

Doc 61

**Burns PD (Phil)**

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**From:** [REDACTED] on behalf of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment  
**Sent:** 26 September 2008 14:57  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Minister for Environment; Communications Rural Affairs and Environment; Booth J (John); Mitchell E (Elaine); Stratford E (Eleanor); Keith S (Sheena); Mcleish W (Will); [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Line to clear for the Sunday Express

Mr Lochhead is content.

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] 16:24  
**To:** cabinet **Secretary** for Rural Affairs and the Environment  
**Cc:** Minister for Environment; Communications Rural Affairs and Environment; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Line to clear for the Sunday Express  
**Importance:** High

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] of the Sunday Express has been contacted by a well known (to us, anyway) campaigner against the ban on tail docking of working dogs. We have had considerable correspondence from him in the past and he has an item in front of the Petitions Committee.

The latest issue he is presenting are claims that he, along with many other breeders, are taking pregnant b\*tches to England to give birth, where puppies can be legally docked and then brought back up to Scotland for sale. We understand that this is legally possible-England and Wales have an exemption for working dogs - but have seen no evidence to back up claims that it is happening.

He is again calling for such an exemption to be made in Scotland and believes that going to England as outlined above is damaging the Scottish economy.

We suggest a line (from a spokesman) as follows:

"Tail docking of dogs and puppies is illegal in Scotland under section 20 of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act (2006) as an act of mutilation. This position is supported by organisations including the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and British Veterinary Association.

"While there is an exemption for working dogs in England, after extensive consultation on the Scottish legislation, we found there to be no scientific evidence to support claims that it benefits the animal and this remains the case."

Grateful for clearance by tomorrow lunchtime at the latest please.

[REDACTED]  
**Communications Officer**  
**Rural Affairs & Environment**  
**Scottish Government**  
[REDACTED]