



# Council of Docked Breeds

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Bill 'carries excess baggage'**

Concerns have been voiced by the Council of Docked Breeds (CDB) over the Protection of Animals (Amendment) Bill, currently before the House of Lords.

The Bill creates new powers for the Ministry of Agriculture to carry out interim care orders on animals kept in commercial premises while the owners await prosecution under the 1911 Protection of Animals Act. It will give very considerable new powers to prosecutors such as the RSPCA.

Speaking at the CDB's Annual General Meeting in Kettering, the organisation's President, Peter Squires, expressed worries about the scope of the new powers of entry which were being offered to non-statutory bodies.

"It is a matter of major concern to us and to a wide range of other interests that any organisation which is not accountable to the public in any way, shape or form should be granted such all-embracing rights of entry to private premises," said Peter Squires. "It is one thing for police officers to be vested with such powers, but quite another for a private animal welfare body to be given the automatic right to enter somebody's business premises."

Mr Squires said that there was no clear definition over what constituted 'commercial premises' under the Bill. "Does it include kennel buildings owned by somebody who possesses a breeder's licence? Does it include the kennels behind a gamekeeper's cottage in which working gundogs are kept? Does it include a Hunt Kennels? The Bill doesn't say, and neither does MAFF."

"We have no objection to the worthy principle of improving the welfare of animals, but unfortunately this Bill carries excess baggage. It needs amending, and time for amendment is running out," said Peter Squires."

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