our dog safe at all times. A dogs welfare is compromised when they are required to be euthanized due to a dog bite or restricted to their yard due to being a ‘dangerous dog’ as adequate training aids cannot be used.

Adequate consultation with key stakeholders, including but not limited to members of the Queensland Government currently utilising these training tools, including Police and Military units, Certified Animal Training Professionals, working to improve standards of pet ownership and care, community safety and education around responsible pet training and ownership and members of the public who own pets or have pet dogs living in their community, would generate a more comprehensive understanding of the use of training tools in behavioural modification and the betterment of animal welfare.

I refer to page 3 of the bill, which states:

*Prohibiting inhumane practices*

*The Bill amends the ACPA and introduces new offences which will prohibit the inhumane practice of:*

- *possessing or using a prong collar, which is designed to bruise or pierce an animal's skin, or another prescribed restraint on an animal*

The above statement is factually incorrect – the tool is not **designed** to bruise or pierce an animal's skin. It is reasonable to state that incorrect use of **any** tool (for example a leash, flat collar or harness) has the potential to cause injury. It is also reasonable to state that **correct** use of the prong collar does not cause injury to the dog.

Additionally it is of great concern to myself that, as per the wording of the bill above, the use of potentially **any and all** restraint based tools is considered to be inhumane. I am especially concerned by this wording given key stakeholders and members of the community have not been given room to provide feedback on this.

Based on the above, I would request that amendments to the use availability and legality of tools not be considered as part of the proposed amendments to the Act, until such time as best practice process is followed and the community is consulted on the proposed changes.

Yours Sincerely,

