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Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

29 June 2021

Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Protecting Tasmanian animals

The Tasmanian Government has been informed that the recent unfortunate death of a dog in Hobart is being investigated by the RSPCA with the support of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment (DPIPWE).

The RSPCA has informed the Government that, while the investigation is ongoing and the autopsy results are being finalised, the initial assessment indicates this is likely to have been a tragic accident. The RSPCA has also informed the Government that during the five RSPCA visits to the property, no offence was detected, there was no evidence of malnutrition or any actual harm being done to the dog and the dog's life was not endangered.

The RSPCA's primary concern was about the dog's housing and tethering.

In November last year I wrote to the Chair of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee, asking that the Committee consider improvements to the Animal Welfare Act to better protect animals, particularly dogs.

The Government is expecting advice from AWAC and DPIPWE in the near future and Tasmanians can be assured we will work with the RSPCA to take action based on the advice of experts.

I have also spoken with the Chair of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee about this incident and AWAC will continue to work closely with the RSPCA.

The Government takes animal welfare seriously, which is why we significantly strengthened the Animal Welfare Act in 2015 and increased penalties across the board and improved the powers of Animal Welfare Officers.

All reports of animal cruelty are taken seriously, and DPIPWE and the RSPCA have formal arrangements in place for responding to and investigating animal cruelty allegations.

If a member of the public sees or witnesses any animal welfare issues, this can be reported to the RSPCA at reportit@rspcatas.org.au or 1300 139 947.