

Inquiry into the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022

Submission No: 1044
Submitted by: [REDACTED]
Publication: Make my submission public but keep my name confidential
Attachments: See attachment
Submitter Comments:

30 May 2022

ANIMAL CARE AND PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Submission to the Committee:

We write this submission as [REDACTED] trading as [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] does not support the amendment to the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 in its proposed form. We do not support the banning of the prong collar also known as a pinch collar (Refers only to the method of fitting).

Who are we?

- 1) [REDACTED] has been in operation for 48 years and widely known as Australia's longest running private trainers in canine obedience
- 2) [REDACTED] has won multiple State and National awards for
 - a) Best Dog Trainers Australia
 - b) Best Dog Obedience and Puppy trainers Queensland
 - c) Best Puppy Trainers Australia
 - d) Best Puppy Trainers Queensland
 - e) [REDACTED] has also won more than 250 Individual awards for Obedience across Australia with multiple Australian Championships
 - f) Authors of 3 "Best-selling" books on the understanding of the canine and how to work with them. Books include [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] now in their 9th printing
 - g) Life members of The Australian German Shepherd Association
 - h) Members of Dog's Queensland
- 3) [REDACTED] have trained across the world including Japan, China, the USA, UK
- 4) [REDACTED] have been a principal service provider for the University of Queensland for more than 20 years in the Education of students from Japan (TESOL)
- 5) [REDACTED] is an accredited lecturer and has conducted many lectures to Dog Obedience Clubs across Australia and in Japan
- 6) Appointed as Master Trainer for the Community Arts Colleges in Japan
- 7) Talks to Rotary and other clubs whenever we are invited about Canine/Human interaction
- 8) [REDACTED] runs "Work Bite Free" seminars for councils across Queensland and for private companies
- 9) [REDACTED] runs a 5 month correspondence course on Canine/Human relationships for Vets and Vet nurses
- 10) Attended the USA as the only lay person invited to the West Virginian Police Canine Association covering Bomb Detection work, Drug Detection, Agility, Protection tracking and Obedience in 1996
- 11) Lectured at conferences on the Australian wild dog - the Dingo to 100 trainers from across the world

- 12) Member of the Dog Training industry of the UK - only 34 people given this honour at the time she was made a member
- 13) Radio talk back in Spain covering all aspects of dogs
- 14) Member of Empire Who's Who as Professional Dog Trainer (Executive Professional)
- 15) Creators of multiple videos covering all aspects of "Working with your Canine"
- 16) ■■■ is a Senior Obedience Judge A.N.K.C. (Australian National Canine Assoc.)
- 17) 2007 ■■■ worked in China with the Chinese Police Dog Squad getting ready for the 2008 Olympics
- 18) Behavioural specialists (Certified C.E.A) Canine/Human interaction
- 19) Member of P.I.A.A. (Pet Industry Assoc. Of Australia)

The use of restraints for dogs.

It is important for us to look at the use of restraints for dogs in an open and fair minded way utilising our very broad knowledge as to the use, value and benefits of certain restraints and how they may be viewed by those who may have less experience and knowledge of restraints. We refer to restraints as training aids.

It is very fair to say there are many viewpoints as to the practicality and value of certain training aids, as well as the Question "Do they hurt the dogs"? "Are they Humane"? The optics from different groups and organisations including some of the general public are and should be carefully considered but weighed and balanced against the true value to society generally and canines specifically of their use or not.

There are those who would prefer not to use restraints at all. In a perfect world all canines would be born equal and all humans would know how to work with their dogs but this is simply not possible. We have been responsible for the training in Queensland of tens of thousands of dogs and families. We know without reservation that this perfect Utopia is and never will be, possible.

Training Aids (Restraints) come in a very wide variety and have very specific uses. There is no 'one size fits all' method of training nor the equipment which may be utilised. We recognise that our training methods may not suit some people and they (Families) prefer a different method to help in the training of the dog and the family and this is both normal and understandable. We accept and applaud different styles and methods of training as we believe every family who gets a new puppy either a Certified Breed, mixed breed or a rescue dog should have the training which suits them best.

We need the training aids (Restraints) to give us the tools to help everyone. Consider an 80 year old with a bull mastiff who is 40kg or more and can pull at 120kg. This is not an unusual situation for us. Consider a mixed breed dog of 50kgs being rehomed as a rescue dog to a family with 3 little kids. Without training aids the outcomes for these and other groups is almost certainly impossible. We know that humans don't really grasp what they are getting into when it comes to dogs. They love the way the dog looks, The colour of its eyes or coat. The size (when they want a protection dog) or just because they see it and say I want one of those. Large breed dogs such as Rottweilers, German Shepherds, Bull Mastiffs and a dozen other large breed dogs must be managed. Must be able to live in our human society in a way which puts NO others at

risk.

Other breeds of medium and smaller dogs can be no less anxious and if not managed carefully become aggressive to both other dogs and humans. Size and breed is not a prerequisite to having a great companion dog - training and temperament of the dog and human, is.

Currently there are a wide variety of training aids which must be "Fit for Purpose". Again there is no 'one size fits all' and with more than 48 years of training we fully comprehend that there are occasions where we may need to try different equipment on a dog to get the very best from the dog and for the handler/owner to be comfortable with their use.

There are 2 overriding criteria as to which equipment we use or offer. Is it safe for the dog and can it be used correctly by the owner? Does it hurt the dog in any way? Often when equipment is fitted for the first time the dog isn't sure of 'what is this thing' and may be unsure of it. It's not that they cause pain, it's simply something new to get used to. The fitting of the equipment is at the outset most important that it fits correctly so it does not hurt the dog in any way. We consistently check equipment we fit on a weekly basis, particularly when the dog is growing. We spend a lot of time with the families in explaining their use, how to use, when to use, how to fit and for them to read the body language of the dog.

Tens of Thousands of people across Australia and Queensland specifically use training aids with and for their dogs.

Correctly designed and fitted prong collars (Pinch collars - the method of fitting, not what it does to the dog), Check Chains (Choke chains when fitted backwards), Halti's, Bridles, Figure of 8's, Martingales etc are all humane methods of training. Each must be used for purpose, fitted correctly and explained thoroughly to the handler/owner. These types of restraints are used across Australia and the World by professional trainers, Police and other services. All without hurting the dog in any way.

We know that without the use of "fit for purpose" restraints thousands of dogs would have been put down and would be in the future, owing to the owners not being able to manage their dogs at home or in public. Thousands more may not be rescued in the first place. There most certainly will be more aggressive dogs in society resulting in more dog bites, fights and more. We will never and have never fitted and or used any equipment where we believed the dog would be in any danger or pain through its correct use.

Often the subject of restraints is an emotive one. Ban this or that because of how it looks and is perceived and not on the valid use of the equipment. We recommend crates for dogs as this becomes their 'safe place' for the life of the dog. Some people see this as a cage and won't use one - we understand their view point and will teach them other methods for giving their dog a safe place, but they can't take this safe place when they travel, go to grandmas for a few days or go camping. It is their choice which we respect.

Some people prefer not to have anything on their dogs nose like a halti or Bridle or Black Dog so we can use a Martingale or in some cases a check chain.

One of the most misunderstood pieces of training aids are flat collars. Most are

fitted far too loosely, too narrow for the size of the dog and the owners are not sure about how to have it correctly fitted. Like a pair of shoes. Many people are moving to harnesses for their dog believing that this will be better for the dog. In many cases this is so they feel better about their choices and has nothing to do with "Is it fit for purpose"? Of course with some dogs with great temperaments and knowledgeable owners they can work ok. They were made for War Dogs, Sledding pack dogs, search and rescue where pulling is necessary. Many people cannot control nor manage their dogs using a harness. We will help them in their choices and explain very clearly that they will have to work very hard for their dog to be a part of their team. It can be done but it is not as easy as many people believe.

All equipment must be fitted no tighter than a man wearing a tie. With prong collars the dog stops itself from pulling as it increases slightly the pressure on the whole neck. Not of the throat specifically.

Of the 250,000 families and dogs we have both trained and educated over the past 48 years NOT ONE wants to hurt their dog in ANY way. They love their dog - They want their dog to be happy and treated very well - but they need to be able to manage their dog irrespective of size, weight, breed or temperament. Any suggestion that the use of restraints is inhumane is due, in part, to a lack of understanding of why they are used in the first place.

We appreciate the conversation and that groups and organisations are always looking out for dogs. Banning prong collars and or other restraints will have a far greater repercussion than may currently be anticipated.

Finally - It is true that there have been dogs abused by many methods and in many ways. Images can be shown of equipment having an adverse effect on a dog but this is only a very very small percentage of the total number of dogs and owners who rely on them in order to live a balanced, joyous and happy life together and become good members of societies across Queensland and the globe.

If asked I would be happy to do a verbal submission and answer any questions the committee may have.

Sincerely,

