

# the lotus eaters cafe

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A Submission in support of:

PROPOSAL P1018 - COMPANION DOGS IN OUTDOOR DINING AREAS.

To: FOOD STANDARDS AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND (FSANZ)

Tasmania has the highest proportion of dog ownership per household in Australia but the Tasmanian Dog Control Act of 2000 is very restrictive. In the Huon valley there are over 3,700 registered dogs amongst approximately 5,800 households. (Huon Valley Council Records 2011/2012). That is a lot of potential customers who are dog owners.

There is a strong coffee culture in Cygnet and the coffee shops have outdoor dining areas which are suitable for dogs. My coffee shop is one of these. I am very much in favour of allowing dogs into the outdoor dining area at the Lotus Eaters because I see dog owners as valuable customers who I 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. ([www.doggydining.com.au](http://www.doggydining.com.au))

Tourism is a major source of revenue in the region but, according to Tourism Tasmania statistics to 2011, there has recently been a steady decline in visitors to the state. Therefore it is very important that proprietors are able to maximise their customer base and are not forced to turn away a large sector of potential customers. Having a dog friendly environment will facilitate this and lead to increased satisfaction for visitors and residents and increased business for local operators including myself.

In New South Wales dogs have been allowed in outdoor dining areas since 1998 (NSW Companion Animals Act 1998). However there have been no reports of increases in dog borne diseases in the fourteen years since this Act was passed.

I can see no good reason why dogs and their owners should not have the same freedoms in all Australian states and I strongly support Proposal P1018.

Giselle Benton  
Proprietor  
1/6/12

