



Meegan Fitzharris MLA

Member for Yerrabi

Minister for Health and Wellbeing
Minister for Transport and City Services
Minister for Higher Education, Training and Research

Ms Jan Phillips
President
Pets and Positive Ageing Inc.
PO Box 400
CURTIN ACT 2605

Dear Ms Phillips

Thank you for your letter of 3 May 2017 as follow-up to me speaking at the "And my dog comes too...new approaches to living with our pets" session on 26 April 2017. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

I do appreciate the bond between people and their pets and that is why I undertook to consider pets on the Flexible Bus Service. I also note your desire for Transport Canberra to consider allowing pets on all public transport including all bus services and light rail.

I have provided your comments to Transport Canberra staff to bear in mind as they review their operational policies.

The ACT Government is committed to promoting responsible pet ownership as the underlying principle for best-practice management of pets including dogs.

The ACT has among the strongest laws in the country in relation to managing dogs and ensuring that owners of attacking dogs are held responsible. These laws are enforced by trained and skilled Rangers and provide for serious consequences for owners if their dog attacks or harasses another person or animal. However, laws alone cannot prevent dog attacks and a preventative approach is required. Such an approach is provided for in the draft *Animal Welfare and Management Strategy 2017-2022* (the Strategy) which was recently released by the ACT Government and has an underlying theme of responsible pet management.

The Strategy is the broad umbrella under which a range of practical measures will be pursued. As part of this work, the Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) Directorate will be increasing its efforts to educate and inform the public about responsible pet ownership and will also review a number of matters related to animal control, including restraining devices and exercise areas.

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Thank you for raising this matter. I trust the information provided is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Meegan Fitzharris MLA
Minister for Transport and City Services

22 August 2017