

**Burns PD (Phil)**

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From: [redacted] on behalf of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment  
02 February 2016 15:14  
Sent: Burns PD (Phil); Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment Minister  
for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform; DG Enterprise, Environment &  
Innovation; Pryce JM (Jonathan); Voas S (Sheila); [redacted]; Voas AP (Andrew);  
Cc: [redacted] Communications Greener  
RE: Consultation - Tail Docking of Working Spaniels and Hunt Point retrievers

Subject:

Hi Phil

Thanks for this - Mr Lochhead is content with the attached documents for public consultation.

Kind regards,

[redacted]

Deputy Private Secretary to Richard Lochhead MSP | Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food & Environment |  
Scottish Government | 2N:08, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | [redacted]

From: Burns PD (Phil)

Sent: 25 January 2016 16:53

To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment

Cc: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform; DG Enterprise, Environment & Innovation; Pryce JM  
(Jonathan); Voas S (Sheila); [redacted]; Voas AP (Andrew); [redacted] Communications Greener

Subject: RE: Consultation - Tail Docking of Working Spaniels and Hunt Point retrievers

[redacted]

Thanks for your e-mail with the Cabinet Secretary's changes. These have been made to the attached documents.  
I have also tidied up a couple of typos from the earlier version.

One slightly more substantive change to the earlier version has been made. That relates to the URL where the  
research studies will be made available to those interested in the consultation. These will be hosted on the webpage  
for the consultation itself.

**I would be grateful if the attached documents could be approved for public consultation.**

Phil

« File: Consultation document.docx » « File: Consultation Questionnaire.docx » « File: Letter for  
consultation.docx » « File: RIF form.docx »

Phil Burns  
AFRC - Animal Health & Welfare  
P Spur  
Saughton House  
Broomhouse Drive

Edinburgh  
EH11 3XD

[redacted]

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**From:** [redacted] **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment

**Sent:** 25 January 2016 15:22

**To:** Burns PD (Phil); Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment

**Cc:** Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform; DG Enterprise, Environment & Innovation; Pryce JM (Jonathan); Voas S (Sheila); [redacted] Voas AP (Andrew) [redacted] Communications Greener

**Subject:** RE: Consultation - Tail Docking of Working Spaniels and Hunt Point retrievers

Phil

Thanks you for this consultation document. Mr Lochhead has had a quick look over [redacted]

Once done, can you send back a clean version for final sign-off please

Thanks

[redacted]

Private Secretary to Richard Lochhead MSP

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment

[redacted]

[redacted]

**From:** Burns PD (Phil)

**Sent:** 15 January 2016 10:47

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment

**Cc:** Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform; DG Enterprise, Environment & Innovation; Pryce JM (Jonathan); Voas S (Sheila); [redacted]; Voas AP (Andrew); [redacted]

Communications Greener

**Subject:** Consultation - Tail Docking of Working Spaniels and Hunt Point retrievers

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment

## **Purpose**

To seek your approval to issue the attached public consultation on 'Proposal to permit tail docking of working Spaniels and Hunt Point Retrievers'. The decision to consult was publicised by a Scottish Government news release on 10 December 2015.

## **Priority**

**URGENT** - preparations are being put in place to launch the public consultation on 1 February 2016, or as soon as possible thereafter. Early clearance would be greatly appreciated to aim for publication on 1 February 2016.

## **Background**

On 10 December 2015 you wrote to the Convener of the Rural Affairs and Climate Change Committee ("RACCE") to inform him that the Scottish Government would consult on a tightly defined exemption to the ban on tail docking for working Spaniel and Hunt Point Retriever puppies only. That letter came following correspondence between you and the RACCE Convener on 24 June, 27 August, 26 October and 4 November 2015; the last of which confirmed RACCE support for consultation on a tightly defined exemption to the tail docking ban.

After much public debate, tail docking of all dogs was banned in Scotland in 2007 under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006. At that time, the Scottish Government stated that if in future the ban compromised the overall welfare of working dogs then it would review the position.

The Scottish Government commissioned, in 2011, research from the University of Glasgow on the incidence of tail injuries to working dogs. One of the research projects calculated that in one shooting season 57% of undocked spaniels and 39% of hunt point retrievers experience a tail injury of some sort; and that docking their tails by one third could significantly reduce the risk of injury.

This consultation is designed to ask interested parties if there is support for either a tightly defined exemption or a continuation of the current ban on tail docking.

## **Attachments**

The proposed consultation pack is attached, including:

- Covering letter
- Consultation document
- Respondent information form
- Consultation questionnaire

## **Recommendation**

**You are recommended to:**

- **approve the attached documents for public consultation.**

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Phil Bums  
AFRC -Animal Health & Welfare  
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Saughton House  
Broomhouse Drive  
Edinburgh  
EH113XD

[redacted]

Doc 03

## Burns PD (Phil)

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**From:** [redacted]  
**Sent:** 08 February 2016 11:18  
**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment; Burns PD (Phil)  
**Cc:** Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform; DG Enterprise, Environment & Innovation; Pryce JM (Jonathan); Voas S (Sheila); [redacted] Voas AP (Andrew); [redacted]  
News release to clear - Consultation - Tail Docking of Working Spaniels and Hunt Point retrievers - due cop Tuesday  
**Subject:**

Hi [redacted],

We've prepared the following news release to issue on Wednesday about the tail docking consultation.

Grateful for Cab Sec clearance by cop Tuesday.

Thanks,

[redacted]

February 10, 2016

## **Tail docking consultation**

### **Views sought on possible exemption for working dogs.**

A consultation on whether to introduce a tightly-defined exemption to Scotland's dog tail docking ban has been launched today.

Views are being sought on a possible change to allow vets to dock the tails of working Spaniel and Hunt Point Retriever puppies, by up to a third of their length, to reduce the risk of more serious injury later in life.

Docking dogs' tails was completely outlawed in Scotland in 2007, although exemptions exist in other parts of the UK.

Rural Affairs Secretary Richard Lochhead said:

"Scotland is a nation of dog-lovers with some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world.

"Protecting dogs from avoidable harm and suffering is the whole reason Scotland banned tail docking in the first place. But since then it has been argued that an exemption for specific breeds could help reduce the risk of injury to working dogs.

"This issue has clearly divided opinion which is why it is only right and proper that the Scottish Government formally consults on such an exemption and how it might work in practice.

"Specifically, we are seeking views about a very tightly-defined exemption for Spaniels and Hunt Point Retrievers as well as further potential restrictions such as whether docking should be limited to the top third of the tail, or whether the procedure should only be carried out by specially approved veterinary surgeons.

"The consultation will therefore give everyone a chance to have their say and help inform us the best way to take this issue forward - and I urge everyone with an interest to respond before the consultation closes on 3 May 2016."

#### Background

Link to consultation here <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/animal-welfare/proposal-to-permit-tail-docking>

Currently the docking of any dog's tail is banned in Scotland. Other parts of the UK have exemptions to their bans, allowing certain breeds of working dogs to be docked. Veterinary surgeons may, of course, amputate part of an animal's tail in the course of medical treatment.

Research commissioned from Glasgow University suggested that docking the tails of some breeds of working dog by a third while they are puppies could significantly decrease their risk of injury as a working adult.

#### Contact

Catherine Brown: [redacted]

[redacted]

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**From:** [redacted] On Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment  
**Sent:** 02 February 2016 15:14  
**To:** Burns PD (Phil); Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment  
**Cc:** Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform; DG Enterprise, Environment & Innovation; Pryce JM (Jonathan); Voas S (Sheila); [redacted]; Voas AR (Andrew); [redacted] Communications Greener  
**Subject:** RE: Consultation - Tail Docking of Working Spaniels and Hunt Point Retrievers

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Deputy Private Secretary to Richard Lochhead MSP | Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food & Environment | Scottish Government | 2N:08, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | [redacted]

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**Sent:** 25 January 2016 16:53  
**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment  
**Cc:** Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform; DG Enterprise, Environment & Innovation; Pryce JM (Jonathan); Voas S (Sheila); [redacted]; Voas AR (Andrew); [redacted]

Kennedy P (Pam); Beale G (Graeme); Brown J (Judith); Lawson A (Angela); Brown C (catherine); Stanley C (Claire);  
Communications Greener

**Subject:** RE: Consultation - Tail Docking of Working Spaniels and Hunt Point retrievers

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Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment

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