

Doc 01

Rt Hon Alex Salmond MSP
First Minister of Scotland

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG

[Redacted] 1



[Redacted]

The Scottish Gamekeepers Association
Chairman

[Redacted]

In 2014 Scotland Welcomes the World



Our ref: 2014/0025855

6h November 2014

[Redacted]

Thank you for your letter regarding the ban on tail docking of working dogs.

As you may be aware, on a personal level, this is an issue I am extremely sympathetic to. However, it is essential that any decision on the matter strikes the best balance between protecting puppies as well as adult working dogs.

To this end, following the publication of the Glasgow University research on tail injuries in working dogs in Scotland, the Scottish Government undertook a series of discussions with key stakeholders on the findings. The Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment, Richard Lochhead, has subsequently asked the Chief Veterinary Officer for Scotland to further analyse how the exemptions allowing tail docking of working dogs have worked in practice in other parts of the UK, and how, if any potential exemption were proposed in Scotland, it could be genuinely restricted to working dogs. This work is currently in progress.

I hope you will agree that these are important issues, and that it is necessary for us to do all we can to ensure we reach the correct outcome.

If you would like to comment on how any potential change in tail docking legislation could be genuinely restricted to puppies that later go on to be working dogs, then please submit these to: Robin.MacLean@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.

ALEX SALMOND

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 August 2014 14:54:14
To: Ministerial Correspondence Unit
Cc: [REDACTED] Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment, [REDACTED] First Minister
Subject: Ministerial Reply for FM : Letter to First Minister from Scotland's Gamekeepers

Attachments: LETTER TO FIRST MINISTER FROM SCOTLAND'S GAMEKEEPERS.docx

MCU

MACCS case please for MR for the FM's signature.

Action officers: Please note the FM would like to respond to this correspondence. Can you ensure that the MACCS system does not change this case back to the portfolio Minister, especially if you are forwarding the case on to another action officer.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Office Manager
Office of the First Minister
Scottish Government
5th Floor | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 August 2014 14:40
To: First Minister
Subject: Letter to First Minister from Scotland's Gamekeepers

Dear Sir/Madam, please find attached a letter of request to the First Minister of Scotland from Scotland's gamekeepers and rural workers. We would appreciate it if the First Minister could be made aware of this correspondence as soon as possible.
Yours Sincerely, [REDACTED], PR and Communications Officer, on behalf of [REDACTED] Chairman, The Scottish Gamekeepers Association.

[REDACTED]

August 13th, 2014.

Dear First Minister,

I am writing to you today with an urgent request on behalf of 5300 rural workers in the Scottish countryside*, their friends and families.

Several months ago, science from Glasgow University, commissioned by Scottish Government, was published which showed that, in one surveyed shooting season, 56.6 per cent of working Spaniels and 38.5 per cent of Hunt Point Retrievers suffered at least one tail injury. The report's authors recommended, in conclusion, that shortening the tail of these working breeds by one third would significantly reduce the risk of injury. The rationale for a change in the law to permit the shortening of a working dog's tail, by a vet, in the first few days of its life, to avoid serious injury later, is clear, and Government-commissioned evidence supports this.

Despite delivering a petition to Holyrood on 26th February 2014, signed by 4158 Scottish people, calling on the SNP-led Scottish Government to reverse the ban on tail docking of working dogs, nothing has been done.

All bodies with an interest in this, including ourselves, responded to the written consultation in May. The science is there and its conclusions have been peer reviewed. The matter is now with Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment, Richard Lochhead MSP, to make a decision. Sadly, it appears to have slipped from his agenda and we have been given no indication of when or whether a decision is to be made. This is the reason for my appeal to you today, as First Minister of Scotland.

It is our view that a large number of rural workers and voters, many of whom back the SNP and Independence, are beginning to grow

extremely tired of waiting and watching their working dogs suffer through a Lab/Lib bill you yourself stated back in 2006, at our AGM at Perth

Racecourse, would be reversed by an SNP administration, if there was good evidence to do so.

While Land Reform proposals are to be advanced in the current Parliamentary session, rural people have waited nearly 8 years to have a key issue for them properly addressed.

I appeal to you on their behalf. Please, in the interests of animal welfare and in support of rural workers, urge your Ministers to make a decision as soon as possible and let people know the fate of their working dogs.

Yours Sincerely,

██████████, Chairman, The Scottish Gamekeepers Association.

*The SGA represents 5300 gamekeepers, stalkers, land and river ghillies, wildlife managers and rangers.

Doc 02

Rt Hon Alex Salmond MSP
First Minister of Scotland



St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG

[Redacted]
Email - [Redacted]

Our ref: 2010/0016258
12/2 July 2010

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your email dated 21 June 2010 concerning the tail docking ban in Scotland.

I was extremely sorry to learn of your dog's injuries which unfortunately resulted in 3 tail amputations and I can certainly appreciate how distressing this must have been for you and your dog. However, the tail docking of dogs is an extremely controversial issue and strong views are held both by those who support the ban and those who think that an exemption should have been made for working dogs, as was the case in England and Wales.

Since there was a lack of robust scientific evidence to show whether tail injuries have increased since the ban, the Scottish Government contributed £10,000 towards a case control study to estimate the risk of tail injury to dogs. The aims were to document the risks of tail injuries in dogs in Great Britain, to evaluate whether docking of tails reduces the risk of tail injury and to identify other major risk factors for tail injury. The study was undertaken by the University of Bristol and the Royal Veterinary College in North Mymms.

The researchers completed the Study and the Report they produced was 'peer reviewed' and published by the British Veterinary Association (BVA) in the Veterinary Record on 26 June. The Government is currently considering the Report and the BVA's editorial which relates to the Report, to see whether or not policy changes need to be made in Scotland.

Links to the Report and Editorial in the Veterinary Record are below -

<http://veterinaryrecord.bvapublications.com/cgi/content/full/166/26/812>
<http://veterinaryrecord.bvapublications.com/cgi/content/full/166/26/800>

My officials will write to you again when consideration of the Report is concluded.

ALEX SALMOND

Hastie TW (Thomas)

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of First Minister
Sent: 24 June 2010 14:16
To: DG Rural Affairs Environment and Services
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FAST TRACK FIRST MINISTER'S CORRESPONDENCE : tail docking - Letter from [REDACTED]
Importance: High
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Due By: 01 July 2010 16:30
Flag Status: Flagged

C.U. received
24 JUN 2010

FAST TRACK MINISTERIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Please see the attached letter from [REDACTED]. Please provide advice and a draft reply by close of play 1 July. Please can you inform MCU of the lead officer dealing with the correspondence. Please copy in the Ministerial Correspondence Unit into all subsequent emails.

Lead Officer – Please confirm to myself and MCU that you are dealing with this case

This case will be sent to you through the MCS system. Please note the deadline for the case which will be stated by MCS is not correct. The deadline for this fast-track case is 1 July. When you have accepted the case please contact MCU to confirm that you are dealing with it. When you have submitted the case, please call the Private Office it is forwarded to (see 'History' menu), to ensure that they arrange for the case to be sent on to the First Minister's Private Office as soon as possible.

[REDACTED]
Correspondence Secretary
Office of the First Minister
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 June 2010 14:21
To: First Minister
Subject: tail docking

Hi MR SALMOND...

I DO HOPE YOU HAD A GOOD DAY AT MUSSELBURGH RACES ON FRIDAY I WAS GUY WHO CAME OVER TO YOU AND WAS ASKING YOU AND YOUR WIFE ABOUT THE SITUATION ON THE TAIL DOCKING BAN IN SCOTLAND.AS I EXPLAINED TO YOU I HAVE 5 WORKING DOGS AND 1 HAS HAD TO HAVE 3 AMPUTATIONS TO ITS TAIL IN THE LAST 6 WEEKS NOT A GOOD THING TO HAPEN TO A 1 YEAR OLD SPRINGER ..I WOULD LOVE TO SEE THIS BAN LIFTED IN SCOTLAND I AM MEMBER OFF SOTTISH GAMKEEPERS ASSOCIATION AND ALWAYS LOOKING FOR THINGS ON TAIL DOCKING DO YOU KNOW THE SITUATION ON THIS AND WHEN ITS DUE BACK IN PARLIMENT COULD YOU LET ME NO MANY TANKS

[REDACTED]

Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Cùisean Dùthchail agus na h- Arainneachd
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment
Ridseard Lochhead BPA
Richard Lochhead MSP

1
E: scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Mr Alex Salmond MSP
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP



Ar faidhle/Our ref: 2014/0003856
March 2014

Thank you for your letter dated 29 January 2014, on behalf of your constituent [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
concerning the tail docking of working dogs.

As you are aware, in 2011 the Scottish Government commissioned a research project from the University of Glasgow examining the incidence of tail injuries in working dogs in Scotland, specifically in relation to spaniels, hunt point retrievers and terriers. The project has now been completed and scientific papers have been submitted to the Veterinary Record for peer review and publication.

Although we have not been informed of a definite date yet, we expect these papers to be published soon. Once the research has been deemed robust and published, we will undertake to review the legislation on tail docking of working dogs in Scotland.

In terms of communication, representatives of the Scottish Countryside Alliance, the Scottish Gamekeepers Association and the British Association of Shooting and Conservation Scotland were on the steering group for the Glasgow project and are fully aware of the results of that research and the contents of the papers submitted.

In addition you may be aware, on 26 February 2014 I met with the Scottish Gamekeepers Association to receive a petition from them calling for an exemption to the ban for working dogs. We also had a brief discussion to update them on the current position.

/I...

Taigh Naomh Anndrais, Rathad Regent, Dùn Èideann EH1 3DG
St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.scotland.gov.uk



I hope that this information is useful to you.

RICHARD LOCHHEAD

RAE
31 JAN 2014
PRIVATE OFFICE



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

RT HON ALEX SALMOND MSP
ABERDEENSHIRE EAST

Mr Richard Lochhead MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs & Environment
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Our Ref: AS/FM/198806

29/01/2014

Dear Richard,

Tail Docking - Working Dogs

[REDACTED]

I refer to my abovementioned constituent who visited my office in Inverurie this week seeking information on tail docking legislation and whether the Scottish Government is reconsidering exemptions in the case of working dogs.

My office staff explained to [REDACTED] that the issue would be reviewed in light of the commissioned research from the University of Glasgow, of which the constituent was not fully aware. I would be very grateful, thereby, if you could provide information on when this research will be published and how the Scottish Government will subsequently seek to take its conclusions forward.

Furthermore, I would be grateful if you could outline how the Scottish Government's approach to these matters is being communicated to those living and working in rural communities and to the Scottish gamekeeping lobby, particularly in the North East.

I look forward to your response.

*Yours for Scotland
Alex Salmond*

Alex Salmond MSP

