

From: Rod Matthews [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 8 June 2012 11:51 AM
To: submissions
Subject: Companion dogs

Submission to Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)

in support of

Proposal P1018 Companion Dogs in Outdoor Dining Areas.

As a business owner in the Huon Valley I strongly support **Proposal P1018, Companion Dogs in Outdoor Dining Areas** as I agree that there is a need for consistent nation wide legislation in this matter especially as Tasmania has the highest proportion of dog ownership per household in Australia but the Tasmanian Dog Control Act of 2000 is very restrictive. There are almost 4,000 registered dogs in the Huon Valley alone.

There are many coffee shops and small restaurants, such as my own, in Tasmania which have outdoor dining areas suitable for dogs. The owners of many of these businesses are in favour of allowing dogs into their outdoor dining areas. This is partly because we own and love dogs ourselves and partly because we see dog owners as valuable customers who we do not wish to turn away. In dog friendly states it seems that many cafe and restaurant owners feel that they would go out of business if they had to ban dogs. (See www.doggydining.com.au)

I am also aware that there is a misconception in some sections of the community that allowing dogs in outdoor eating areas will lead to an increase in disease. However, as stated by Dr Scott Weese and Dr Maureen Anderson , Ontario University Veterinary College – Centre for Public Health and Zoonoses, *“In reality simply having a dog in a restaurant should be less risk than having people in a restaurant since people can transmit some infections to each other over short distances by coughing and sneezing. (As long as) people who touch a dog wash their hands before touching food and restaurant staff do not touch dogs.”* This supports the argument that as long as normal hygiene procedures continue to be observed there is no increased risk of disease. According to the **New South Wales Companion Animals Act of 1998** this situation has also been acceptable in New South Wales for the last fourteen years without any noticeable outbreak of disease.

Tasmania also relies heavily on tourism and a large proportion of this market consists of visitors travelling in mobile homes. These visitors often have their dogs with them as part of their family. The introduction of **Proposal P1018** will enable them to eat at local cafes and restaurants with their companion dog and will enhance their holiday experience in Tasmania. It will also benefit local

businesses, such as my own, and encourage tourism as Tasmania becomes known as a dog friendly state.

Your faithfully

Rod Matthews
Petty Sessions Gourmet Cafe



7/6/12