

MEETING WITH FERGUS EWING MSP AND THE SCOTTISH GAMEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

<i>Date and Time of Engagement</i>	Wednesday 7 ^m November 2012 Pre-meeting with officials 3:30pm-4pm Room T3.04 Scottish Parliament Meeting 4pm-4:45pm Room TG21 /22 Scottish Parliament
<i>Where</i>	Scottish Parliament
<i>Key Message</i>	[redacted]
<i>Who</i>	Fergus Ewing MSP (In constituency capacity) [redacted] Chairman, Scottish Gamekeepers Association
<i>Why</i>	The SGA have requested a meeting to discuss the following issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tail docking • [redacted]
<i>Official Support Required</i>	Hugh Dignon mob. 07824499301
<i>Media Handling</i>	N/A
<i>Dress code</i>	No
<i>Greeting Party and specific meeting point on arrival (if event is at a non SE Building)</i>	N/A
<i>Specific entrance for Ministerial car/parking arrangements</i>	N/A

Key issues regarding tail docking of dogs

- The tail docking of dogs is an issue which has been both controversial and difficult
- Tail docking involves the amputation of puppies' tails when between two and five days old. It involves cutting through skin, muscles, nerves, bones and cartilage. The length of tail which is removed varies between and within breeds
- Tail docking of all dogs has been banned in **Scotland** since April 2007 as the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 prohibits all mutilations. The Prohibited Procedures on Protected Animals (Exemptions) (Scotland) Regulations 2010 provide for exemptions from this ban for various animals. **England and Wales** have an exemption which permits the tail docking of certain working dogs
- Sports organisations maintain that tail docking is necessary to protect dogs from serious injury occurring when they work in thick cover. This is due to the very vigorous tail action by some breeds, such as spaniels which can result in injuries which can be difficult to heal and occasionally requires tail amputation
- Veterinary and welfare organisations are concerned that neither anaesthetic nor analgesia is generally used. In addition, there are a number of health and welfare problems that have been associated with tail docking in some dogs.
- This issue of tail docking of puppies was given extremely careful consideration when the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Bill was making its way through Parliament. An amendment to exempt working dogs from the tail docking ban was considered and debated by the Environment and Rural Development Committee on 22 March 2006 and was defeated by 8 votes to 1. At the Stage 3 debate on 31 May 2006 another amendment moved by Fergus Ewing which would have exempted tail docking for working dogs was debated and defeated by 89 votes to 31. Parliament opted for a total ban on tail docking in the full knowledge that this position was different to other parts of the UK.
- The Stage 1 report from the ERO Committee concluded that making an exception for working dogs to a general ban on tail docking would be difficult to enforce and could create a loophole which would allow non-working dogs of traditionally working breeds to continue to have their tails docked. The Government at that time accepted this recommendation and the docking of all dogs' tails was prohibited in Scotland in April 2007
- When the legislation on tail docking was passed in Scotland, the Scottish Government made a commitment to review it should there be evidence that tail injuries in working dogs had increased.
- Three research studies into tail injuries in dogs have been undertaken since then:
 - Risk Factors for Tail Injuries in Dogs in GB by the Royal Veterinary College and Bristol University
 - A study by Airlie Bruce Jones on tail injuries in working dogs based on responses from gun dog owners.
 - A study by John Houlton on types and causes of injuries to working dogs published in March 2008.

- This research did not specifically examine the position of working dogs in Scotland.
- The Scottish Government commissioned a further research project, from the University of Glasgow, to look at the incidence of tail injuries in working dogs in Scotland, specifically spaniels, hunt point retrievers and terriers. This research commenced in June 2011 and has now been completed. We expect to receive the final report and for papers reporting the findings to be published in peer-reviewed scientific journals in the near future
- The SGA have been closely involved in this research project and have been members of the steering committee, which also included representatives of other field sports organisations and veterinary bodies.

Lines to take

- The University of Glasgow study should provide clear evidence regarding the impact of the ban on tail docking on working dogs in Scotland and should therefore enable an objective review of the current legislation.
- It would not be appropriate to propose changes to the current legislation until the research has been peer reviewed and published.

Burns PD (Phil)

From: [redacted]
Sent: 27 February 2013 12:08
To: Minister for Environment and Climate Change
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Tail Docking Update

[redacted]

As requested by [redacted] in Wildlife Management, I attach a briefing note on tail docking for the Minister.



Tail Docking
Update.docx

If more information is required, please contact [redacted]

Regards
[redacted]

[redacted]
Animal Welfare Policy
Directorate for Agriculture, Food and Rural Communities
The Scottish Government
P Spur
Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh
EH11 3DX
[redacted]

TAIL DOCKING OF DOGS

- Tail docking has been prohibited in Scotland since April 2007, including tail docking of working dogs. This decision was not taken lightly and has been the subject of considerable consultation.
- The issue is both controversial and difficult, with strong views held by those on both sides of the argument. The Scottish Government agreed that if evidence came to light that suggested the ban compromised the welfare of dogs then we would review the position.
- The Scottish Government helped fund research by the University of Bristol and the Royal Veterinary College on the issue of tail injuries in working dogs which was conducted during 2008/2009, and published in 2010.
- The research did not provide sufficient information about tail injuries in working dogs in Scotland to justify a change in present policy.
- In 2011, the Scottish Government commissioned a further research project, from the University of Glasgow, to look at the incidence of tail injuries in working dogs in Scotland, specifically spaniels, hunt point retrievers and terriers. The University of Glasgow study should provide clear evidence regarding the impact of the ban on tail docking on working dogs in Scotland and should therefore enable an objective review of the current legislation.
- This research commenced in June 2011 and has now been completed; however, it would not be appropriate to propose changes to the current legislation until the research has been peer reviewed and published. We have now received for a comment a draft of one of the papers intended for publication and expect to receive the second in the near future.

Animal Health and Welfare Division
February 2013

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Doc 03
attach.

SCOTTISH GAMEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Minister for Environment and Climate Change

Date and Time of Engagement	7 March 2014 Arrive: 10:00am Depart: 11:00am
Where	Tulloch Caledonian Stadium, Inverness, M1 1FF
Key Message	[redacted]
Who	You have been invited by [redacted], Vice Chairman of The Scottish Gamekeepers Association to address their AGM. The group will consist of gamekeepers, stalkers and gillies.
Why	[redacted]
Official Support Required	[redacted]
Media Handling	Non-media event
Dress code	Business suit
Greeting Party and specific meeting point on arrival (if event is at a non SE Building)	You will be met by [redacted], SGA's PR and Communications Officer at the entrance to the Stadium, who will escort you to the Kingsmill Suite where the SGA's Chariman, [redacted], will introduce you to the audience. You will be hosted by [redacted] and the SGA's Committee. In case of late arrival, please contact [redacted] on his mobile: [redacted]
Specific entrance for Ministerial car/parking arrangements	There is a car park immediately in front of the main entrance to the Stadium (a parking space will be cordoned off for the Ministerial car).

Briefing Contents

Annex A	[redacted]
Annex B	[redacted]
Annex C	[redacted]
Annex D	[redacted]
Annex E	[redacted]
Annex F	[redacted]
Annex G	[redacted]
Annex H	[redacted]
Annex I	[redacted]
Annex J	TAIL DOCKING
Annex K	[redacted]

SCOTTISH GAMEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TAIL DOCKING

Lines to take

- The issue is both controversial and difficult, with strong views being held by those on both sides of the argument. The Scottish Government agreed that if evidence came to light that suggested the ban compromised the welfare of dogs then we would review the position.
- The research project was completed in 2013 and papers have been submitted by the researchers for peer review and publication in the Veterinary Record. Publication is expected early in 2014.

Background

Tail docking, including the tail docking of working dogs has been prohibited in Scotland since April 2007. This decision was not taken lightly and was the subject of considerable consultation.

The Scottish Government helped fund research on tail injuries in working dogs by the University of Bristol and the Royal Veterinary College. The research was conducted during 2008/2009, and published in 2010. The results however, did not provide sufficient information on tail injuries in working dogs in Scotland to justify a change in present policy.

In 2011, we commissioned a further research project from the University of Glasgow into the incidence of tail injuries in Scotland's working dogs, specifically spaniels, hunt point retrievers and terriers. This research should provide further evidence regarding the impact of the ban on tail docking on working dogs in Scotland, and should enable an objective review of the current legislation.

The research project was completed in 2013 and papers have been submitted by the researchers for peer review and publication in the Veterinary Record. Publication is expected early in 2014.

[redacted]
Wildlife & Protected Areas
Natural Resources Division
[redacted]
3 March 2014

A7976262

SCOTTISH GAMEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TAIL DOCKING - SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

Tail docking of all dogs was banned in Scotland in 2007. It is also banned in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, but exemptions are allowed for working dogs of various breeds. This was controversial at the time and field sports interests in Scotland have continued to campaign for an exemption for dogs used for shooting or pest control in Scotland. In response to their concerns we commissioned a research project into tail injuries in working dogs in Scotland by Glasgow University, with a steering group that included those in favour of docking (SGA, BASC, SCA) and those against (BVA, RCVS, BSAVA.) We expect the research to be published in the Veterinary Record in the next few weeks but do not have a precise date yet.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The main part of the research was a survey of over 1000 owners of working dogs in Scotland that asked them to report injuries that had been caused in the 2010/11 shooting season. A second part investigated records of treatments of tail injuries at veterinary practices across Scotland, although this was only able to collect information on working dog breeds, not necessarily dogs that had actually been used for working. A third part was to have been a survey of a group of dogs recording injuries as they happened, but too few owners volunteered for this part of the work to produce meaningful results.

The two research papers should be published in the Veterinary Record in the next few weeks. The main findings likely to be quoted are that over 50% of undocked working spaniels were reported to have suffered a tail injury of some sort and that docking Hunt Point Retrievers (HPR) and spaniels by one third would significantly decrease the risk of tail injury sustained while working in these breeds. The number of puppies that would need to be docked to prevent one tail injury in these breeds was estimated to be somewhere between two and 18 dogs, depending on the number of puppies from a litter that go on to be used for shooting.

A possible criticism of the research is that the survey was of necessity promoted by the field sports organisations who were campaigning for a change in the legislation, which may have produced a bias towards reporting injuries. This was partly addressed by a later survey of a smaller group of gundog owners who had not participated in the original survey. This produced very similar results to the original survey.

STAKEHOLDER VIEWS

A possible change in the legislation would be welcomed by SGA, SCA, and BASC.

RCVS, BVA, BSAVA and animal welfare groups such as SSPCA, Dogs Trust and Onekind are officially opposed to tail docking at present so will need to consider the full research in detail when it is published before reaching a formal position.

Andrew Voas, [Exct. redacted] 6 March 2014

Burns PD (Phil)

From: [redacted]
Sent: 08 December 2014 11:00
To: [redacted]
Subject: FW: Tail Docking Submission - 03 July 2014

[redacted]

Scottish Government
Rural and Environment Directorate
Animal Health and Welfare Division
P Spur
Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh
EH11 3XD

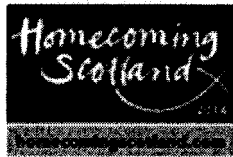
[redacted]



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[redacted]

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From: [redacted]
Sent: 03 July 2014 09:56)(')
To: cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment
Cc: DG Enterprise, Environment & Innovation; Minister for Environment and Climate Change; Pryce JM (Jonathan); Voas S (Sheila); [redacted]; Voas AP (Andrew); [redacted]
Subject: Tail Docking Submission - 03 July 2014

Good morning,

Please see attached submission on Tail Docking of dogs.

Kind Regards,

[redacted]



Tail Docking
Submission - 03 .

Animal Welfare Policy Officer - Saughton House
AHW - Animal Welfare
Saughton House,
Broomhouse Drive,
EDINBURGH,
EH113XD

[redacted]

From: [redacted]

Animal Welfare
3 July 2014

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment.

CHANGING THE CURRENT LEGISLATION ON TAIL DOCKING OF DOGS IN SCOTLAND

Purpose

To provide a summary of the views from key stakeholders on recently published Glasgow University research into tail injuries and how this has affected their opinions on a potential exemption to the current ban on tail docking for working dogs. To invite you to consider the next steps.

Priority

1. Routine

Background

2. You met with [redacted] (Animal Welfare Team Leader) and Andrew Voas (Veterinary Adviser) on 12 March. It was agreed that once the Glasgow research on tail injuries had been published, key stakeholder views were to be collated and considered and you would make a decision on whether a review of the legislation is required.

3. The Glasgow research has been completed and two papers were published in the Veterinary Record on 4 April (abstracts at Annex 1). The research suggests the likelihood of tail injury in working Spaniel and Hunt Point Retriever breeds could be significantly reduced if their tails are docked by one third as puppies.

Stakeholder views

4. A series of informal stakeholder meetings with SG officials and Glasgow researchers were held to discuss views on the research and on the potential merit of a change to the current legislation. A deadline of 23 May was set for formal views to be submitted. Views have been received from the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC), Scottish Gamekeepers' Association, Scottish Association for Country Sports (SACS), Scottish Countryside Alliance, the Kennel Club, the Scottish Kennel Club, the League Against Cruel Sports, One Kind, Dogs Trust, the British Veterinary Association (BVA), the BVA Animal Welfare Foundation, the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) and the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA). These views have been summarised in Annex 2 - full responses can be supplied if required.

5. Overall there has been little change in the established positions of the interested organisations, if anything the opposing views seem to have been reinforced. Those organisations and individuals previously in favour of allowing tail docking of working dogs feel the research provides the evidence needed for a change in the legislation, whereas those previously in favour of a complete ban remain opposed.

6. The underlying position of those opposed seems to be that it is not ethically justified to balance a definite injury for many animals against the possibility of avoiding a future injury associated with a particular activity in a smaller number of animals. They argue that the way in which dogs are worked should be adjusted to reduce injury rather than the natural anatomy of the dog. Although some concerns about the validity of the research findings were raised, further work to provide more information on the types of injuries in working dogs or the pain associated with docking is unlikely to change their fundamental ethical position.

7. [redacted]

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information	
			Portfolio Interest	General Awareness
Minister for the Environment				X
DG Rural Affairs, Environment and Services			X	
Jonathan Pryce			X	
Sheila Voas				X
[redacted]				X
Andrew Voas				X
[redacted]				X
[redacted]				X
[redacted]				X
[redacted]				X
[redacted]				X
Comms Greener				X
[redacted]				X

Annex 1- Glasgow University Research

Paper 1: Survey of tail injuries sustained by working gundogs and terriers in Scotland

Abstract

Working dog owners in Scotland were invited to take part in an internet survey regarding the 2010/2011 shooting season, which was designed to estimate the prevalence of tail injuries; assess the risk of tail injuries in docked and undocked working dogs; and identify risk factors for owner-reported tail injuries. Of 2860 working dogs, 13.5 per cent sustained at least one tail injury during the 2010/2011 shooting season. Undocked spaniels and hunt point retrievers (HPRs) were at greatest risk of tail injury with 56.6 per cent of undocked spaniels and 38.5 per cent of undocked HPRs sustaining at least one tail injury during the season. There was no statistically significant difference in the risk of tail injury in dogs with tails docked by one-third, half or shorter. To prevent one tail injury in one shooting season, between two and 18 spaniels or HPRs would need to be docked as puppies. The authors believe that this work provides the best available evidence on which to base a consultation for changes to the legislation on tail docking in working dogs in Scotland. Docking the tails of HPRs and spaniels by one-third would significantly decrease the risk of tail injury sustained while working in these breeds.

Paper 2: The prevalence of tail injuries in working and non-working breed dogs visiting veterinary practices in Scotland

Abstract

The aim of this paper was to estimate the prevalence of tail injuries that required veterinary examination in different breeds of dog in Scotland. The study population included all dogs that had visited one of 16 veterinary practices located in Scotland between 2002 and early 2012. The overall prevalence of tail injuries in dogs visiting one of the 16 veterinary practices was 0.59 per cent. The prevalence of tail injuries in dogs of working breeds was estimated to be 0.90 per cent. Working dog breeds that were examined by a veterinary surgeon were at a significantly greater risk of sustaining a tail injury than non-working breeds ($P < 0.001$). To prevent one such tail injury in these working breeds approximately 232 dogs would need to be docked as puppies. To prevent one tail amputation in spaniels, 320 spaniel puppies would need to be docked. Spaniels presented after January 2009 were 2.3 times more likely to have a tail injury than those presented before April 29, 2007 (date of the legislation that banned tail docking in Scotland). Given the results of this and the accompanying paper it may be appropriate to consider changes to the current legislation for specific breeds of working dogs.

Annex 2 - Summary of views from key stakeholders

Field sports stakeholders such as British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC), Scottish Gamekeepers' Association (SGA), Scottish Association for Country Sports (SACS) and Scottish Countryside Alliance (SCA) remain of the opinion that the process of tail docking is less traumatic than having the tail injured and potentially amputated in later life. They would like the legislation changed to allow for Spaniels and Hunt Point Retriever breeds, that will be used for working, to be exempt from the ban. SGA, SACS and SCA also argued that the legislation should be changed to allow working terriers to be docked as well, although the research findings do not support this.

Two breeders organisations (The Kennel Club and the Scottish Kennel Club) responded by stating that they would support a change in legislation to allow for the docking of working Spaniels and Hunt Point Retriever dog breeds. The Kennel Club believes that the recent research papers prove beyond reasonable doubt that dogs involved in working are at significantly greater risk of tail injury.

Animal welfare groups such as the League Against Cruel Sports, One Kind, Dogs Trust and BVA Animal Welfare Foundation remain of the opinion that there should not be any further consideration of an exemption to the tail docking ban for working dogs. Their reasoning was that it was not acceptable on ethical grounds to inflict pain on puppies during the docking procedure regardless of the possibility of future injury. They also felt the research was not robust enough, one of the reasons being that there was no comparison made between tail injuries in working dogs that already had docked tails.

The British Veterinary Association (BVA) and the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) made a joint response to the research. Both organisations are of the opinion that the Glasgow research does not present any reason to change current legislation. They feel that the response rate in the study of owners was low and the study suffers from a small number of participating veterinary practices. They are also of the opinion that exemptions to the ban in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are hard to enforce and, as a result, some dogs are being docked for purely cosmetic reasons. However, we received an unofficial response by one member of the BVA in support of an exemption to the ban for certain working breeds and we are aware that there remain a number of practising vets who are supportive of docking for certain working dog breeds, particularly those who are directly involved in field sports themselves.

The Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA) are not completely opposed to an exemption on docking for some working breeds but would like more research to be carried out. The SSPCA feels the study was inconclusive and the evidence not solid enough to justify a complete rethink of the current legislation but remain open minded to the idea. Interestingly, we received two unofficial responses from SSPCA directors; one was *for* an exemption being made for working breeds and the other was *against* any change to existing legislation.

[3 pages redacted]