



AVA SUPPORTS REHOMING OF STRAY DOGS

Following reports of the recent case of a jogger who was scratched and bitten by a pack of stray dogs at Punggol Waterway, there are public concerns that all stray dogs that are rounded up are culled. The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA) would like to clarify that AVA does not practice blanket culling. Instead, we allow stray dogs that are suitable for adoption to be re-homed. Those which cannot be re-homed will be humanely euthanized.

Re-homing of stray dogs

2 This year, 30 stray dogs have been re-homed. AVA will continue to work closely with Animal Welfare Groups (AWGs) such as Action for Singapore Dogs (ASD) and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) to re-home suitable stray dogs.

3 Those who wish to re-home the dogs will have to bear the costs of associated with re-homing. These will include licensing, microchipping, and boarding fees (amounting to approximately \$150). The adopters must also sterilize the dogs and ensure that the dogs are kept at the licensed address and not be released back into the environment. Punitive action will be taken against adopters if these dogs are found straying again.

4 Ms Tan Poh Hong, Chief Executive Officer of AVA said, “We recognize that there are animal lovers who are genuinely concerned about the welfare of stray dogs. Those who wish to re-home the stray dogs must be committed to providing them with a permanent home and caring for them responsibly.”

5 Sharing AVA CEO’s views on responsible dog ownership, Mr Ricky Yeo, President of ASD commented, “We are heartened by AVA’s support of re-homing but we would like to emphasise that adoption is a lifetime commitment. Dogs that are adopted should not be released into the streets again.” SPCA’s Executive Director, Ms Corrine Fong, agrees, “The SPCA stands ready to work with AVA on re-homing adoptable stray dogs. Adopters must ensure that the re-homed dogs are licensed, sterilized, vaccinated and microchipped.”

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Managing the stray dog population

6 Strays dogs can pose a threat to public safety especially when they are in a pack. They have been known to chase and even attack both people and animals. The recent Punggol Waterway incident is a case in point.

7 In addition, of greater concern is the possibility of stray dogs spreading rabies in the event of a rabies outbreak in Singapore. Rabies is a disease that can be fatal to both humans and animals. As dogs are highly susceptible to rabies, a large stray dog population can exacerbate the spread of rabies to other animals and humans if they are exposed and bitten by a rabies-infected animal. It is thus important to keep the stray dog population in check.

8 The management of stray animals is an emotive issue. On one hand, we understand and share the concerns of animal lovers who seek to safeguard the welfare of stray animals in Singapore. On the other hand, we must also respect the interests of those who are bothered by stray animals, even though they may not hate animals or condone animal cruelty. Nevertheless, AVA has a duty above all to ensure public safety and public health of our people, even as we strive to do so in a measured and collaborative manner, working with various stakeholders in the community.

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