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Response due	

Hon Ian Hunter MP
Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation
GPO Box 1047,
Adelaide SA 5001

12th August, 2014

Dear Minister Hunter

Re: Future of the Dog and Cat Management Board (DCMB)

I write to you following the recent announcement by Premier Weatherill of the proposed abolition of all government boards and committees.

As a major stakeholder, RSPCA South Australia believes that the DCMB has and will continue to play a vital role in providing timely and well considered advice on current and emerging dog and cat management issues. In addition,

Through its broad representative membership, including companion animal breeding, veterinary, research, public health and regulatory expertise, the DCMB collectively provides a very effective advisory function. Companion animal issues affect many people in the community, given that approximately 67% of households care for at least one companion animal. In addition, these issues can have wide ranging effects including public health and safety as well as environmental impact and animal welfare concerns.

Based on the achievements of the DCMB, it is clear that they have performed both effectively and efficiently in so many areas. The Board has identified new and emerging issues, supported relevant research and provided strategic direction as well as effective communication with the general public.

DCMB receives funds from local government authorities, which in turn is derived from dog registrations, thus minimizing the financial commitment from government. This is unique and as the Board provides advice and information materials that can be utilised by the community, companion animal businesses, animal advocacy groups and local government, this achieves both efficiency and consistency.

Given the government's current commitment to introduce regulations for control companion animal breeding following the Report of the Select Committee for Dogs and Cats as Companion Animals in July last year, it would be a retrograde step to dismantle the DCMB. This issue alone will attract significant public and media attention.

In addition, the DCMB serves a vital role with regard to other significant and controversial issues such as dog attacks and cat management, with both emerging as an increasingly urgent and important issue.

RSPCA South Australia firmly believes this State government will benefit greatly from the depth of experience and expertise the DCMB offers, to achieve sound decisions and develop progressive policies and strategies. A significant benefit of maintaining a stable board with consistent membership and good leadership is that

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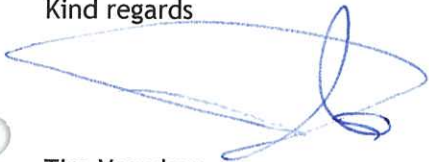
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goodwill and trust develops to enable delivery of sound, well based and practical advice. The contribution of all major stakeholders through the DCMB, provides an invaluable mechanism that allows consideration and therefore resolution of all potential conflicts and challenges. This could not be achieved through either an ad hoc committee or within government advisory mechanisms.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please don't hesitate to contact me directly.

Kind regards



Tim Vasudeva
Chief Executive Officer
RSPCA South Australia