



11 March 2016

To: **Subcommittee on Issues Relating to Animal Welfare and Cruelty to Animals,**  
Panel on Food and Safety and Environment Hygiene  
Attn: Chairman

**Re: Views on Issues relating to animal welfare and cruelty to animals**

Dear Chairman,

STOP! Save HK's Cats and Dogs (STOP) is pleased to see that the Panel on Food and Safety and Environment and Hygiene has set up the Subcommittee for Animal Welfare and Cruelty issues.

STOP is an animal welfare group concentrating in lobbying the government to fight for better welfare for animals in Hong Kong. Over the years, we have successfully convinced Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) to try the Trap, Neuter and Release (TNR) method in order to control the population of stray dogs. The trial TNR is now underway and will end in Jan 2018 and we hope the results can reveal the effectiveness of TNR in order to solve the overpopulation of stray dogs in Hong Kong in the future.

STOP also has other views for animal welfare and cruelty issues:

1. Animal Police

We do not have any objection if the Hong Kong Police can set up a team specialized in investigating the animal cruelty cases. However, we are not sure if the Hong Kong Police has enough manpower or resources to do so. We suggest that even a special team cannot be formed, it is advised that the Police School should have enough coverage and tutorial sessions on animal cruelty for the police constables. It is also advised that routine tutorial sessions should be given to the frontiers of all police stations.

## 2. Amendment of Cap. 139B

AFCD regulated the dog trade in 2009. However there were no regulations on dog breeders which made the loop hole remained. Hobby breeders can breed any dogs anytime and anywhere they like and those dogs are not guaranteed receiving proper care from the breeders.

STOP has been lobbying AFCD to close the loop hole since 2011 and we are glad to see that an amended proposal was made to further regulate the dog trade business. But at the same time, we are also very sad to learn that some of animal NGOs object the proposal which made AFCD in very difficult position to propose it to the Legco. STOP and some animal NGOs group supported the amendment of Cap 139B and we believe that the pet trade business, especially the dog trade business can only be enhanced if more regulations can be implemented on the trade. A joint supporting letter from animal NGO groups is also attached and we urge the Legco members (without delay) to support the am ended proposal in order to enhance the animal welfare.

## 3. Amendment of Cap 374 Road Traffic Ordinance Part 7 Section 56 Duty to stop in case of accident.

The present law states that:

(1) Where, owing to the presence of a vehicle on a road, an accident occurs whereby-

- (a) personal injury is caused to a person other than the driver of that vehicle; or
- (b) damage is caused to-

  - (i) a vehicle other than that vehicle or a trailer drawn thereby;
  - (ii) an animal other than an animal in or on that vehicle or a trailer drawn thereby; or
  - (iii) any other thing not being in or on that vehicle or a trailer drawn thereby,

the driver of that vehicle shall stop.

(4) In this section **animal**(動物) means any horse, cattle, ass, mule, sheep, pig or goat.  
[cf. 1972 c. 20 s. 25(4)  
U.K.]

STOP advises that in Cap 374, dogs and cats should be included in the section since dogs and cats are the majority animals in Hong Kong who are hit by vehicles.

#### 4. Microchipping domestic cats

We all know that under Cap 421A Rabies Regulation, all dog owners shall ensure that the dog be vaccinated against rabies at the age of 5 months and thereafter every 3 years along with renewal of licence..

If any domestic dog has been lost, it is easier for the dog owner to trace if the dog is microchipped. However, cats do not need to be vaccinated against rabies and if anyone loses a cat, it is really hard to identify even someone find the cat because most of the domestic cats do not carry any microchips.

STOP has conducted a research on social media, asking domestic cats owners if (i) they want their cats to be microchipped and (ii) has the owners' information stored in the system of AFCD. About 80% of the cat owners in this research are willing to do so.

STOP would like AFCD to consider setting t a database system for domestic cats and their owners.

#### 5. Dog keeping policy in Public Renting Housing

As you may aware there is a lot of dog abandonment from the residents of public renting housing estates recently and it was reported that some of the management offices under Housing Authority are now trying to kick the dogs out.

In 2003, the HA upheld the ban on dogs in public housing estates while granting a general permission for the keeping of "small household pets".

The HD has adopted the Temporary Permission Rule to handle dogs kept in public renting housing before implementation of the Marking Scheme. According to the Rule, one-off permissions were given to tenants applying to continue keeping those small dogs (i.e. less than 20 kg in weight) that had been kept in the leased premises before 1 August 2003. Tenants who have been granted the permission should strictly comply with the prescribed rules for dog keeping. The permission will be withdrawn if there are two substantiated incidents of creating nuisance / breaking the rules.

With effect from 1 November 2003, tenants who keep prohibited dog(s) or animal(s) inside the leased premises without prior written consent of the HA will be allotted penalty points under the Marking Scheme.

But since 2003, the HA doesn't have any reviews on this issue but the authority now instructs their estate management officers to inspect their tenants. Most tenants with dogs at home choose to give up their dogs rather than giving up their flats. It is now a pressure to the dog shelters due to the sudden supply of abandoned dogs will exploit the rehoming opportunity of the shelter dogs.

STOP together with 20 other animal NGOs and individuals has sent a letter to the Transport and Housing Bureau in Dec 2015. This aimed to ask for a meeting to discuss the current strategy with regards to dog keeping and to offer our assistance and advice in developing a policy, However, we got a reply from the Housing Authority that they will continue with the policy on banning unauthorized dogs in Public Renting Housing with the advices from the Estate Management Advisory Committees. We, the animal NGOs, are regret to learn that the Housing Authority refuses to have further discussion on this issue and we would like to take this opportunity to invite the Housing Authority to come to the next meeting to reveal all the complaints regarding the dog keeping issues they collect from their estate management offices and other public opinions they get from either their tenants or other related parties.

Pet/animal keeping, no matter keepng cats, dogs, goldfishes, birds, turtles.....is very common in Hong Kong and only humans can protect them since those animals do not have voice in the human world.

Yours truly,

Gloria Li

Co-chairperson

STOP! Save HK's Cats and Dogs

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