Dear Graeme,

I am writing to confirm that the Scottish Government intends to take steps to ensure electronic training devices cannot be used to cause pain to animals.

We will consult with animal welfare organisations to develop specific Guidance under Article 38 of the Animal Health and Welfare Scotland Act (2006). This Guidance will be published promptly to allow courts to take it fully into account when considering criminal cases involving those accused of causing unnecessary suffering to animals.

We will not now be pursuing our initial plans to recognise a qualification for trainers wishing to use electronic training collars.

Initial draft guidance has been published and can be found at http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/animal-welfare/AnimalWelfare/companion/electronictrainingaids

We also plan to consult your committee on the wording of the guidance in the near future, after we have considered comments from stakeholders.

Yours

Roseanna Cunningham