

14<sup>th</sup> July, 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Maree Anderson. I have been involved in training and showing Rottweilers and German Shepherds for over 25 years. I have been training my dogs with Huon Valley for 3 years. During this time, I have partaken in several private lessons and have attended group classes consistently. I have trained 2 of my own dogs during this time and have found success with using balanced training methods.

I am strongly against the amendment to section 8(2) of the act which will specifically ban the use of pronged (or pinch) collars and make it an animal cruelty offence to use one.

The Pinch Collar is specifically designed to distribute pressure evenly around the neck of a dog and to prevent neck and tracheal injuries. For strong, powerful dogs, the amount of safe control that these collars can provide is invaluable.

Pinch collars, when used correctly, are gentle and effective tools for training some dogs. Pinch collars are a lifesaving tool and leads to better animal welfare outcomes. They can help fix a wide variety of behavioural issues in a short time, especially in cases where positive reinforcement training alone has failed. The reality of the animal world is that positive reinforcement can only bring so much success and most dogs require a different approach.

The proposed banning of pinch collars presents a number of adverse impacts on the community. This ban will limit access to the wider dog training market by limiting the options available to responsible dog owners. The removal of these tools prevents dog owners training in a way that suits them. For many dogs, positive reinforcement only training is not effective, and balanced training is required to correct unwanted and dangerous behaviours.

For dogs and owners who rely on this tool as a training aide to help with these behaviours, a ban will be devastating. The suggested alternative suggested by force free trainers who cannot fix the issue is to medicate or euthanise the dog, which is a poorer outcome leads to a diminished quality of life for dogs whose behaviour can be fixed efficiently with a pinch collar.

It is reasonable to state that the misuse of any dog training tool (flat collar, harness, head halti etc.) can cause injury to an animal. When used correctly then they do not. The same can be said for pinch collars. My understanding is that under the current legislation, an individual can be convicted of animal cruelty for any injury that is caused by the misuse of ANY dog training tool, so the provision to specifically ban pinch collars is unnecessary and will lead to poorer animal outcomes for dogs in Tasmania.

At this point in time, I am unaware of any current or historical investigations by RSPCA Tasmania that have specifically involved the use of pinch collars so do not believe that the use of pinch collars is an animal welfare issue in Tasmania.

When showing Rottweilers and German Shepherds in the 'All Breeds' competition they must always be under control and never show any reactive behaviour towards other breeds. This is a big ask when you consider that all dogs at a competition are entire and by that very nature they can be naturally assertive towards other males.

Here lies the importance of correct training that allows a dog to be comfortable, confident and happy around many other breeds.

When I started showing my young male Rottweiler he was reactive and it was very difficult to walk him in public due to his out of control behaviour around other dogs. After months of struggling to

control my dog to no avail I contacted a local trainer who was able to show me a different approach to training.

My trainer suggested a pinch collar and I am really glad that he did. My trainer was able to show me that when the pinch collar was used correctly they are a gentle and effective tool for training strong powerful dogs. In fact, it has proved to be far gentler and effective than the choker collar that I used previously. Since using the pinch collar, my dog no longer reacts at other dogs and can now be walked regularly at Kingston Beach, Salamanca and other public places safely. He is now able to attend group classes with other dogs and can enjoy life as a dog should. He lives a more fulfilling life and I can say that this is directly attributed to my use of the pinch collar. It is a fantastic tool that has given me and my dog a new found happiness and freedom.

Based on the above, I would request that the amendment to the use and legality of pinch collars be removed as part of the proposed amendments to the Act.

Kind Regards,

Maree Anderson