



Media release

Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
The Honourable Desley Boyle

Amstaffs cleared for good: Minister

A legal safety net has been thrown over much-loved American Staffordshire terriers with the Bligh Government today amending legislation to give owners of these pets peace-of-mind.

Local Government Minister Desley Boyle explained the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* has been amended to clarify that Amstaffs are not “restricted dogs”.

This follows a Supreme Court case in April this year, *Chivers v. Gold Coast City Council*, which ruled the Amstaff involved was the same as a restricted pit bull.

Ms Boyle said while it was never the State’s intention for Amstaffs to be classified as restricted dogs, the Court’s determination meant the amendment was necessary.

“I am very pleased to see the amendment passed through Parliament which will end any confusion among pet owners,” Ms Boyle said.

“This will certainly be a relief to people who own Amstaffs and especially those on the Gold Coast.”

There are an estimated 4000 Amstaffs in Queensland and some 230 on the Gold Coast.

The legislative amendment expands the provisions relating to identification so that vets may issue certification as evidence of any breed of dog, not just restricted dogs which they could only do previously.

As well, pedigree certificates issued by the Australian National Kennel Council and any of its member bodies such as Dogs Queensland will also be accepted as evidence of a dog’s breed.

Ms Boyle said the amendment was modelled on the Commonwealth Government’s veterinary certification system used in enforcing importation prohibitions on certain breeds.

“The amendment, it is important to spell out, will not compromise community safety as owners of all dogs, including Amstaff owners, will still be held accountable for the behaviour of their dogs and face the full weight of the law if their dogs behave badly,” Ms Boyle said.

In Queensland any dog who bites a person can face fines of up to \$30,000 under the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* and the offending dog can be seized by a Council and declared as dangerous.

Ms Boyle said dogs who caused fear were also not immune, with owners liable to fines of up to \$2,000 and Councils able to declare these offending animal as menacing.

Special provisions apply to animals that are declared by Councils as dangerous or menacing, such as muzzling in public, fencing and kennel requirements.

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