

## Hon Ian Hunter MLC

Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation

Wednesday, 21 June 2017

### **Tighter leash for law-breaking pet owners as fee, investigation changes take effect**

Fines and expiations for dog and cat owners who flout the rules will have extra bite from 1 July as fee increases come into effect, as well as increased powers for council to investigate offenses.

The increases to expiations and maximum penalties are the first of the changes to come from the reform of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*, following years of consultation and a citizens' jury process.

Some of the changes:

- Failure to pick up after your dog will now attract a \$210 expiation, up from \$55.
- Allowing your dog to attack, chase or menace another person or animal will be a \$315 expiation, or \$750 if your dog is a prescribed breed (American Pit Bull Terrier, Fila Brasileiro, Japanese Tosa, Dog Argentinia, Presa Canario)
- A new maximum penalty of \$5000 is now possible for allowing a prescribed breed to wander, attack or enter the grounds of a school or childcare centre without permission.

The changes also give council officers new powers to investigate breaches of the Act, including the ability to seize and gather evidence for an investigation and compel dog owners to give their name and address.

### **Quotes attributable to Sustainability, Environment and Conservation Minister Ian Hunter**

South Australia's new dog and cat laws remedy long-standing weaknesses in the way our community manages dogs and cats.

The new laws create tools to reunite lost dogs and cats with their owners, prevent unwanted litters and encourage owners to take responsibility for their pets.

Fines and expiations hadn't increased since 1995. These outdated fines had lost their impact as a deterrent, and needed to be significantly boosted.

We expect these new fines and expiations, along with increased council powers to investigate and prosecute offenses, will help address the problem of dog attacks, and remind owners that they are responsible for their dogs' behaviour.

Along with looming changes to microchipping, desexing and breeder registration, this Government has shown its commitment to real action on effective dog and cat management.

**Quotes attributable to Dog and Cat Management Board Secretary Andrew Lamb**

The many benefits of dog and cat ownership come with responsibility. Not only do we need to properly care for our dogs and cats, but we need to think about the impact of our pets on our neighbours and local community.

The Dog and Cat Management Board is working hard with its partners in local government to make better dog and cat owners of us all.

These new fines, expiations and investigative powers give councils a much more effective set of tools to manage dogs and cats in their communities.