



DOBERMAN PINSCHER CLUB OF AMERICA

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September 27, 2012

Dr. Gail Golab
American Veterinary Medical Association
1931 North Meham Road, Suite 100
Schaumburg, IL 60173

Via Email: ggolab@avma.org

Re: AVMA Tail Docking Policy

Dear Dr. Golab:

As I am sure you know, the breed standard for the Doberman Pinscher calls for the tails of the puppies of our breed to be docked. The policy position adopted by the DPCA, which we request be adopted by the AVMA, is to support the freedom of Doberman Pinscher breeders and owners to choose to procure the docking of tails to advance the purpose of the breed and breed standard, so long as the procedure is performed by a licensed veterinarian in the state in which the procedure is conducted, or under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian in states which allow that practice.

The docking of the tail of the Doberman Pinscher within mere days of the puppy's whelp is important to enable the dog to perform the function for which Herr Karl Friedrich Louis Dobermann created our great breed. He created the Doberman Pinscher as a personal protection guard dog. From the inception of the breed, the tail has been docked to prevent a determined attacker from being able to grab the dog's tail and attack the dog's human partner. Tail docking is essential to enable the Doberman Pinscher to fulfill its function.

After 150 years of selective breeding, responsible breeders have not factored tail qualities into their breeding decisions because the tails are docked within a few days of whelp. Those few Doberman Pinschers who have tails suffer serious problems as a result. The tails are bare of protective hair, unlike other breeds for which tails are kept intact. Consequently, undocked Doberman Pinschers constantly bang, bump and rub their unprotected, spindly and unfunctional tails against furniture and other objects, causing them to bleed and in some instances to cause fractures.

Last year on the 10th anniversary of 9/11, the DPCA was the prime sponsor of the 10th Anniversary Recognition Ceremony of the Working Dogs of 9/11, held in Jersey City, New Jersey across the Hudson River from Ground Zero. You may be aware that AVMA Immediate Past President Dr. Rene Carlson and AVMA Director Dr. Heather Case attended the ceremony. At its conclusion, a contract drafted by the DPCA was signed by 27 working dog and related organizations, in which the signatories pledged to work cooperatively to provide a steady, greater supply of American-bred dogs for working fields, including search and rescue.

The product of that contract, entitled "The Convention on Cooperation Among America's Working Dog Organizations," is just now beginning to be realized. The 2012 DPCA National Specialty and Convention is about to begin in Ft. Mitchell Kentucky on Monday, October 1, 2012. In connection with it, and in furtherance of the covenant made by the DPCA in drafting and signing the Convention on Cooperation, we are dedicating our annual Breeders Education Seminar to the following topic: "Breeding, Raising and Training a Scent Detection Dog: A View From the Field." We are bringing in numerous outside experts, like Dr. Cynthia Otto from the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine and the newly inaugurated Penn Vet Working Dog Center, to assist our breeders in making informed breeding decisions that will ultimately save lives throughout the country. A Doberman Pinscher with a tail is a hazard to itself and an impediment to first responders in an urban rubble pile.

We understand the importance of the various components that our breed standard call for in the ability of our breed to function as it was originally created, as well as for other working purposes which we have committed our organization to achieve. As in World War II, when the DPCA led the way in providing the dogs who saved hundreds of lives in the South Pacific and are immortalized at the military cemetery on Guam, so now too the DPCA intends to lead. Failure by the AVMA to adopt a reasonable policy statement about tail docking that would knowingly put our effort at risk should not be taken lightly. The DPCA urges the AVMA to adopt a policy position on tail docking that is compatible with our own.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Dr. Anthony DiNardo
Dr. Anthony DiNardo
President
Doberman Pinscher Club of America

AD/jph