

22 March 2019

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

**Local Government Official Information and Meeting Act (LGOIMA) request for information on Brodifacoum poisoning of Flagstaff**

I am writing in response to your LGOIMA request on 21 February 2019 asking for information on the use of Brodifacoum poison on Flagstaff. Please see our response on the specific matters you raised in your email letter below.

**1. Sub-lethal doses**

**Both yourselves and OSPRI mention the lack of danger of secondary poisoning from to dogs and say it is of low risk, that a dog would have to consume 'several' carcasses to be poisoned.**

**But what about sub-lethal doses? What harm can this do?**

Dogs could be harmed by repeated sublethal doses of brodifacoum, which could occur if they consumed several poisoned carcasses. Brodifacoum is slow acting and when poisoning is suspected, dogs should immediately be taken to a vet.

There is some risk that possums which have consumed brodifacoum baits could move out of the operational area before dying.

The possible movement range is variable but, in some cases, may be several kilometres.

Dogs owners should ensure dogs are kept leashed in risk areas.

Despite these potential risks, brodifacoum is widely used for possum control in urban and peri-urban areas in New Zealand, without causing major problems for dog owners who take reasonable precautions.

**Has anyone looked into this?**

Yes.

**Have you considered that in adjacent off-leash areas a dog who uses the area regularly could be exposed to several carcasses and the poison could have a cumulative effect?**

Yes.

**Have you been made aware of travel zones for poisoned animals moving out of the area and where these may end up?**

Yes

**2. Community engagement**

**I would like you to explain what considerations have been made for the many thousands of dog owners in the city.**

The measures we have put in place to ensure dogs will be safe are:

- no bait is being placed within 30m or within sight of tracks
- signage being installed at all known access points will clearly show that dogs should be on lead

Dogs would need to eat multiple carcasses to succumb to poisoning. Brodifacoum is a slow acting poison and an antidote is readily available.

**I would also like to know what 'community engagement', actually entails and what communications with the community have occurred.**

- We have provided information on the DCC website, social media and in our March *FYI Dunedin* publication, and permitted hunters and adjacent landowners have been advised.
- An information brochure has been sent to local vets and will be available in laminated form in dog parks
- An information event was held on 21/02/2019
- OSPRI website has a Dunedin information page
- OSPRI has posted information on Facebook
- Warning and information signs will be installed at all known access points
- Media releases have been sent.

**3. Off-leash dog walking areas**

**I would like you to describe, in detail, which alternative off-lead areas Mr West refers to. The ones I am aware of in no way meet the needs of myself and many others. Are there off-leash bush areas we are unaware of? Do you have a few hidden gems you would like to make available for public use?**

With regards to the concern raised about lack of places that dogs can be walked off leash the following areas (including dog parks) are available to dog owners. There are numerous other alternative off lease areas currently available to dog walkers. Please visit :

<http://www.dunedin.govt.nz/services/dogs/dog-exercise-areas>.

Your concern raised in your letter of 21 February 2019, about offending against the Dog Control Act 1996 if they accessed Flagstaff during the Ospri operation is unfounded because the dog owners are not restricted from accessing Flagstaff but is recommended to keep their dogs on lead in the area until warning signs are officially removed – therefore dog owners will not be breaking the law if they chose to walk their dogs in this area.

With respect to your concern that the DCC does not have regard to the exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners (Section 10(4)(d) of the Dog Control Act), the extensive list of exercise areas detailed in the website link, clearly shows the DCC is complying with this requirement in full.

**4. Knowledge of Brodifacoum**

**Can you please tell me if anyone within the DCC has in depth knowledge/experience in the use of Brodifacoum?**

Yes, we have staff that have knowledge of and are experienced in the use of Brodifacoum.

We have attached a map detailing the area identified for bait and trapping and the area for trapping only.

Yours sincerely



Lauren McDonald  
Governance Support Officer  
**Dunedin City Council**

Encl

