

Dog and Cat Management Board

STRATEGIC PLAN

2017 – 2020



Government of South Australia
Dog and Cat Management Board

Leadership and initiative in Dog and Cat Management

Mission:

Leadership and initiative in Dog and Cat Management

Our Approach:

- We provide information and base decisions on factual, reliable and accurate data and research.
- We promote the benefits of dog and cat ownership through education on responsible dog and cat ownership.
- We collaborate and work in partnership with others.
- Deliver what we promise.
- Focus on outcomes, not just activity.
- Work to an ethical code that includes service, respect, trust and courtesy.
- Value and support our own staff.



Board Chair: Dr Felicity-ann Lewis

Objects of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*:

- To encourage responsible dog and cat ownership;
- To reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats;
- To promote the effective management of dogs and cats.

Our 2017 – 2020 Strategic Objectives are:

- Improved dog management through responsible dog ownership and community collaboration.
- Improved cat management through responsible cat ownership and community collaboration.
- Connecting Councils, community, professionals and agencies interested in and responsible for dog and cat management.
- Leadership in dog and cat management and effective administration of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*.

Dog and Cat Management Board Membership

In accordance with *Section 12 of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*, the Dog and Cat Management Board has the following membership and structure:

Chair:

Dr Felicity-ann Lewis Jointly nominated by the Minister and the Local Government Association

Members:

Mr Rocky Warren Nominated by the Local Government Association

Cr Gail Kilby Nominated by the Local Government Association

Mr John Darzanos Nominated by the Local Government Association

Cr Janet Loveday Nominated by the Local Government Association

Dr Ron Somers Nominated by the Minister

Dr Susan Hazel Nominated by the Minister

Ms Vicki Jacobs Nominated by the Minister

Ms Wendy Wakefield Nominated by the Minister

Governance

The Dog and Cat Management Board is established under *Section 10 of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* as a body corporate. The Dog and Cat Management Board is an instrumentality of the Crown and is the only statutory authority of its kind in Australia. The functions of the Dog and Cat Management Board are to:

- a) *Plan for, promote and provide advice about, the effective management of dogs and cats throughout South Australia;*
- b) *Oversee the administration and enforcement of the provisions of this Act relating to dogs;*
- c) *Inquire into and consider all proposed by-laws referred to it under this Act, with a view to promoting the effective management of dogs and cats, and, to the extent that the Board considers it appropriate, the consistent application of by-laws throughout South Australia;*
- d) *Advise the Minister or the LGA, either on its own initiative or at the request of the Minister or the LGA, on the operation of this Act or issues directly relating to dog or cat management in South Australia;*
- e) *Undertake or facilitate research relating to dog or cat management;*
- f) *Undertake or facilitate educational programs relating to dog or cat management;*
- g) *Keep this Act under review and make recommendations to the Minister with respect to the Act and regulations made under the Act; and*
- h) *Carry out any other function assigned to the Board by the Minister or by or under this Act.*
(*Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, Section 21*)

Dogs and cats add value to our lives in many ways, including: as companions to provide comfort and connections for those who live alone or who are unwell; as the eyes and ears of some citizens needing additional help to get around; as the targets for affection and common interests all over our neighbourhoods and as working animals that assist agricultural and security businesses.

Our vision is to see children and adults safely enjoying a relationship with dogs and cats across every community and neighbourhood because of the positive role these animals play in our lives.

The Board support the State Government's seven strategic priorities for South Australia's future: and believe dogs and cats play a vital role in this pursuit.

The Board's priority to 'improve dog management through responsible dog ownership and community collaboration' aligns with the Government's Strategic Priority of '*safe communities and healthy neighbourhoods*'. The Board's strategic plan contributes to a number of additional targets in South Australia's Strategic Plan. These include the following:

- *Target 1 – Urban spaces* – by promoting the development and management of well-designed and integrated dog parks, which provide safe and accessible places for people to interact with their dogs
- *Target 78 – Healthy South Australians* – by encouraging people to exercise with their dogs and by promoting responsible dog management to reduce the incidence of dog related injury in the community
- *Target 83 – Sport and recreation* – through promoting responsible dog ownership and encouraging the development of areas where people can safely exercise their dogs
- *Target 86 – Psychological wellbeing* – by promoting the social benefits of dog and cat ownership and encouraging responsible pet ownership.

Providing Advice

The Dog and Cat Management Board provides advice and assistance to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, the Local Government Association of South Australia and Councils on dog and cat management issues, including dog registration fees, Council By-laws and options for cat management. The Board has collaborated with the State Government and stakeholders to develop the Dog and Cat Management legislative reform program.

Education

A significant role of the Dog and Cat Management Board of SA is to undertake or facilitate educational programs relating to dog and cat management. The Board acknowledges the significant role of education in promoting responsible pet ownership and management in the community.

The Board delivers the *Living Safely with Pets* education program. This program is a significant component of the Board's strategy to reduce the incidence of dog related injury in the community, improve understanding of the responsibilities that come with pet ownership and the positive role responsibly owned pets play in the community. The programs aligns with the state strategic priority of Creating Safe Communities and Healthy Neighbourhoods.

The Board also provides educational material through its publications, social media pages and websites <http://www.dogandcatboard.com.au>

Strategic Direction 2017- 2020

Objective 1:

Improved dog management through responsible dog ownership and community collaboration.

Strategies:

1A: Implementation of mandatory desexing and microchipping and other legislative changes.

1B: Inform and educate the community about the legislative changes.

1C: Educate, inform and influence behaviour across the community, to ensure positive and safe interactions with dogs.

1D: Support and encourage research relating to responsible dog management and ownership.

Actions:

- We will promote the implementation of the legislative changes with key agencies and to the public.
- Support councils and the community to ensure dogs are desexed and microchipped.
- We will run programs and work with other key agencies to reduce harm caused by dog attacks.
- We will improve recording and reporting of dog-related incidents

Performance Measures and Indicators:

Measure 1: Annual hospital admissions and other data relating to dog attacks.

Indicator: Numbers of attacks and hospital admissions will stabilise or reduce over the 3 years.

Measure 2: The proportion of the registered dog population which is desexed.

Indicator: An increase in the proportion of desexed dogs within the registered population.

Measure 3: Report Dog Incidents through DACO.

Indicator: Increase in proportion of councils providing dog incident reports to the Board.

Objective 2:

Improved cat management through responsible cat ownership and community collaboration.

Strategies:

- 2A: Implementation of mandatory desexing and microchipping and other legislative changes.
- 2B: Investigate options for addressing the semi-owned cat population.
- 2C: Encourage the voluntary confinement of owned cats.
- 2D: Support councils who wish to improve their cat management programs.
- 2E: Support and encourage research relating to responsible cat management and ownership.

Actions:

- We will promote the implementation of the legislative changes with key agencies and to the public.
- Support councils and the community to ensure cats are desexed and microchipped.
- Communicate the benefits of confinement of owned cats.
- We will inform and support our local government stakeholders in the development of local management strategies for cats.
- Research and communicate the issue of owned, semi-owned and feral cats in our community and encourage involvement in identification of solutions.

Performance Measures and Indicators:

- Measure 1: Number of cats which are microchipped in South Australia are recorded in DACO and other available databases.
Indicator: An increase in the number of cats which are microchipped in the state in DACO and other available databases.
- Measure 2: Local Government Cat By-laws.
Indicator: An increase in the number of Local Government Cat By-laws.
- Measure 3: The percentage of cats entering AWL and RSPCA which are microchipped.
Indicator: An increase in the percentage of cats presenting to the AWL and RSPCA with a microchip.

*Defining the cat population

The cat population is considered to be broadly divided into three types:

- **Owned population** –cats that have an identification tag/microchip or are claimed to be owned. Owned cats may be free-roaming, are generally sociable and depend on human contact for survival.
- **Free-living/Semi-owned population** - this group consists of cats which are intentionally provided with food, medical treatment and/or shelter by people who nevertheless do not consider that they own the cat. Free living, owned cats exhibit varying levels of sociability with people.
- **Feral population** – identified as cats that are completely unsocialised and do not depend on human contact for survival, but may have had domestic ancestry.

Objective 3:

Connecting Councils, community, professionals and agencies interested in and responsible for dog and cat management.

Strategies:

3A: Commission DACO - a state-wide information management tool that will enable South Australians to comply with legislation while providing informed engaging user friendly data.

3B: Continue to pursue the South Australian Government's Digital By Default strategy.

3C: Continue to foster and maintain relationships with stakeholders.

Actions:

- We will develop and implement DACO with the involvement of key stakeholders.
- Deliver a register of all dog and cat breeders through DACO, which can be used as a tool to identify puppy farms and other unethical breeders.
- Optimise existing print resources to be available online consistent with Digital by Default in addition to hard copy.
- Utilise social media to help build the Board's relationships with stakeholders and promote the messages of the Board.
- Facilitate the recruitment and availability of dangerous dog trainers.
- Develop partnerships with educational institutions that foster research into dog and cat management.

Performance Measures and Indicators:

Measure 1: Collaborative partnership projects undertaken.

Indicator: An increase in the number of collaborative projects undertaken.

Measure 2: SA Dog and Cat Management information is managed through DACO.

Indicator: 100% of councils using DACO.

Measure 3: Ensure all resources produced by the Board are available online, mobile-ready, easy to use and accessible.

Indicator: Reduction in demand for print-based resources currently offered by the Board.

Objective 4:

Leadership in dog and cat management and effective administration of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.

Strategies:

4A: Influence, inform and advise regarding appropriate administration, enforcement and compliance with the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*.

4B: Research and communicate improvements to the regulatory framework governing our management of dogs and cats.

4C: Foster a culture that promotes effective and accountable governance.

4D: Promote and encourage best practice in dog and cat management.

Actions:

- We will ensure the legislative changes are implemented effectively throughout SA.
- Evaluation of the implementation of the changed legislation.
- Program of audits to ensure compliance with the Act.
- Board provides best practice examples to Local Government on dog and cat management issues.
- The Board maintains its strong, symbiotic relationship with local government.
- Provide national leadership on issues including a consistent approach for assistance dogs.

Performance Measures and Indicators:

Measure 1: Audit of Local Government compliance with the *Dog and Cat Management Act, 1995*.
Indicator: Successive audits of Local Government indicate an increase in compliance.

Measure 2: Independent audit of the statutory compliance of the Dog and Cat Management Board.
Indicator: The Dog and Cat Management Board is 100% compliant with its statutory responsibilities under the legislation.

Measure 3: Review Dog and Cat Management Board systems, tools and processes to provide for effective and efficient service delivery.
Indicator: The Dog and Cat Management Board Projects are delivered on time and within 10% of budget.