

Dog & Cat Management Plan 2005



A Planned Response to The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995

**Council Approved
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	4
Objectives	5
Laws and Guidelines	5
Community Education	6
Participatory / Inclusive Community Education	8
Implementation	9
Identification and Registration	10
Dogs and Cats in Public Places	12
Wandering at Large	13
Dog and Cat Waste Management	14
“Un-owned” Feral / Out of Control Dogs	15
“Un-owned” Community and Feral Cats	16
Reduction of Feral Animal Food Source	17
Enforcement	18
Resources	19
Endnotes / Descriptors	20

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan has been prepared by the Kangaroo Island Council, in consultation with the following organizations;

- Dog and Cat Management Board - Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH)
- Kangaroo Island Natural Resource Board (KINREB)
- Agricultural Kangaroo Island (AgKI)
- Primary Industries and Resources (PIRSA)
- Kangaroo Island Veterinary Clinic
- Kangaroo Island Cat Control Committee (KICCC)
- Urban Animal Management Advisory Group (Australian Veterinary Association)

This plan presents a whole of Kangaroo Island planned approach to dog and cat management. It will enable Kangaroo Island Council to serve it's community, preserve the environment and meet it's responsibilities under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995,

This plan represents a new direction in dog and cat management on Kangaroo Island. It incorporates the inclusion of recommendations derived from no less than 21 written submissions provided by the public after an extensive consultative process, and includes recommendations from key stake holders involved in dog and cat management on Kangaroo Island.

The plan includes a descriptive outline of the philosophical rationale behind the enclosed action plan and; also includes budget considerations required to implement the plan. Once all aspects of the plan are adopted and implemented, it is unlikely that increased funding will be required unless Council substantially changes its animal management strategy.

The Dog and Cat Management Act provides a comprehensive basis for all dog management on Kangaroo Island and in contrast, provides very little in terms overall domestic cat management. In this plan, Dog and Cat Management strategies have been aligned, by introducing unified strategies for cat management that promotes a fair and responsibly system that in many cases, relates equally for all dog and cat owners. This plan creates a clear delineation between owned and un-owned cats that provides structured protection for the owned cat, and facilitates clear direction for addressing the issues of feral cat control on Kangaroo Island.

Kangaroo Island is recognized in the agricultural community for having a high incidence of Sarcosporidiosis (a cat borne disease that transfers to sheep and forms macro cysts in the meat) and Toxoplasmosis (cat borne disease that transfers to animals and humans and results in increased instances of birth defects in humans and abortion in sheep). Kangaroo Island is also at risk from the negative impact of unowned cats and dogs on the natural fauna such as penguins, marsupials and reptiles and bird life in general, with substantial threat being to a growing Tourist Industry that relies on the availability and accessibility of native fauna and the natural clean image that is, and is expected to be, Kangaroo Island.

Mission Statement

- To create an environment which encourages responsible dog and cat ownership and minimizes the negative environmental, social and economic impact of owned and un-owned dogs and cats on Kangaroo Island.

Aims

- To promote responsible companion dog and cat ownership on Kangaroo Island
- To protect native fauna from the negative impact of owned and un-owned dogs and cats
- To ensure public safety and reduce community conflicts by providing effective dog and cat control measures
- To reduce the negative impact of un-owned dogs and cats on Kangaroo Island's economy.

INTRODUCTION

The Objectives of Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 are:

- Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership
- Reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats
- Promote the effective management of dogs and cats

Each Council is required to administer and enforce the provisions of the *Act* in its area.

The Dog and Cat Management Board has responsibilities under the *Act* to plan, promote and advise on effective management of dogs and cats in the state, to monitor councils' management for their responsibilities, to issue guidelines for councils and to advise and assist councils.

Kangaroo Island is a unique environment with a large (>30%) portion reserved for conservation. The management of dogs and cats over this complex environment, and in particular, the control of cat numbers, is critical to the maintenance, sustainability and preservation of the communities that work and play in this slice of nature.

Due to Kangaroo Island's "remoteness" there is a unique opportunity for the council to undertake many positive and innovative steps towards effective management of dogs and cats. These steps could, if good decisions are made, enhance Kangaroo Island's "clean green image" and enhance the reality of a naturally balanced environment that both residents and visitors enjoy most about Kangaroo Island.

There is little doubt that if dogs and cats are left to roam across Kangaroo Island in an uncontrolled manner, there will be permanent and long term damage to bio systems on the Island. The loss of quality in Island sheep is already being experienced and whole species such as the Dunnart which is currently severely threatened, could disappear totally. The compounding of this negative flow will impact on Kangaroo Island's attractiveness to tourism operators and the farming community alike. Kangaroo Island needs an effective dog and cat management strategy that protects the interest of all stake-holders, including the environment, and it is the duty of all Kangaroo Island residents and land holders, to support responsible dog and cat ownership and strive for a healthy and viable future.

Following the public release of a previous Draft Dog and Cat Management Plan, which was completed on 18 July 2003, it was clear that many residents were not aware of the requirements placed upon both individuals and Council under the Dog and Cat Management Act. This revised plan, relates to the new requirements under the Act and embraces the spirit of "responsible pet ownership and environmental stewardship" in introducing requirements that have been devised specifically in the interest of Kangaroo Island and its residents....

OBJECTIVES

- 1) **To enforce the provisions of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995***
 - a) Operate in accordance with the Dog and Cat Management Act
 - b) Regularly review council policies and by-laws on dog and cat management
- 2) **To apply fair, responsible and effective dog and cat management, that promotes responsible dog and cat ownership, by;**
 - a) Promoting Kangaroo Island as a unique place for a wholistic and effective dog and cat management model for ¹“owned” and ²“un-owned” dogs and cats.
 - (1) Identifying Kangaroo Island as a ³“boundary secure” area that requires special dog and cat control measures to maintain “boundary security”. *Securing the boundary to Kangaroo Island is essential in managing the dog and cat issues the exist within.*
 - (a) Introduce laws that provide the following;
 - (i) External boundary protection (Island Entry Only)
 - (ii) Protection of native fauna from un-wanted dog and cat harassment or attack, in areas that lie outside of council care and control. Eg: National Parks.
 - b) Promoting responsible dog and cat ownership through community awareness and acceptance, with less emphasis on management by way of enforcement.
 - c) Working in partnership with other agencies and groups to inform the community of the impact of dogs and cats on the environment and the economy of Kangaroo Island
 - i) Encouraging and supporting the minimization of un-owned dog and cat numbers in towns and on farms by;
 - (1) Encouraging reduced interaction between un-owned dogs and cats and humans in towns and on farms
 - (2) Providing penalties for any person caring, harboring or knowingly supporting un-owned dogs and cats to
 - d) Introduce mandatory identification and registration for all owned dogs and cats on Kangaroo Island by;
 - i) Requiring that all owned dogs and cats on Kangaroo Island be registered and be either micro-chipped or carry identification to demonstrate current registration,
 - ii) Require any person who wishes to breed dogs or cats to obtain a permit from council with strict conditions being applied to the issuing of any permit.
 - e) Introduce mandatory de-sexing of all owned cats on Kangaroo Island. *This is to reduce the reproductive rate and hence predation pressure from increased cat numbers. (Dogs do not represent the same level of threat – hence no such requirement).*
- 3) **Maintain effective impoundment capabilities for dogs and cats.**
- 4) **Council will support community based initiatives to capture and humanely destroy feral populations in council controlled areas of Kangaroo Island**
- 5) **Formulate and implement an education campaign to promote responsible dog and cat ownership, as it applies to and impacts on Kangaroo Island and its residents.**

LAWS AND GUIDELINES

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 manage dogs in their area, and; are empowered make by-laws for cat management and thereafter administer and enforce the provisions relating to dogs and cats within their respective areas.

Kingscote and Dudley Councils (previous councils on Kangaroo Island) had a number of by-laws relating to dog and cat management. These by-laws were adopted by the Kangaroo Island Council at amalgamation. Under the revised Dog and Cat Management Act and through the passage of time, there has been a need to change and streamline by-laws.

This plan seeks to standardize and modify a number of by-laws used in dog and cat management. Through the use of council resolutions, orders and by-laws, laws specifically relating to cats will, as far as possible, be brought into line with current dog laws, to provide an equitably balanced approach to dog and cat management and responsible pet ownership on Kangaroo Island.

Benefits of Mandatory Registration:

The following benefits will occur once effective registration measures are in place;

1. *Capacity to identify the whole dog and cat population on Kangaroo Island from a two-category perspective, that being "Owned and Un-owned" dogs or cats*
2. *Capacity to control key border entry points where dogs and cats may be introduced to the island;*
 - a. *Introduce conditional access measures regarding the introduction of any cat or dog to Kangaroo Island*
 - b. *Require any person wishing to bring an ⁴"intact" cat to Kangaroo Island must seek council permission prior to bringing any "intact" cat onto the island and that permission may be conditional*
3. *Enable owned pets that have strayed to be returned to their owners quickly*
4. *Enable council to identify irresponsible pet owners by way of formal response to uncontrolled animal activity and penalize where applicable*
 - a. *Minimize the negative impact of owned cats and dogs on the Kangaroo Island community and environment, by;*
5. *Encouraging obedience and socialization programs for dogs*
6. *Development of Council approved "Open Space" areas where "un-restrained" dog access can occur.*
7. *Providing effective support measures that assist dog and cat owners in reducing the instances of unwanted dog and cat litters; by*
 - a. *Promoting the de-sexing of dogs through differential registration fees*
 - b. *Introduction of cat de-sexing as a required component of a standard cat registration*
 - c. *Introduction of stringent breeder permit conditions for any cat owner who owns an "intact" cat*

8. *Implementation of a staged introductory period for cat registration, that mimics dog registration and also provides an ⁵amnesty period for any of the following;*
 - i. *Breeding of Cats without a permit*
 - ii. *Caring, harboring or knowingly supporting an un-owned dog or cats*
 - iii. *Keeping of an “intact” cat without a permit*
9. *Instigation of a strategy of humane destruction of “un-owned” or ⁶“un-wanted” dogs and cats on Kangaroo Island*

PARTICIPATORY / INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The key to successfully implementing this plan is in establishing pro-active working partnerships between council and other key agencies and organizations that deal with the public. This will ensure the plan and its implementation are consistent with public expectation and demands.

By collectively presenting a united approach to animal management on Kangaroo Island, that includes information dissemination, opportunity for active participation by all stake holders, and a capacity for evaluation and monitoring in the interests of continuous improvement, the model becomes a live program, with inbuilt capacity for future growth and development in line with community wishes.

In addition to the community, the key agencies and organizations involved at present are-

- Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH)
- Kangaroo Island Natural Resource Board (KINRB)
- Kangaroo Island Plant and Animal Control Board (KIACB)
- Kangaroo Island Cat Control Committee (KICCC)
- Agricultural Kangaroo Island (AgKI)
- Primary Industries and Resources (PIRSA)
- Kangaroo Island Veterinary Clinic

It is anticipated that the education campaign will have the following elements-

1. Advice to the public of the requirements of the Act, Regulations and Council By-Laws
2. Through a collaborative approach by council, key agencies and organizations, provide information sessions across key locations on Kangaroo Island and seek public feedback on the plan and the implementation progress
3. Provision of Information Fact Sheets with the distribution of rates notices stating reasons for the changes and when the enforcement will take effect.
4. Provision of Information Fact Sheets, whenever people attend to register and re-register their dogs and cats with the Registrar
5. Local media information release (Newspaper and Radio)
6. In partnership with Kangaroo Island Natural Resource Board (KINRB), provide information relevant to visitors and new residents to Kangaroo Island.
7. Inclusion of dog and cat information in the ⁷“Secrets” magazine to provide widest distribution of information to island visitors.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The successful implementation of this plan relies on a sequence of positive actions;

1. A positive decision from council to support this plan, along with a level of unified commitment from councilors to support implementation and work collaboratively with staff and the constituency to promote and execute the plan.
2. Successful delivery of a comprehensive education campaign that engages all the people of Kangaroo Island and Councilor's alike;
3. Development of fair and responsible implementation strategies to turn the plan into an effective operational model on Kangaroo Island;
4. Effective enforcement of the Act, Regulations and any local council by-laws, orders and resolutions.

Enforce the provisions of the Act, Regulations and Bylaws

1. Develop those areas of the management structure that are currently not in place and commence an education campaign as part of enforcement
2. Implement an amnesty and implementation transition period
3. Provide an offset to Council fees and penalties where cats are concerned. eg; one off registration, offset fees for de-sexing and ⁸micro-chipping.
4. Enforcement of offences in an educational, fair and responsible manner that provides forthright flexibility without bias.

Information provided is to include-

- Environmental, social and economic reasons for these regulations
- Impacts of ⁹feral dogs and cats on the environmental, social and economic components of Kangaroo Island
- Requirements under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 and Regulations
- Relevant council by-laws that support this plan
- Promotion of the importance of ¹⁰,"obedience training"
 - Notices on program activities in relevant council mail-outs
 - Notices on differential registration fee entitlements for dogs that have undertaken and passed obedience classes
- Information sheets on ¹¹de-sexing / micro chipping
 - Veterinary information
 - Public micro-chipping days where professionals can provide information direct
- Other relevant information as required and as it becomes available
 - Regular information articles in the local media

DOG & CAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

IDENTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION

Part 4 of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, states that every dog over the age of 3 months must be registered and identified in accordance with the Act and Regulations. A person must be over the age of 16 before they can register a dog.

It is imperative that in order to address the issues of feral animals, all owned companion dogs and cats need to be identified. This will result in just two status types of companion animal, "Owned" and "Un-owned".

Once status identification becomes a routine part of animal ownership, the process of adequately dealing with un-owned animals will also be clear.

- 1) **Any owned dog or cat must be registered to the owner through council, with penalties applicable for the keeping on any unregistered dogs or cats.**
- 2) **Any "un-owned" / "un-registered dog or cat to be regarded as feral, and be subject to a different set of rules on management and control to owned / registered dogs and cats.**

Recommended Actions re Registration

1. That the Chief Executive Officer of Kangaroo Island Council be the Registrar for all dogs and cats on Kangaroo Island.
2. That enforced registration of all owned dogs on Kangaroo Island under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 be continued, and;
3. That implementation of a council by law requiring mandatory registration of all owned cats on Kangaroo Island occur, with compliance requirements and penalties that mimic the existing laws relating to dog registration.
4. That all cat registrations include a requirement for the cat or cats, to be micro chipped with identification registered on veterinary and council records.
5. That all cat registrations include a requirement for the cat or cats, to be de-sexed or; require the owner to obtain a permit for the keeping of an "intact cat"
6. That cat registration be segregated to identify an "intact cat or cats" and "de-sexed cat or cats, with the ownership of an intact cat on Kangaroo Island being the sole right of those people who have paid for and obtained a permit to keep an "intact" cat

Note:

- Where a cat or kitten has been obtained by a new owner, that cat or kitten must be registered with Kangaroo Island Council within 14 days of taking up ownership of the cat.
 - Where the new ownership involves a cat or kitten, the new owner has the following timeframes to have or have arrange to have the animal micro-chipped and de-sexed;
 - 14 days in the case of a cat of breeding age (at the eruption of adult teeth)
 - 3 months in the case of a kitten
7. Require that a condition of cat registration be that all cat owners who do not attain permit to keep an "intact" cat, have their cats de-sexed, with penalties for non compliance.

8. That an amnesty period be implemented that allows cat registration fees to be offset against cat de-sexing and or micro-chipping costs. eg: Registration fee \$35 - De-Sexing fee \$35 – No fee payable if proof of de-sexing and microchip number is provided at time of registration during amnesty period.
9. That cat registration involve a first year of implementation cat registration payment of \$5 between original and any subsequent owners of a cat, thereafter an registration fee of an amount the similar to annual dog registration, less subsidies for micro-chipping and de-sexing.

[Note:

- *All first year Cat Registration in the first year of implementation of cat registration, to be \$5.00 in recognition of the fact that costs are incurred by the owner because compulsory de-sexing and micro-chipping is a required component of initial cat registration.*
 - *All first year Cat Registration in the first year of implementation of cat registration, where the cat registration involves a cat that is already de sexed and micro-chipped, the same subsidy(\$5.00) applies in recognition of the owner having incurred costs associated with new registration requirements. .*
10. Recognize that proven harboring and or keeping or supporting of un-registered dogs or cats, is contrary to overall dog and cat management strategies and; any proven acts of harbouring or keeping supporting of any un-registered dog or cat without undertaking formal ownership by way of registration, shall incur penalty as if that person were the owner.
 11. *[Note: This condition is important because many farmers do not remove feral cats from their farms due to the cats capacity to address the rodent population. This clause will also reduce the unwanted interaction between humans and un-owned cats in community areas]*
 12. Differential registration fees consistent with the Dog and Cat Management Act, for de-sexed, micro chipped and formally trained dogs.
 13. Limit the number of registered dogs and cats and dog and cat combinations, per household in townships.
 14. Inclusion of an exemption system for those people who can demonstrate special circumstances that give rise to a valid reason to own more that the limited number of cats or dogs.

Eg; A person has two dogs and an aged parent dies leaving a little dog behind - That person may receive an exemption subject to;

- *Application for an exemption*
- *Being assessed by the GI's as not creating a problem in residential areas*
- *Undertaking full registration and normal ownership responsibilities for the dog.*

DOG & CAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

DOG AND CAT ACCESS TO PUBLIC PLACES

In line with amendments to the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, dogs under the “control” of their handler / owner can access public places. “Effective Control” is the key to reducing public risk and maintaining a harmonious relationship between people and dogs in public places.

It is therefore imperative that Council enforce effective dog control in public areas.

Section 7 of the Act outlines that effective control is;

- 1) By means of physical restraint, or;
- 2) By command, the dog being in close proximity to the person and the person being able to see the dog at all times.

Section 8 of the Act states that effective control by means of physical restraint is-

- 1) By means of a chain, cord or leash that does not exceed 2 meters in length restraining the dog.

The person has effectively secured the dog-

- 1) By placing it in a cage, vehicle or other object or structure; or
- 2) By tethering it to a fixed object by means of a chain, cord or leash that does not exceed 2 metre's in length

Section 81 of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 states

- a person who is wholly or partially blind or deaf is entitled to be accompanied by a guide dog in a public place or passenger vehicle, and;
- the occupier or person in charge of a public place or public passenger vehicle must not refuse access to the place or vehicle to a person who is wholly or partially blind or deaf on the ground that the person is accompanied by a guide dog

Recommendations:

- 1) That dogs and cats be under “effective control” of the owner / handler at all times whilst in public areas.
- 2) That council make recommend for the following areas require dogs and cats to be under “effective control by physical restraint”;
 - a. All foreshore and beach areas under council care and control
 - b. All schools, kindergarten, child-care, pre school and associated areas
 - c. All built up areas, shopping precincts and town center's
- 3) That “effective control” and “effective control by physical restraint” of a cat, be identified as one of the same, with the requirements being;
 - a. Physical restraint by means of a lockable “cat carry box”, whenever the cat is taken out into a public area.
 - b. Physical restraint by “leash” no longer than 2 metres. *(This type of restraint is the less preferred option because of the continued risk of injury from a cat that can move freely within a 2 metre radius.)*

Note:

The requirement for enclosed physical restraint of a cat in a public place is realistic. It is for the safety and well-being of the public and the cat. This is due to the unpredictable nature of a cat's response in general, particularly in relation to dogs and the high risk of injury and loss that could occur in trying to control an agitated cat in the presence of an unknown dog, be it restrained or not.

DOG & CAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

WANDERING AT LARGE

Section 7 of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, states a dog is wandering at large if;

- 1) The dog is in a public place (other than a park) or is in a private place without the consent of the occupier, and no person is exercising “effective control” of the dog by means of physical restraint or;
- 2) The dog is in a park and no person is exercising effective control of the dog either-
 - a. By means of physical restraint, or;
 - b. By command, the dog being in close proximity to the person and the person being able to see the dog at all times.

Section 63 of the *Act* states that a dog wandering at large can be euthenaised if not claimed by the owner within 72 hours from its detention in a pound.

Section 76 (a) of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, states that a person may lawfully seize, detain, destroy, or otherwise dispose of any unidentified cat in the following circumstances;

- 1) If the person is a cat management officer and the cat is found in an area in respect of which the officer is authorized to exercise powers under this Part of is delivered or is delivered to the officer by another person.

Note:

The above section is significant in that any cat, that is unidentified and found to be wandering by an Authorized Officer, can be immediately destroyed. Unlike dogs, no time limit is required for its detention prior to any decision to destroy the cat. In this case registration and micro-chipping is essential to the well being of the owned cat, and any owner who does not identify their cat, risks the un-notified loss of the cat if the cat wanders off the owner's property.

Recommendations:

- 1) That cats be treated similar to dogs, in that impoundment for 72 hours occur after identified cats are found wandering, so as to enable time for a cat and owner to be re-united.
- 2) That like dog owners, owners of cats be penalized when they fail to report the loss of their cat from their premises within 72 hours of the cat going missing.
- 3) That a penalty system be implemented under by-law, to mimic the penalties associated with wandering dogs.

DOG & CAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

DOG AND CAT WASTE MANAGEMENT

Section 45A (6) of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*, states;

A person who owns or is responsible for the control of a dog (not being an accredited guide dog) is guilty of an offence, if the dog defecates in a public place and the person responsible for the control of the dog does not immediately remove the faeces and dispose of them in a lawful and suitable manner.

Dog owners are legally required to retrieve and dispose of their dogs faeces for health, environmental and amenity reasons. Kangaroo Island's dog population in urban areas is not large enough to warrant dog faeces collection facilities in its park locations (this may change in the future), however dog owners need to be aware of their responsibilities.

Recommendations:

- 1) That Council continue to provide bags at the Council offices for the collection of dog faeces

DOG & CAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

“UN-OWNED” FERAL / OUT OF CONTROL DOGS

The number of feral dogs on Kangaroo Island is extremely low and almost non-existent. Some dogs are owned, some registered and some un-registered, do undertake killing of livestock and wildlife.

Section 48 of the *Act* states-

- 1) A person may lawfully injure or destroy a dog if that action is reasonable and necessary for the protection of life or property
- 2) If a dog, unaccompanied by a person, is found in an enclosed paddock or other enclosed place in which an animal that is being farmed is confined, the owner or occupier of the place, or person acting under the authority of the owner or occupier, may lawfully injure or destroy the dog

If a person injures or destroys a dog in these circumstances they must as soon as practical notify the following;

Police Officer
Dog and Cat Management Officer
Owner of the dog (If known)

Note:

Destruction of a dog must be humanely undertaken and the person who kills the dog must ensure that the dog is dead - not left injured to die. Penalties Apply.

Recommendation:

- 1) That a copy of this section be sent out with every rate notice, with a reminder that any effort at destroying a dog must be in accordance with law.

Dog Attacks in known ¹²“Fragile Areas”

Currently the only consequence to a dog owner when a dog enters a “Fragile Area” (eg: Kangaroo Island Foreshore area that is not an area of National Park) and attacks wildlife, is to penalize the owner by expiation or prosecution for the Wandering / Straying of their dog away from their normal place of control.

The biggest issue here is that council can give as many expiations as it likes to a given owner, without any change in behaviour necessarily happening. However if council chooses to prosecute, it must successfully prosecute for a second time in order to have the authorization to seize and destroy the offending dog.

This creates all sorts of problems on Kangaroo Island given all foreshores have an abundance of natural wildlife. Currently any attacks against wildlife on crown land or land under the care and control of council, fall beyond the legislative capacity in terms of consequential responsibility. Too often the available legislated response does not reflect the significance of the offence and the penalty has little or no relevance to the real issue. *eg; Dog attack against penguins in a penguin colony on crown / council controlled land, can only be dealt with by way of an offence to the responsible owner for dog wandering.*

Recommendation:

1. That in recognizing all non National Park foreshores of Kangaroo Island as being “Fragile Areas”, that council make application to the Minister for authorization of designated council officers to seize, detain, destroy or otherwise dispose any unrestrained cat found on the foreshore or within a harbour of Kangaroo Island.

2. That by-laws be enacted that address the issue of “Dog Attack” in a “Fragile Area”, with similar penalties for attacks against wildlife to those that currently exist in the Dog and Cat Management Act” for dog attack.

DOG & CAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

“UN-OWNED” COMMUNITY AND FERAL CATS

Kangaroo Island has significant numbers of community and wild feral cats. All are un-owned and represent a range of dangers to health and well-being to humans and livestock and the environment on Kangaroo Island.

The control of community and feral cats across Kangaroo Island requires the community as a whole to undertake control programs. Many new initiatives that support the control of cats are being formulated. It is the responsibility of council to ensure the wishes of the majority of residents of Kangaroo Island are implemented.

Section 74 of the *Act* allows areas to be defined “Remote Areas”. This enables any person to lawfully seize, detain, destroy, or otherwise dispose of any cat found in a place that is more than one kilometer from any place genuinely used as a place of resident.

Under Section 76 of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*, defines “other areas” where any person can capture a cat; however only the following people can destroy the cat;

- Cat Management Officer
- Crown Lands Ranger
- Authorised Officer under the Animal and Plant (Agricultural Protection and Other Purposes) Act 1986
- Inspector under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1985
- Veterinary Surgeon

Recommendations:

- That Kangaroo Island Council formally recognize Kangaroo Island as a ¹³“unique place” and support a “total control” dog and cat management model.
- That Council request the Dog and Cat Management Board, to make recommendation for a Governor’s proclamation for the purposes of the Cat and Dog Management Act, for all foreshore areas under Kangaroo Island Council control be proclaimed a “Fragile Area” under Section 73 (2) of the Dog and Cat Management Act; and; authority be extended to authorized persons under the act, to lawfully seize, detain, destroy, or otherwise dispose of **any cat** found in a “Fragile Area” within the meaning of the proclamation.
- That Council continue to support cat trapping on Council controlled property.
- That Council in partnership with the Kangaroo Island Cat Control Committee (KICCC), assist landholders with cat trapping information or equipment where possible, for the removal of unwanted feral cats from their properties.

Note:

A distinct separation must be made between an identifiable cat wandering in a “non fragile area” and an identified cat wandering in a “Fragile Area”. Any unrestrained cat that is found in a “Fragile Area” (eg: a foreshore area), must be considered to be hunting and pose a significant risk to Kangaroo Island wildlife. Cats that establish hunting areas will rarely change their habits and will remain a threat if not destroyed.

DOG & CAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

REDUCTION OF FERAL ANIMAL FOOD SOURCE

Removal of ¹⁴Carriion from Roadways and Paddocks:

The removal of carrion from roadways and paddocks is a key to ensuring the feral population of cats do not prosper into the future. Through partnership with the community and key stake-holders, policy proposals need to be developed to encourage the removal of unwanted carrion from roadsides and paddocks. This will be a timely process that will require the combined input of all concerned.

Recommendation:

1. That council in conjunction with the Kangaroo Island Cat Control Committee, oversee a project committee to specifically explore the efficacy of developing realistic and effective strategies for reducing the amount of carrion available as a food source for feral cats.

DOG & CAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

ENFORCEMENT

The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, requires that Council enforce the provisions of the Act and Regulations within in the area of the Council jurisdiction.

The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, also enables council to develop by-laws to provide effective enforcement capacity in areas where provisions of the Act are not relevant.

Actions

- Chief Executive Officer of Kangaroo Island Council to be appointed the Registrar under the Act, Regulations and By-Laws , to ensure the Dog and Cat Register is current and represents the known ownership details of **all “owned” dogs and cats on Kangaroo Island.**
- Council General Inspectors will act as the Dog and Cat Management Officers under the Act.
- Council General Inspectors will monitor all public places to ensure compliance of the *Act* and associated Regulations and By-Laws
- Council will implement an appropriate call system to respond to the public who have reported possible instances non-compliance of the provisions of the *Act* and associated Regulations and By-laws.
- Where necessary, Council will authorize Wardens under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1970*, and selected members of the public from time to time, as Dog and Cat Management Officers, to ensure an overall coverage of Dog and Cat Management occurs across Kangaroo Island.

Note:

The notion of controlling all dogs and cats on Kangaroo Island may sound like a tall order, however the very nature of an Island environment with a natural boundary such as the sea, makes management of all that lies within a measurable, achievable and very realistic goal. When considered against what is at stake it is really only a matter of application and commitment to the task. .

This is a long term plan for the benefit of Kangaroo Island and all its inhabitants.

The benefits of this strategy may not be realized for years to come, and as discomfoting as change and enforcement might be in the early days, the reality is that there will always be an element of resistance to change and enforcement. To do nothing today, will always cost more when it comes time to do it later.

The rewards and benefits to the Kangaroo Island community, the environment and its inhabitant , far out-weigh the discomfort of resistance from the few who fail to acknowledge the facts that form the basis for change.....

DOG & CAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

RESOURCES

Financial

The overall cost of administering the Dog and Cat Management Act far out-weighs the income received from the registration of dogs alone. While administrative burden of the Dog and Cat Management Act will remain relatively extant, some additional Council resources will be required to create and manage cat registration through the implementation of this plan. However because the anticipated numbers of cat registrations is quite low and the system for registration of cats basically involves a mirroring of the current dog registration system that is already in place, the burden on the council should be minimal.

Current Veterinary Clinic data base figures for owned cats on Kangaroo Island as of January 2005, are:

- 430 cats designated a “Not dead”
- 52 cats designated as “Not dead” and not designated as “de-sexed”

Note: These figures only reflect those cats that have been seen by the Vet on K.I.

From these figures alone, it is clear that Kangaroo Island is not unlike other council areas as far as cat ownership and de-sexing goes. Because most cat owners have their cats de-sexed anyway, any financial impact that may occur through a mandatory requirement for cat de-sexing as a part of cat registration, will mainly impact on some 12-15% of known cat owners. Further to this, by introducing an amnesty period for the introduction of new measures, the cost of de-sexing and micro chipping can be planned for over time by responsible cat owners and thereby have reduced impact on the cat owner.

Of more importance is the need to recognize the immediate outcome from implementation of this plan;

1. The clear defining of what constitutes an owned / domestic companion cat, and a feral cat;
2. A separation between strategies for managing the domestic owned cat and the feral cat, that can be used for a basis in addressing the long term issues involving feral cat management and, the increased protection of owned domestic cats against formal and indiscriminant killing.
3. The fees generated from the introduction of cat registration will not be as significant as that of dog registration, however the potential income from the enforcement of cat management measures may well be sufficient to supplement the functioning of feral cat control measures and the Kangaroo Island Cat Control Committee.

Dog and Cat Management Fees:

- Currently a percentage of income from dog management goes to the Dog and Cat Management Board and, provides support for costs incurred in managing dogs and cats from a Statewide perspective.
- Because there is no provision for cat management fees in the Dog and Cat Management Act, ALL monies collected through any cat management strategies on Kangaroo Island will go to council.

Possible purposes could be;

- Administrative costs for cat management
- Equipment for General Inspector role in cat management
- Resources for cat trapping and feral cat management strategies
- Support for KICCC with operating costs

Human Resources

It is anticipated that the General Inspectors in conjunction with other staff members, will be the primary instigators in the implementation of this plan. The enforcement of the Dog and Cat Management Act is the primary function of the General Inspector.

The Kangaroo Island Cat Control Committee, being a volunteer group with no regular form of funding, do provide an invaluable service that does involve administrative requirements.

Equipment / Resources

To implement this plan, the current pound which has been budgeted for replacement and inclusion of cat impoundment capabilities in this financial year, needs to be completed at the earliest possible opportunity.

In the interim, a partnership has already been developed with a local kennel provider to provide for cat impoundment when required. There is some cost involved in this process however the only cats that will make it to the impoundment will be those that are identified and for whom the owner can be exiated for failure to control cat. The penalty, in line with those for dogs, clearly outweighs the cost of cat impoundment.

Actions

- Council to continue to maintain a dog pound at the Kangaroo Island Council Operations Centre
- That Council to begin the renovation / upgrading of the Council Pound to include cat impoundment facilities as soon as possible.

ENDNOTE DESCRIPTORS

¹ **“Owned”** recognizes a dog or cat in this instance, that is under the acknowledged ownership of a person.

² **“Un-Owned”** recognizes a dog or cat in this instance, that no person accepts ownership or responsibility of

³ **“Boundary Secure”** recognizes the fact that Kangaroo Island has a natural sea-board boundary that separates it from the mainland and effectively provides security from the natural inflow of cats and dogs.

⁴ **“Intact”** in this case means a dog or cat that has not been de-sexed

⁵ **“Amnesty Period”** a designated period of time where special consideration applies in relation to law enforcement

⁶ **“Un-wanted”** means an owned dog or cat that is subject to registration and is no longer wanted by the owner

⁷ **“Secrets”** refers to a Tourist Information magazine provided free on Kangaroo Island

⁸ **“Micro-chipping”** means the inserting of a micro chip under the skin of a dog or cat for identification purposes

⁹ **“Feral”** in this document relates to any dog or cat that is un-owned

¹⁰ **“Obedience Training”** means any formal obedience training undertaken by a dog or cat and the owner

¹¹ **“De-Sexing”** means the surgical sterilization of a dog or cat

¹² **“Fragile Area”** means any foreshore area of Kangaroo Island that is not governed by National Parks

¹³ **“Unique Place”** means a place of uniqueness that without protective measures to preserve that place, irreparable damage or loss is a likely consequence..

¹⁴ **“Carrion”** means the dead exposed remains of an animal that lies at the point or close to where death occurred