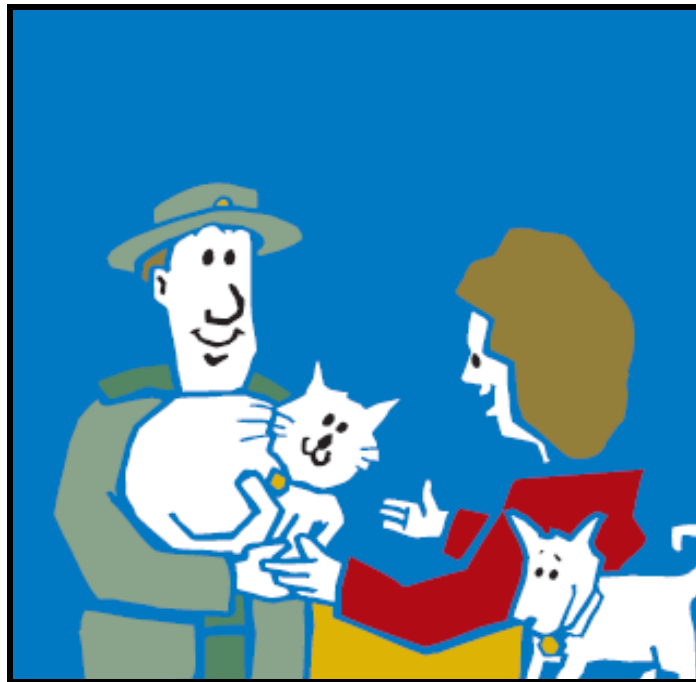


Moirashire

ENRICHING LIFE ON THE MURRAY

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN



Adopted 20 April 2009
Amendments Adopted 17 October 2011



CONTENTS

1.	<u>BACKGROUND</u>	3
1.1	Introduction – Purpose of Domestic Animal Management Plan	3
1.2	Legal Requirements	3
1.3	Process Plan Development	4
1.4	Shire Demographics	4
1.5	Domestic Animal Statistics	4
1.6	Operational Structure	6
1.7	Current programs and services	7
2.	<u>STATEMENT OF PURPOSE</u>	7
3.	<u>PROGRAMS</u>	8
3.1	Training and development of officers	8
3.2	Responsible Pet Ownership	9
3.3	Identification and Registration	10
3.4	Compliance and Enforcement	11
3.5	Domestic Animal Businesses	12
3.6	Declared Dogs	12
4.	<u>PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION</u>	13
4.1	Method of Evaluation	13
4.1.1	Conquest System	13
4.1.2	Lynx System	13
4.1.3	Pound Register	13
4.1.4	Domestic Animal Business Register	13
4.1.5	Declared Dog Register	14
4.2	Key Performance Indicators	14
4.3	Management Plan Review	14
5.	<u>AMENDMENTS</u>	15
5.1	Original Domestic Animal Management Plan Adopted	15
5.2	Amendments	15
5.3	Amended Domestic Animal Management Plan Adopted	15

1. **BACKGROUND**

1.1 **Introduction Purpose of Domestic Animal Management Plan**

Local Government has long been the level of government primarily responsible for domestic animal management issues. In years past, this was through the former Dog Act and in later years, through the *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994* and from 11 December 2007, known as *The Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act).

Animal management service levels, standards and methods of dealing with domestic animals throughout Victoria remain diverse. The Victorian Government considers that, through a formalised approach to domestic animal management planning, services and methods of dealing with pets will improve across the whole local government sector.

The objective of this legislative requirement on Councils to prepare a domestic animal management plan is to increase the relative profile and importance of the domestic animal management function in the local government sector.

1.2 **Legal Requirements**

Section 68A of the Act requires all Councils to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan at four year intervals which must include the following:

- set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council are adequate to give effect to the requirements of the Act and the Domestic Animals Regulations 2005. (Regulations)
- outline training programs for authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of the relevant Act and Regulations
- outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district -
 - to promote and encourage responsible pet ownership of dogs and cats
 - to ensure people comply with the Act, Regulations and any related legislation including Local Laws
 - to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals
 - to address any over population and high euthanasia rates of dogs and cats
 - to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats
 - to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance
 - to effectively identify all dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs and to ensure that said dogs are kept in compliance with the Act and Regulations
- review all existing orders made under this Act and local laws with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats are desirable

MOIRA DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

- provide for review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats within Council's Municipal district that may be necessary
- provide for periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under this plan
- review it's Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and if appropriate, amend the plan
- provide the Secretary of the Department of Primary Industries with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and
- publish an evaluation of it's implementation of the plan in the annual report

1.3 PROCESS PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The plan has been developed in consultation with all members of the Moira Shire Local Law Enforcement Team. Other council's (Wellington, Alpine, Campaspe, Mitchell, and Camperdown Shires) draft plans were examined during the preparation of Moira's Draft Plan.

1.4 SHIRE DEMOGRAPHICS

The Municipality of the Moira Shire is situated in the Northern Country of Victoria. The Murray River forms the northern border of the Municipality, the Goulburn River the western border and the Ovens River the eastern border.

The Moira Shire has an area of 4,058 sq. km, and a population of approximately 29,000 people. The Municipality consists of 26 distinct communities and has five major urban areas being Cobram, Nathalia, Numurkah, Tungamah and Yarrawonga.

The land use is predominately agricultural with cropping and grazing on the flatter plains to the east, and dairying and orchards in the central area with mixed farming and grazing in the western area. There is extensive irrigation along the Murray River and Broken Creek.

Vegetation types depend on location and include irrigated grasslands, dry land grasslands and native forests.

The economy of the region revolves around food processing and manufacturing, tourism, mixed farming, grazing and light industry.

The Municipality generally enjoys a temperate climate with an average mean summer maximum temperature of 32 degrees and average minimum of 13 degrees and an average mean winter maximum temperature of 13 degrees and an average minimum of 3 degrees.

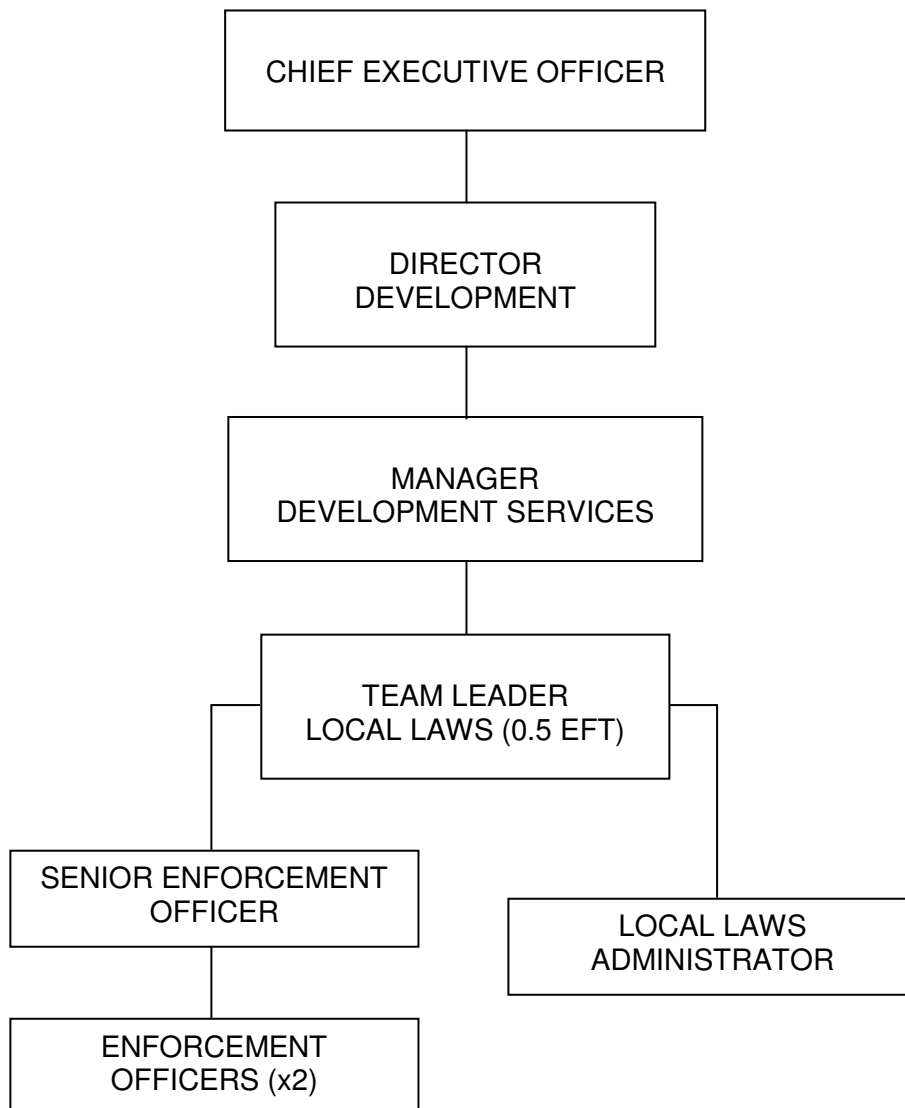
1.5 DOMESTIC ANIMAL STATISTICS

Shire/Council – Key Statistics	Like Councils Average	State Average	Moira Shire 2010
Population	16,000	25,000	29,000
No. of EFT Authorised Officers	3	3	3.5
No. of Registered Dogs	2261	5155	5004
No. of Registered Cats	531	1,706	1,127
No. of Registered Declared Dogs	2	n/a	13
No. of Prosecutions Completed	1	3	1
No. of Successful Prosecutions	1	n/a	1
No. of impoundments (dogs)	116	n/a	294
No. of dogs returned to owners	50	44	120
No. of dogs euthanased	37 (32%)	n/a (33.5%)	174 (59%)
No. of impoundments (cats)	22	n/a	235
No. of cats returned to owner	1 (4.5%)	n/a (10.5%)	5 (2.1%)
No. of cats euthanased	9 (41%)	n/a (74%)	230 (97%)
No of Dogs stolen from pound	n/a	n/a	0

Moira Shire Council's registration record indicates the following compared to the State Average or Like Councils Average:

- Moira Shire has a comparable number of Authorised Officers to the state and like council's average given the differences in population.
- Moira Shire Officers have impounded more than 2.5 times the number of dogs than the Like Councils average and more than 10 times the number of cats than the Like Councils average.

1.6 OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE



1.7 CURRENT SERVICES LEVELS

ACTIVITIES	SERVICE LEVEL
Identification and registration of animals	Ongoing
Door knock campaigns	Annually & if need arises re complaints
Domestic Animal Complaints	Response within 4 hours
Dog attacks	Immediate Response
Dangerous and/or restricted breed dog complaints	Immediate Response
Routine street patrols	Daily (as part of reactive duties)
Pound Management	Open office hours & by appointment
Community Group Seminars: Responsible Pet Ownership	4 per year

Continuous improvement measures implemented have clarified the timing of Council's responsibilities and a calendar of annual activities has been prepared to ensure that any activities undertaken as required by the Domestic Animal Management Plan will be accommodated within the current program of the business unit.

2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The core purpose of the Moira Shire's Animal Management Service is:

- (i) to create an environment where people and pets can peacefully coexist within the community
- (ii) to inform and educate the community about the needs of companion animals and promote responsible pet ownership
- (iii) to ensure that the needs of the wider community are reflected through the administration and enforcement of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, the Regulations and Codes of Practice

3 PROGRAMS

3.1 ANIMAL MANAGEMENT OFFICER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Objective

To ensure that all staff involved in animal management have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work.

Current Activities:

- The Department of Primary Industries training sessions held twice per year at Benalla, Wangaratta, Shepparton or Melbourne depending on availability of offices; and
- Various other seminars throughout the year which will benefit officers i.e. dog attack, DNA sampling courses, dealing with aggressive people etc.

Planned Programs

- It is intended that each Animal management Officer attends relevant courses as required by their performance management appraisals. Officers will share the contents of these courses/seminars in a group meeting and disseminate documentation which will continue to keep all officers abreast of the latest changes and techniques pertaining to their roles.

3.2 ENCOURAGING RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP – COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Objective

To encourage people to manage pets in a way that protects the health and welfare of the animal, maximises the companion benefits of their pet and minimises potential for nuisance or harm to others.

Current Activities:

- Four Pet Ownership Talks to various Community Groups and Primary Schools within the Shire have been conducted during the last twelve months;
- Various media releases throughout the year designed to continually keep public informed of not only responsible pet ownership but also of their requirements as set down by Government Legislation;
- Annual door knocks which effectively promotes responsible pet ownership on a personal level; and
- Daily patrols of the shire resulting in detection of stray animals. The resultant follow up is intended to eliminate repetition of animals straying from properties.

Planned Programs

- Endeavour to conduct a minimum of four responsible Pet Ownership Seminars with interested Community groups/schools within the shire per year;
- Media releases throughout the year designed to keep the public informed of not only responsible pet ownership but also their requirements set down by government legislation and local laws;
- Conduct annual door knocks over a 3 month period rotating between townships and rural areas which effectively promotes responsible pet ownership on a personal level whilst ensuring compliance with registration requirements;
- Daily attendance by members to complaints received from the public;
- Conduct patrols of the Shire resulting in detection of stray animals. The resultant follow up is intended to eliminate repetition of animals straying from properties. Note that these patrols are of lower risk than other programs and will be undertaken if resources are not taken up in higher risk programs.
- Annual review of premises with animal permits allowing the keeping of animals that exceed the permitted number. This enables officers to keep abreast of over population of animals on premises designed to educate the public of their legal requirements; and

3.3 IDENTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION

Objective

To maximise the number of registered and identifiable domestic animals

Current Activities:

- Programmed annual door knocks – attend households personally within both rural and urban townships on a rotation basis, of the Shire annually from August to November
- Daily patrols – resources permitting, when officers are not attending complaints or other duties involving Local Laws, they will pro-actively conduct patrols throughout the Shire locating any stray animals
- Attendance of complaints
- Media releases
- Pet ownership seminars

Planned Programs

- Annual door knocks – attend households personally within both rural and urban townships on a rotation basis, of the Shire annually from August to November
- Daily patrols , when officers are not attending complaints or other duties involving Local Laws, they will pro-actively conduct patrol throughout the Shire locating stray animals
- Attendance of complaints;
- Media releases;
- Pet ownership seminars; and
- Annual review of animal permits re over population of animals on premises.

3.4 COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Objective

To maximise compliance with domestic animal laws, orders and regulations (State and Local)

Current Activities:

- The offer to conduct responsible pet ownership seminars;
- Media releases;
- Programmed annual door knocks;
- Daily attendance of complaints from public; and
- If resources permit daily patrols of the shire ensuring compliance of all relevant state and local legislation.

Planned Programs

- Annual door knocks – attend households personally within both rural and urban townships on a rotation basis, of the Shire annually from August to November
- Daily patrols , when officers are not attending complaints or other duties involving Local Laws, they will pro-actively conduct patrol throughout the Shire locating stray animals
- Attendance at complaints;
- Media releases;
- Conduct two responsible pet ownership seminars per year;
- Annual review of animal permits re over population of animals on premises;
- Annual review of domestic animal businesses;
- Officers to attend training modules/seminars/courses
- Review and evaluate any existing orders made under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and local laws and regulations;
- Review and evaluate any matters, service or strategy relating to this management plan biannually for the first 12 months of implementation and annually thereafter; and
- Review and evaluate any other matters that arise relevant to the management of dogs and cats with Moira Shire's Municipality that may be necessary.

3.5 DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

Objective

To work in partnership with domestic animal businesses to achieve Council's domestic animal management goals.

Planned programs

- To inspect two domestic animal businesses per year to ensure compliance with State Legislation and Local Laws; and
- Review annually, domestic animal businesses permits.

3.6 DECLARED DOGS

Objective

To minimise the risks of dog attacks within the community by identifying dangerous, menacing or restricted breed dogs within the shire.

Current Activities:

- Identifying restricted breeds not known to council Officers during programmed annual door knocks;
- Inspections of premises of declared dogs for compliance with legislation;
- Declaration of dogs involved in dog attacks where Courts do not issue an order for dog to be euthanized; and
- Ensure Department of Primary Industries Bureau of Animal Welfare is informed of all declared dogs within the shire as required under the Act.

Planned Programs

- Review annually, domestic animal businesses permits;
- Annual door knocks;
- Media releases;
- Ensure all declared dogs premises are audited annually for compliance as per legislation;
- Ensure all declared dogs are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry; and
- Promote visible presence to public as a proactive role.

4 PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

4.1 Method of Evaluating Animal Control services

4.1.1 Conquest Complaint System.

By utilising the Conquest Complaint Recording System it is possible to categorise complaints received, jobs attended, or offences detected whilst patrolling the shire.

This system enables us to evaluate where resources are being utilised. It is also possible to identify any problem areas by examining these statistics to best strategise and direct where resources could be better utilised. This also enables the establishment of a concerted effort if the need demands into a particular area.

Annual assessment of requests lodged will be undertaken and statistics analysed accordingly. Works programs will be targeted based on statistics gathered throughout the year.

4.1.2 Lynx Management System

All animals registered are recorded on the Lynx system. Animals are registered against both the property and client. The animal remains on file indefinitely and the registration for it is renewed each year unless the owner declares it deceased, left premises or otherwise.

The client does not have to be a ratepayer for the property; they could be a tenant or other resident of the property.

The animal register display shows the main details on the animal being the type of animal (cat or dog) breed, name, sterilised, sex, age, notes, colour, rate, status, and tag number of animal.

The registration data will be reviewed annually. Changes in registrations will be assessed against previous years.

4.1.3 Pound Register

The pound register gives us accurate records of animals impounded by Animal Management Officers. It also identifies animals that repeatedly are impounded. The register is contained within an Excel Spreadsheet.

Data includes breed of animal, colour, sex, de sexed, age, location found or picked up, name of person handing animal over, reason for impounding (stray etc) behavioural problems, permanent identification details, status of disposal and notes.

An annual assessment of the pound register will be undertaken and reported to council as required by Government Legislation.

4.1.4 Domestic Animal Business Register

The Domestic Animal Businesses Register contains accurate records of all such businesses within the Shire.

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4.1.5 Declared Dog Register

The Declared Dog Register is divided into three categories:

- Restricted Breed
- Dangerous Dogs
- Menacing Dogs

The declared dog register contains records from 2004 onwards.

4.2 Key performance Indicators (KPI's)

Item	KPI's	Target	Current Target
1	Endeavour to Increase Animal Registration Compliance – from 1 st August to 10 th March annually	4%	4%
3	Inspect two Animal Businesses per year	100%	100%
4	Endeavour to Conduct four Community Education programs re responsible Pet Ownership	100%	100%
5	Quarterly media releases re Community Education	100%	100%
6	Review Domestic Animal Plan	Annual	Annual
7	Successful prosecutions	100%	100%

4.3 Review Cycle/Date for this Management Plan

The Domestic Animal Management Plan will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis.

5 **AMENDMENTS**

5.1 **Original Domestic Animal Management Plan Adopted**

Original Domestic Animal Management Plan adopted: 20 April 2009

5.2 **2011 Amendments**

Section	Title
1.2	Legal Requirements
1.4	Shire Demographics
1.5	Domestic Animal Statistics
1.6	Operational Structure
1.7	Service Levels
2	Statement of Purpose
3.6	Declared Dogs
4.1	Method of Evaluating Animal Control services
4.2	Key performance Indicators (KPI's)
4.3	Review Cycle/Date for this Management Plan

5.3 **Amended Domestic Animal Management Plan Adopted**

Amended plan adopted:.....