

Sunset of the Domestic Animals Regulations, November 2015

Industry & enforcement FAQs

Q. When will the Regulations sunset?

A. The Domestic Animals Regulations 2015 will commence on 26 November 2015. The Domestic Animals Regulations 2005 were due to sunset on the 29 November 2015, and will be revoked in line with the commencement of the new Regulations.

Q. What are the changes?

A. The new Regulations are largely consistent with the previous Regulations but contain minor amendments as follows:

- an amended definition of a microchip 'reader' to reflect current technology;
- removal of the requirement for 'sealed' concrete in dangerous and restricted breed dog enclosures. The requirement for 'sealing' of the concrete is unnecessary in a private residence where the enclosure is only required to house a single dog, unlike in a pound or shelter facility where hygiene is paramount;
- an amendment of the minimum width of dangerous and restricted breed collars. This amendment improves a dog owner's ability to source collars that meet the requirements of the Regulations and improve the fit and comfort of collars for smaller dogs;
- amendment to references to scent trailing hounds registered with the Secretary to reflect machinery of government changes and references to the Game Management Authority;
- inclusion of a prohibition on the movement of a microchip record between microchip registries once a record has been established for an animal. The purpose of this is to prevent a single animal having multiple records on multiple registries. Generally, it is difficult to ensure owners maintain the accuracy of their microchip records, such as updating their address and contact details. Some animals now have records on multiple registries. "Pet address" is a website (www.petaddress.com.au) used by enforcement agencies, rescue groups and shelters to identify which registry a microchip record is held. When searching "Pet address" if a record is held on multiple registries, Pet address will list all registries that the microchip is held on, but gives no indication as to which registry is the most recently updated. Preventing transfer of records between registries will improve the return of lost animals to their owners and, in some cases, reduce the time taken for owners to be notified that their animal is lost;
- amendment to the length of time a record must be kept by a registry. The current Regulations require registries to maintain a record for a maximum of 30 years or the life of the animal, whichever is the "lesser". However, horses can live for more than 30 years, so there is the potential for a registry to remove or archive a record for a horse that is still living. Therefore, the proposed Regulations have been amended to require a record to be kept for the lifetime of the animal or 30 years, whichever is the 'greater';
- prescribing the requirements for proof of change of ownership of an animal on an animal registry record, in cases where ownership is in dispute, to an order of the court of VCAT. Animal registry services requested this amendment; and
- increasing the number of practical hours a dog trainer must complete before being fully qualified, from 25 to 100. This change is in line with current industry practice.

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Q. Was industry consulted?

The department consulted with stakeholders prior to and during the preparation of the new Regulations. Industry consultation was undertaken with animal registry services licensed in Victoria, obedience training organisations approved in Victoria, a selection of local government authorised officers, a selection of microchip implanters, and members of the horse industry involved in horse microchipping.

Q. Where can I get more information?

Refer to the “Matrix of changes” document, found on the DART site (<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/pets/dart>). Contact the DEDJTR Council Liaison Officer on 9217 4294, or email pet.welfare@ecodev.vic.gov.au

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