

Outback Communities Authority 2014-2019

PLAN OF MANAGEMENT RELATING TO DOGS AND CATS



Government
of South Australia



Outback
Communities
Authority



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PLAN OF MANAGEMENT RELATING TO DOGS AND CATS IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS

2014 - 19

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OUTBACK COMMUNITIES AUTHORITY

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Animal Management Plan has been prepared by the Outback Communities Authority (OCA) in response to a planned approach to undertake its responsibilities under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (the Act) Section 26A and will guide domestic animal management by the OCA from 1 January 2014 up to and including 30 December 2019.

The objectives of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* are to:

- Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership;
- Reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats; and
- To promote the effective management of dogs and cats (including through the encouragement of de-sexing of dogs and cats).

This Plan of Management has been developed in conjunction with the Dog and Cat Management Board with consideration to the unique environment, cultural diversity and administration framework of the unincorporated areas of South Australia. The Plan of Management identifies the core legislative requirements to be managed appropriately by the OCA.

The OCA is prescribed as a district Council for the purposes of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 and as such is responsible for the registration of dogs and the control of dogs and cats within its area of administration. Although its empowering legislation, the *Outback Communities (Administration and Management) Act 2009* gives the OCA responsibility over all areas not within municipalities and districts established under the South Australian *Local Government Act*, as a matter of policy the OCA works within the areas beyond the outer line of incorporation in the State and does not operate within those pockets of out-of-council areas within the surveyed Hundreds.

2. PROVISION OF THE DOG AND CAT MANAGEMENT ACT 1995

The responsibilities for dog and cat management in South Australia are prescribed in the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*. Under the Act Councils are required to administer and enforce the provisions relating to dogs within its area. Responsibilities include maintenance of a register of dogs containing information required by the Board, appointment of a Registrar, make arrangements for issuing and replacing certificates of registration, appointment of at least one full-time dog management officer or make other satisfactory arrangements, make satisfactory arrangements for the detention of dogs seized and its other obligations under the Act. A Council is also able to make By-Laws relating to the management of dogs within its area.

2.1 Dogs in Public Places

The *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* provides that a dog can be in a public place provided that it is under the effective control of a person, and that effective control will be by means of a leash not more than two metres in length. The Act also provides that a dog can be in a 'park' provided that it is under effective control by command, the dog being in close proximity to the person and the person being able to see the dog at all times. (*Park as defined by the Act: "A park, garden, reserve or similar public open space, or foreshore area, within the area of a Council"*). Dogs are required to be under effective control by means of physical restraint in a public place

(other than a park). (*Public place – means a place to which the public has access (whether an admission fee is charged or not).*)

Within the 32 outback communities that the OCA supports, only a few have designated recreation areas and other identified maintained areas within the OCA's jurisdictional area where community members gather and may use to exercise domestic companion dogs. Leigh Creek, Woomera, Iron Knob and Andamooka communities have identified such recreational areas. In other outback townships there are areas of public land set aside under the care and control of associations but these are no particular drawcard for dog exercise given that most of the dogs in other communities are working dogs and have plenty of area in which to exercise. Andamooka and Woomera are the only communities in the unincorporated areas that have a designated 'off-leash' area. The Andamooka area is accessible at all times and supports dog owners by providing dispenser bags, shade and tap water. The Woomera area offers specific off-leash times, Monday to Friday.

2.2 Identification/Registration

The success of domestic animal management is identification, which for the OCA is ultimately the registration of dogs. The purpose of registration includes:

- To assist with funding animal management programs.
- To assist with reuniting lost pets and owners.
- To encourage responsible animal management through discounted registration fees.
- To provide proof of ownership.

Under the general overview of the General Manager, registration of both companion and working dogs are carried out on behalf of the OCA under agency agreements with local business and community Progress Associations. Local businesses that act as an agency on behalf of the OCA are remitted a commission for providing the service to its community. Agencies collecting dog registrations on behalf of the OCA are located in the following outback communities:

- Andamooka
- Blinman
- Cockburn
- Iron Knob
- Leigh Creek
- Marla
- Marree
- Mintabie
- Penong
- Whyalla
- Woomera
- Yunta

2.3 Domestic Cat Management

The OCA encourages communities to utilise networks to reunite identified cats with their owners and unidentified cats in townships to be regarded as feral animals. The OCA has historically worked with the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources to investigate appropriate projects to deal with feral cat numbers, although this has been dependant on the number of complaints received regarding feral cats.

The OCA will work with external agencies to access opportunities for feral cat management as they arise.

2.4 Registrar and Dog Management Officer

Registrar

The OCA's General Manager has been appointed as the Registrar of Dogs within the outback unincorporated areas pursuant to the requirements of Section 10 of the Act (appointment Gazetted April 22, 2004).

Dog Management Officer

Current resources are not able to provide for the appointment of a full time employee dog management officer for the unincorporated areas of South Australia, however the Community Administrator located in Andamooka has recently been appointed as a Dog Management Officer, (included as part of the current role), specific to the Andamooka community. Should further resources become available, the OCA will endeavour to appoint dog management officers to assist with dog and cat management across the unincorporated areas of South Australia.

The OCA can receive applications from town management committees for the appointment of a dog and/or cat management officer and can approve or decline the applications on an individual basis.

Police officers are authorised under the Act. The OCA looks to forming a good strong working relationship with local police officers in the event that assistance may be required in outback townships.

2.5 Detention of Dogs

New facilities have been developed at Andamooka for the impounding of seized dogs.

The OCA, situated in Port Augusta has established a partnership with the neighbouring City of Whyalla Council to utilise pounds when required for areas that fall within the unincorporated region, such as the township of Iron Knob.



The new dog detention facility at Andamooka.

3. REVENUE

Money received by the OCA under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 must be expended in the administration or enforcement of the provisions of the Act relating to dogs. The OCA pays into the Fund the percentage fixed by regulation of the dog registration fees that are collected.

The OCA has agreements in place with agencies collecting dog registrations on behalf of the OCA. A commission is paid to collection agencies per registration that is facilitated.

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Other policies which impact on the area of animal management are;

- DCSB-AM-01.02 Dog Management Administration Policy v3.
- DCSB-AM-01.03 Hire of Cat Traps.
- DCSB-DC-15-01 Enforcement Policy.
- OCA Community Engagement – Our Commitment Policy.

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