

香港狗會有限公司的信頭
Letterhead of HONG KONG KENNEL CLUB LIMITED

By Facsimile

21st July 1999

Your Ref: CBI/SS/10/98

Our Ref: HKKC-101/99

Dr. Hon Tang Siu-tong,
Chairman,
Subcommittee of the Dangerous Dogs Regulations
& Dogs and Cats Ordinance,
Legislative Council Building,
8 Jackson Road,
Central, Hong Kong.

Dear Sir,

Dogs & Cats Amendment Bill and Dangerous Dogs Regulations

Thank you for inviting this Club to present its views on the proposed Dangerous Dogs Regulations. Our view on the initial proposal was presented to the Chairman of the Legco Panel on Economic Services on 29th March 1996, see copy of letter attached. Our views expressed there remain valid.

We are eager to promote the responsibilities in the ownership of a dog in Hong Kong in order that dogs are accepted by the community. We have no objection in relation to the introduction of the new proposals for fighting breeds and known dangerous dogs.

We however do not support the proposal that dogs weighing 20 kg. or more are classified as potentially dangerous and require further restriction in public areas.

We have now held almost 100 dog shows in Hong Kong without incident which shows that dogs under control are safe.

We have reviewed the statistics provided in relation to the incidence dog bite's and our concern is that there is no indication that specific breeds have caused 70% of the hospitalization cases which involved 300 people receiving treatment in 1998. It is our concern that many of the instances of dogs biting may not have been caused by dogs of responsible dog lovers but may have been caused by abandoned or stray dogs.

We cannot understand the rationale of the categorization of many of the breeds listed as "large dogs" and we consider the weight of 20 kg. too low. We also fear that responsible dog lovers in Hong Kong will end up with dogs whose temperament is affected and become aggressive to their owners and others due to excessive use of a muzzle especially in the hot temperatures Hong Kong experiences. In the hot climate of Hong Kong it is also potentially dangerous to the health of the dog if they have to wear muzzle during exercise as dogs do not sweat and they rely upon their mouth to exhale heat.

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It is a further concern that excessive use of a muzzle will create an impression in the public eye that the dog approaching is dangerous in any event, we feel this will further alienate the public and our efforts to instill the principles of responsible dog ownership which we have promoted for so long to ensure dogs are accepted by the community at large.

We feel the existing legislation that dogs need to be on leash or otherwise under control in public places combined with the legislation to penalize owners of dogs which are a persistent menace or ferocious when at large are adequate measures to sufficiently safeguard the public.

We feel that the imposition of much higher penalties for those who fail to exercise adequate control over their dogs combined with an aggressive public education programme in relation to the benefits of obedience training and responsible dog ownership will sufficiently safeguard the public.

We do not accept that size and strength of a “large dog” are the sole factors which affect a dog’s ability to inflict serious injury. Socialization and training of dogs cannot be ignored and we feel the arbitrary used of the muzzle in all indoor public places and keeping dogs on a leash in outdoor public places will not in itself promote responsibility in dog ownership and enable the public to appreciate dogs in Hong Kong.

Finally, we consider the ex-gratia payment of \$3,000 for submission of a fighting dog excessive, as the owner has the option to continue to keep the dog responsibly. Our initial proposal in 1996. was that it should not exceed \$400.

We thank you for your consideration of our views and would be happy to provide further information should you require the same.

Yours faithfully,

J.M. Shen

Chairman

Enc.