




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Dogs, Management

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (9.58 am): We have seen the impacts of dog bites on families across Queensland. I know I speak for all Queenslanders when I say that all of us were shocked and distressed by the recent attacks, and our thoughts and prayers are with their families. After engagement with local government representatives, I commenced a review of the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act with the first task force meeting on 4 August 2022. This included council representatives from Scenic Rim, Moreton Bay, Townsville, Logan, Brisbane and Fraser Coast. It also included representatives from the RSPCA and the LGAQ.

On the table today we will look at changes to increase penalties and options to assist local governments in cracking down on irresponsible people, as well as community education to inform and protect Queenslanders. While the state government makes the laws, it is local governments that play a vital role in not only administering the local laws in relation to dogs but also have insight into what is occurring in their local communities.

My department has met with the task force's technical working group every month since September 2022 to discuss the proposals from different local governments and how these proposals can best serve Queensland. I cannot thank them enough for their commitment and diligence to the review of these laws. The task force aim to examine the effectiveness of current laws and practices and how we can improve them. The task force were scheduled to meet within the month and finalise their recommendations. I thank them for meeting with us today.

The terrible attacks in the last two weeks again highlight the need for change. That is why we have acted to set up the task force. While most dog owners do the right thing, there are people who do not. It is hoped that the proposed changes that come from the task force will assist council in dealing with dogs. Again, I would like to thank all the members of the task force and my department for the commitment to this body of work. Today's outcomes will inform the government on how we move forward. I look forward to updating the House in the future.