



New South Wales
Department of Local Government



Amendments to the NSW Companion Animals Act 1998

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The Companion Animals Act 1998

- Replaced Dog Act 1966
- Commenced on 1 July 1999
- Registration fees set by Regulation
- Cats recognised legally for the first time
- Two step process - Compulsory microchipping and lifetime registration

The Companion Animals Act 1998

- Provides a framework for identification and registration of companion animals in NSW
- Provides for the duties and responsibilities of companion animal owners, and councils
- Principle objective is to provide for the effective and responsible care and management of companion animals



The Act review

- Reviewed after 5 years of operation
- Two rounds of public consultation
- Report to Parliament
- Majority of amendments commenced in January 2006

Act amendments

- Increased fixed and court imposed penalties for breaches of the Act
- Offence to breed, sell, acquire or give away a dog of restricted breed.
- A requirement for council officers to scan animals and notify owners if a pet has been killed as a result of being hit by a vehicle
- Increased powers for councils to seize dangerous and restricted dogs and
- Increased control provisions for owners of dangerous and restricted dogs – including a prescribed enclosure and specially marked collars

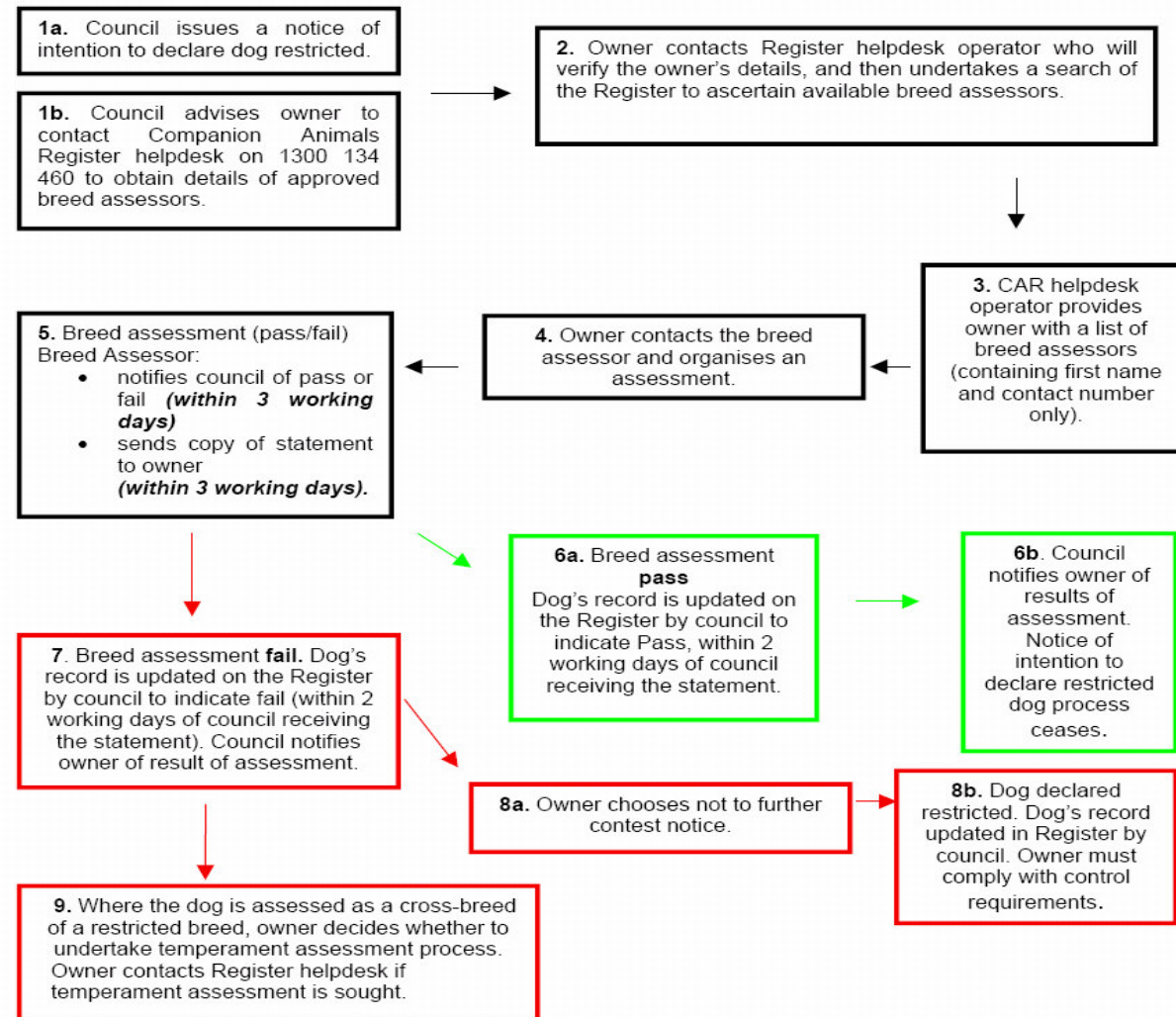
Division 6 - restricted dogs

- Commenced 28 April 2006
- Councils now have the power to declare a dog to be a restricted breed
- Breed and temperament assessments for dogs that are subject to notice of intention to declare restricted
- Appeal prior to declaration but no appeal process once dog is declared restricted.

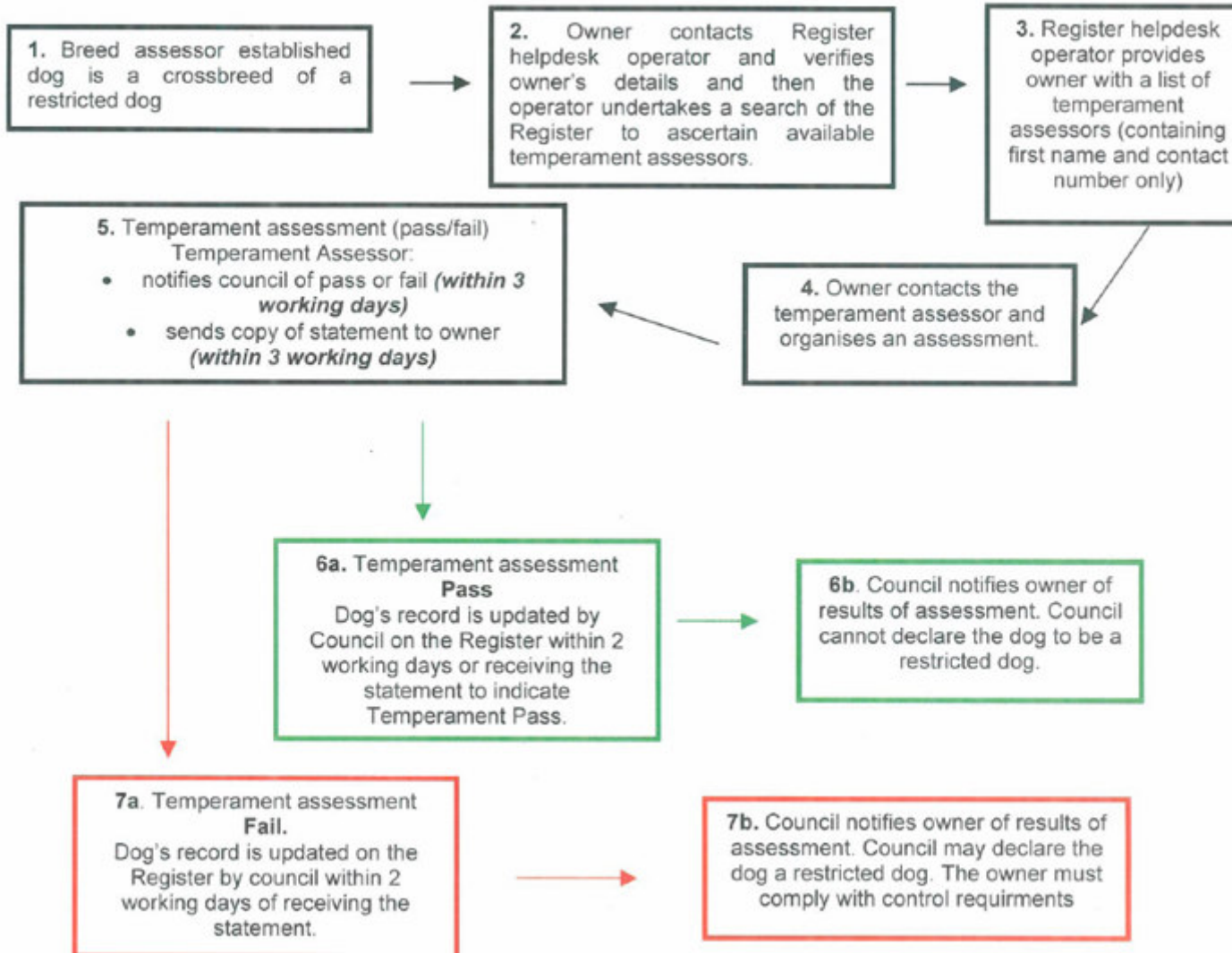
Breed Assessment

- **Breed Assessment**
 - Government has the commitment of Dogs NSW (formerly the Royal New South Wales Canine Council), as experts in dog breeding and identification
 - Approved assessors conduct breed identification assessments of dogs that are subject to a notice of intention under Division 6 of the Act.

1.3 Outline of Breed Assessment Process



1.4 Outline of Temperament Assessment Process



Temperament Assessment

- **Temperament Assessment**
 - Protocol developed in consultation with leading animal behaviourists and animal welfare organisations
 - Designed to provide a temperament assessor with an informed judgment about the behaviour of a dog against straight forward criteria
 - Assessor determines whether or not a dog is likely, without provocation, to attack or bite another person or animal.

Results, so far...

- Since April 28, 2006:
 - Over 100 breed assessments have taken place
 - Several have resulted in dogs being assessed as purebred Pitbull terriers.
 - A number of breed assessment outcomes have indicated the dog is a cross breed of restricted dog thus requiring a temperament assessment.
 - To the Department's knowledge at least 8 of those have failed and subsequently, the dogs have been declared restricted.



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Current Provisions for Dangerous Dogs (section 51)

- Dog must be desexed within 28 days of declaration
- Must not be in control of person under the age of 18
- Must be kept in a prescribed enclosure
- One or more signs on boundaries of property warning that dangerous dog on premises
- Dog must be muzzled in public at all times and when away from property where ordinarily kept
- Must be on a leash in public at all times

There are also various provisions where the owner must inform council of any changes to the dogs information or whereabouts (within 24hrs) which is over and above the normal 14 period for any other companion animals.



Dangerous Dog Order

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So your pet
can dial home.

Step 3 of 3 - Notification Details

Microchip Number 985 [REDACTED]

Issue Dangerous Dog Order:

Order Issue Date: 04 July 2006

Court Order? YES NO

Council Making Order: [Please Select]...

Control Order
[Please Select]...

Notes
Test run for presentation purposes

--OR--

Revoke Dangerous Dog Order:

Order Revoke Date: [] July 2006

Court Order Revoked? YES NO

Council Revoking [Please Select]...



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So your pet
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Step 3 of 3 - Notification Details

Microchip Number 9851 [REDACTED]

Issue Dangerous Dog Order:

Order Issue Date: 04 July 2006

Court Order? YES NO

Council Making Order: [Please Select]...

Control Order
[Please Select]...

Notes
[Please Select]...
Order Dog to be desexed
behavioural/socialisation/training of dog
Both

--OR--

Revoke Dangerous Dog Order:

Order Revoke Date: [] July 2006

Court Order Revoked? YES NO

Council Revoking Order: [Please Select]...



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So your pet
can dial home.

Summary

Animal Details

Animal Status:	Home
Name:	Truvi
Microchip Number:	985 [REDACTED]
Authorised Identifier number:	[REDACTED]
Date of Implantation:	22 January 2002
Identification Date:	22 January 2002
Species:	Dog
Breed:	Weimaraner / Unknown cross
Birthdate:	09 December 2001
Gender:	Female
Desexed:	Yes
Colour:	Grey & White
Identifying Marks:	White Chest & pale eyes - desexed. this is a test entry
Additional Comments	This dog is crazy and kills chickens
Out of Date?	Yes



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Notification of Dangerous Dog - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by -- DLG --

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So your pet
can dial home.

Summary

Address Usually Kept

Address: [REDACTED]
Suburb/Town: NOWRA HILL
State: NSW
Postcode: 2540

Secondary Address

Address:
Suburb/Town:
State:
Postcode:

Dangerous Animal Details

**Please note all new order details at bottom of summary

Order Date	Council Issued Order	Court Order?	Revoked Order?	Notes	Status
04 July 2006	Shoalhaven City Council	No	No		Revoked

Owner Details

Title: Ms

Community Education

- “Safe Pets out There” or “SPOT” project
- A joint project between the Australian Companion Animal Council, The Australian Veterinary Association, Delta Society Australia, RSPCA NSW and the Animal Welfare League NSW.
- Objective - “improve the extent to which the community expectations of pet ownership are met through the education of young children”.

SPOT Program

- Cover four main components:
 - Pets in the Community
 - Safe behaviour around dogs
 - Basic care of pets – health & welfare
 - Kindness and cruelty



SPOT Program

- Funded by Companion Animals Fund for 3 years
- Classroom presenters will include trained educators, salaried staff, animal control officers, vets, veterinary nurses and volunteers.
- Will be subject to continuous and formal evaluation
- The Department is also developing new and updated brochures.

Further Act amendments?

Proposed amendments under consideration:

- Broadening of dangerous dog category
- All dogs required to to be microchipped
- Increased seizure powers for officers
- Immediate destruction of restricted and declared dangerous dogs that reoffend

The future for NSW?

- Promote the positive aspects of the Act
- Increase education **and compliance**
- Assist councils to be proactive in their communities
- Continue to support breed and animal rescue organisations and,
- Continue to strive for legislative changes that improves the lives of our pets and the community