



Yarriambiack
SHIRE COUNCIL

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

2021-2025



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1. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

A four year Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAM Plan) is a statutory requirement for every Victorian municipality under the Domestic Animal Act 1994. It is intended to provide Yarriambiack Shire Council (Council) with a management plan for all dogs, cats, and domestic animal businesses within the municipality. Council's existing Domestic Animal Management Plan was adopted by Council in November 2017 and expires at the end of 30 June 2021. This plan is expected to operate from 1 July 2021 through to 30 June 2025.

The plan addresses responsible pet ownership and animal welfare by focussing on registration, identification, dog attacks, nuisance behaviour, dangerous/ menacing/restricted breed dogs, and animal businesses. It also deals with Council's domestic animal control services, authorised officer training, emergency management and matters relating to the enforcement, compliance and evaluation of the Council's control measures.

The Domestic Animal Act 1994 sets out the following requirements:

68A Councils to prepare domestic animal management plans

- (1) *Every Council must, in consultation with the Secretary, prepare at 4 year intervals a domestic animal management plan.*
- (2) *A domestic animal management plan prepared by a Council must—*
 - (a) *set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this Act and the regulations; and*
 - (b) *outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district; and*
 - (c) *outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district—*
 - i) *to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and*
 - ii) *to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations, and any related legislation; and*
 - iii) *to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and*
 - iv) *to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and*
 - v) *to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and*
 - vi) *to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and*
 - vii) *to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations; and*
 - (d) *provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and*
 - (e) *provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and*
 - (f) *provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.*

(3) *Every Council must—*

- (a) *review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan; and*
- (b) *provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and*
- (c) *publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.*

2. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Domestic Animal Management Plan (the Plan) is to provide the Yarriambiack Shire Council with a strategic framework that delivers policy direction and action plans for animal management over the next 4 years.

The preparation of the Plan follows a recent amendment to the Domestic Animals Act 1994 (DAA) which now requires all Victorian councils to have a four year plan in place for the management of dogs and cats within their area.

The Plan integrates the developing expertise in domestic animal management with Council's own investigations to produce a program of action to be undertaken over the next four years (2021-2025). Relevant issues include those prescribed under relevant legislation and local laws as well as the generally understood notion of responsible pet ownership.

The Plan is confined to Council's management of dogs and cats under the DAA

2.1. WHAT WILL THE PLAN ADDRESS?

Section 68A of the DAA sets out the statutory requirements of the Plan which state that the Plan must:

- *Set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this Act and the regulations; and*
- *Outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district; and*
- *Outline programs, services, and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district-*
 - *to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and*
 - *to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations, and any related legislation; and*
 - *to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and*
 - *to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and*
 - *to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and*
 - *to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and*
 - *to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations; and*
- *Provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and*
- *Provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and*
- *Provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy, or review outlined under the plan.*

2.2. ANIMAL MANAGEMENT AT THE YARRIAMBIACK SHIRE COUNCIL

The Yarriambiack Shire Council is located at Warracknabeal. It covers an area of 7158 Sq Km.

The Shire is bounded by the Shires of Buloke, Hindmarsh, Mildura Rural City Council, Horsham Rural City Council and the Northern Grampians Shire Council. It includes the towns of Beulah, Brim, Hopetoun, Lascelles, Lubeck, Minyip, Murtoa, Patchewollock, Rupanyup, Sheep hills, Speed, Tempy, Warracknabeal, Woomelang and Yaapect.

In the 2016 Census, the Shires population was 6,674.

The Yarriambiack Shire Council has many key features – Yarriambiack Creek, Lake Lascelles, Dunmunkle Creek and Lake Marma.

2.3. STRUCTURE OF THIS PLAN

Section 2 describes the context for developing the Plan. It provides an overview of animal management at the Yarriambiack Shire Council including a brief overview of the shire, a summary of the DAA, key Council animal management statistics and Council animal management staffing. It also outlines the role of other stakeholders.

The **Statement of Purpose** is provided in Section 4. It includes overarching goals for the provision of Council's animal management services. It also identifies key issues that the plan will address.

The **Strategic Directions** contained in Section 5 outline how Council will achieve and implement its goals. Each strategic direction contains objectives and a discussion that explains the issues and Council's intentions.

2.4. PREVIOUS PLAN

In September 2007, a group of 10 Councils in northern and western Victoria engaged consultants to prepare a single Domestic Animal Management Plan that could then be customised by each Council in the group. Council's existing comprehensive animal management services, outlined in part 2.6 operated under this now expiring Domestic Animal Management Plan. Council is required to prepare a new four year Domestic Animal Management Plan.

The previous Domestic Animal Management Plan correctly focused Council's limited resources on the key issues confronting the Shire. These included unregistered dogs and cats, dogs at large and dog attacks on people and livestock and cats – both wild and nuisance. These key issues have not altered and remain a priority for Council. Existing Domestic Animal Controls

2.5. EXISTING DOMESTIC ANIMAL CONTROLS

Domestic Animal Act 1994

Council is responsible for implementing the Act, which has been in operation now for well over a decade. It replaced the former Dog Act. Its introduction heralded a new era in animal control with cats included for the first time in animal control, tougher penalties for dangerous dogs, clearer nuisance provisions and a greater emphasis on prevention.

The purpose of the DAA is to promote animal welfare, the responsible ownership of dogs and cats and the protection of the environment by providing for:

- *A scheme to protect the community and the environment from feral and nuisance dogs and cats.*
- *A registration and identification scheme for dogs and cats which recognises and promotes responsible ownership.*

- *The identification and control of dangerous dogs.*
- *A registration scheme for domestic animal businesses which promotes the maintenance of standards of those businesses.*
- *Matters related to the boarding of dogs and cats.*
- *Payments to the Treasurer from fees received by Councils under this Act; and*
- *Other related matters.*

A recent amendment to the Act saw the introduction of a requirement for all councils to develop and implement the four year animal management plans for dealing with all matters relating to dog and cat management issues. Section 1.1 of this Plan outlines what the Plan is required to include.

Council Local Laws

Council's existing local laws relating to animal management are summarised below. A mechanism will be established to ensure that they are reviewed over the life of the Plan.

Local Law No .5

Has been made under Section 111 of the Local Government Act. It exists to protect the wellbeing and livelihood of all animals within the shire of Yarriambiack and to protect people from nuisance and dangerous animals while keeping a well balanced approach to animal management

2.6. EXISTING DOMESTIC ANIMAL SERVICES

Council through its Local Laws Department provides the following domestic animal services to the community of the Shire:

- registration and identification for domestic dogs and cats, including renewal follow-ups and doorknocks;
- registration and identification of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs.
- dog attack (immediate - including 24-hour emergency service) and dog at large (as available) call-out services.
- cat trap hire services.
- vehicle patrols and nuisance complaint response.
- a domestic animal pound.
- euthanasia services where no alternative occurs.
- identification of, registration and audits of domestic animal businesses.
- prevention of cruelty to animals' authorisation and attendance services.
- infringement notice system and where required, prosecution services; and
- educational and informational services provided, as resources and opportunity allow.

2.7. DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT STATISTICS

Table 1: Animal Management Statistics

	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Dogs registered	1033	1162	1104
Cats registered	319	394	372
Dogs impounded	81	74	85
Dogs euthanised	2	2	3
Cats impounded	31	23	26
Cats euthanised	92	84	73
Number of declared dogs	0	0	1
Number of registered Domestic Animal Businesses	1	1	2

Table 2: Animal Management Complaints received by Council

	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Dogs wandering	74	68	75
Dog attack/rushing	10	12	14
Dog Barking	15	17	23
Cat trespassing (does not include impounded cat figures)	30	36	42

Comments on Table 1

The previous Domestic Animal Management Plan had emphasis on increasing pet registration rates. There has been a slight decrease in the last financial year in dogs and cats getting registered; this could be attributed to COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdowns and restrictions that were present during 2020/21. There has also been a slight decrease in dog attacks; whilst Dog impoundments have gradually increased. These issues will continue to be further addressed in this Domestic Animal Management Plan.

2.8. PRIORITIES IN DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

The following priorities have been identified for the period of the new Domestic Animal Management Plan.

- Increase numbers of registered and microchipped dogs and cats.
- Decrease dogs' attacks on people and animals
- Decrease dogs and cats wandering at large

- Decrease wild cat populations
- Encourage desexing of domestic animals
- Decrease euthanasia rates
- Increase community awareness with education programs and information availability
- Review Orders and increase community awareness of the orders
- Improve animal management officer training
- Monitor, evaluate and report performance

These priorities underlie Part 3 of this Plan, the Action Plan (which uses the 2012 template provided by The Animal Welfare Bureau of the Department of Primary Industries). Measurable and achievable targets, as well as proposed implementation actions are given in the Four Year Action Plan in Part 3.

3. FOUR YEAR ACTION PLAN

The following 4 year Action Plan is structured according to the 2017 Template provided by Animal Welfare Victoria. A general overview of Yarriambiack Shire Council's domestic animal management issues, controls, services, statistics and priorities can be read in Part 2 of this Plan.

It should be noted that Council is a small rural Council with limited resources. Council's animal management staff has many responsibilities, both administrative and in the community, including local laws, permit processing, prosecutions, fire prevention tasks and litter enforcement. Inevitably, this heavily committed small unit has limited opportunity and few resources to undertake additional service activities. Simple maintenance of existing basic services is of itself an ongoing challenge.

Consequently, this Action Plan is targeted to provide the maintenance and improvement of basic animal management services and controls within the municipality.

4. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Our GOALS for animal management are:

- To protect people and animals (pets, livestock, wildlife) from attack by dogs and cats.
- To create an environment where people and pets can peacefully co-exist within the community.
- To promote the welfare of companion animals; and
- To inform and educate the community about the needs of companion animals and promote responsible pet ownership.

KEY ISSUES for the delivery of animal management services in the Yarriambiack Shire Council are:

- Unregistered dogs and cats.
- Dogs wandering at large and attacks on livestock.
- Cats – both feral and nuisance cats.
- Limited resources compared to metropolitan councils.
- The large size of the Shire compared to metropolitan councils.

The Plan is based on the following priorities or STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS for the delivery of Council's animal management services:

- AMO training and development.
- Responsible pet ownership.
- Compliance and enforcement.
- Registration and Identification.
- Confinement of dogs and cats.
- Prevention of animal attacks and risk to the community.
- Animal welfare.
- Domestic animal businesses/ puppy farms.

5. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

AMO training and development

Objective

Ensure that all staff involved in animal management has the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work.

Discussion

All Animal Management Officers receive ongoing on the job training. This includes Safe Dog Handling, Apprehension & Dog Bite Prevention training.

All Animal Management Officers will be encouraged to have or attain the Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation and Certificate IV in Government.

Council will encourage officers to undergo further study to obtain higher animal management and welfare qualifications.

The annual review of this Plan will include a skills audit to identify any gaps in the skills available within the animal management team.

Council will ensure that annual performance reviews include a review of the staff member's skills and training undertaken in the last year.

Council will encourage the Animal Liaison Group (recommended in Section 5) to operate as an information sharing network.

6. Encouraging responsible pet ownership

Objectives

Implement appropriate community education programs in responsible pet ownership.

Discussion

Animal Welfare Victoria operates education programs and activities on a statewide basis.

These include:

Each primary school in Victoria is entitled to a free annual visit from a trained Pet Educator.

They educate the children on issues such as choosing an appropriate pet for the family pet health and welfare and the importance of registration. Particular attention is also given to recognizing the warning signs given by dogs, the correct way to approach a dog and what to do if approached by an aggressive dog. Council will encourage all schools in the Shire to take up this opportunity annually. Council will also consider augmenting the State Government's schools visitation program.

Council's community education programs in responsible pet ownership will focus on the following priorities:

- Registration and microchipping of dogs and cats.
- Desexing of dogs and cats; and
- Confinement of dogs and cats.

Council will ensure the Animal Welfare Victoria brochures on responsible pet ownership are appropriately distributed.

The Animal Management Liaison Group will consider regional approaches to education in responsible pet ownership.

7. Compliance and enforcement

Objectives

Maximise compliance with domestic animal laws, orders and regulations (State and Local).

Discussion

Council will review its procedures for dealing with animal management complaints and incidents in Year 2 of the Plan.

Council will review all existing animal management laws and orders in Year 3 of the Plan.

8. TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

This section outlines programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district.

Compliant with Section 68(A)(2)(b) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994.

8.1. CURRENT SITUATION

All Animal Management Officers receive ongoing on the job training and are encouraged to have or attain the Certificate IV in Animal Control & Regulation. Council's annual performance reviews include a review of the staff members' skills and training undertaken in the last year.

The current organisational structure and list of relevant staff is as follows:

Staff

- Local Laws Officer (1)
- Relieving Local Laws Officer (1)

Duties of all officers include responsibilities under a large variety of legislation. Domestic Animal Management services forms only a part of each role. These responsibilities include Local Laws administration, livestock control, parking enforcement, production of Local Law permits, preparation of infringement and offence prosecutions, administration of fundraising and events, issuing of fire prevention notices and subsequent works and litter control.

Authorised Officer Training	Current (2021)	Planned
Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation	Officer 1	Officer 2 (2022-23)
Cert IV in Local Government	Officer 1	Officer 2 (2022-23)
Dangerous Dog – Safe Dog Handling & Bite Prevention	Officer 1 & 2	Officer 1 & 2 (2023)
Industry Training	Officer 1	Officer 1 & 2 2021-22
OH&S Dealing with aggressive customers	Officer 1	Officer 1 & 2 (2022)

8.2. ORGANISATIONAL CHART



8.3. OUR PLANS

Objective 1: Develop a training policy that clearly identifies minimum training requirements and any additional training opportunities that should be undertaken by Animal Management Officers.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify minimum training requirements by consultation with management and staff	2021/2022	Documentation to be finalised and incorporated into an approved council training policy by end 2021
Identify additional training opportunities by consultation with management and staff	Ongoing	Evaluation of staff skill levels at all times and summarised at yearly staff performance appraisal.

Objective 2: Council will encourage officers to undergo further study to obtain higher animal management, welfare qualifications and, where practical, to attend relevant conferences and seminars.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify additional training opportunities e.g. prosecutions training, conflict management, communication / education technique, networking opportunities and conferences.	Ongoing	Annually – review how many officers undertook training that was in addition to their minimum requirements. Meet objective of providing at least 2 additional training opportunities annually

9. REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

This section outlines programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats.

Compliant with Section 68A(2)(c)(v) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994, (and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

9.1. CURRENT SITUATION

Our data - Council dog and cat registration figures 2019/20 and 2020/21 compared (see full Table in Part 2.8)

	2019/2020	2020/2021	Difference
Dogs registered	1162	1104	% -5.0
Cats registered	394	372	% -5.6

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council has no Orders or Local Laws relevant to the registration of cats and dogs. Council's current controls are under the Domestic Animal Act 1994. Council currently provides:

- registration and identification for dogs and cats, including renewal follow-ups;
- registration and identification of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs including identification programs.
- Council website updated regularly with pet registration information.

Our Education/Promotion Activities

Council currently provides:

- Regular media information releases on pet registration.
- Provision of online payment options
- Introduction of lifetime tags

Our Compliance Activities

Council currently provides:

- Issue of registration notices annually.
- Follow up of non-renewals with reminder notices and phone calls.
- Follow up of registration for animals notified as sold by domestic animal businesses; and
- Use of notice to comply, infringements where required, prosecution of owners with unregistered dogs and cats.

9.2. OUR PLANS

Objective 1: Improve the dog and cat registration renewal process to encourage prompt response to renewal invitations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Improve accuracy of council pet registration database by ensuring consistency in entry of data and appropriate training of staff members using the system.	Ongoing	Reduction of returned notices and contact from customers advising previous changes advised of not having been changed on database
Exploration of alternative methods of payment of renewal notices and issue of reminder notices	Ongoing	Increase of renewals paid prior to reminders being sent.

Objective 2: Increase dog and cat registration numbers by 5% each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure all seized and impounded animals are registered to their owner prior to release.	Prior to every release.	Review annual increase in registration numbers. Review number of dogs and cats being seized and impounded who are not registered to their owner.
Ensure all Animal Registration Renewals are followed up on, and that there are no outstanding registrations.	May/June after new Animal Registration period begins from April 10th	Review animal registration renewal numbers one month after April 10 th . Send out reminder notices to owners who have outstanding registration(s) Review numbers again one month after reminder letters are sent. Issue Infringements for not renewing registrations
Media articles	Annually	Review annual increase in registration numbers.
Website update	Annually as part of the website review and at time of any significant change	Review annual increase in registration numbers.
Ensure that animal complaints are checked for registration compliance as part of the process of dealing with the complaint. Issue of notices to comply for unregistered animals and appropriate follow up in non-compliance continues	Ongoing	Review annual increase in registration numbers and reduction in issue of notice to comply for non-registration.

10. NUISANCE

This section outlines programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance.

Compliant with Section 68A(2)(c)(vi) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994, (and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

10.1. CURRENT SITUATION

Our data - Council dog and cat nuisance complaint figures 2019/20 and 2020/21 compared (see full Table in Part 2.8)

	2019/2020	2020/21	Difference
Dogs wandering	68	75	10% Increase
Barking dog complaints	17	23	27% Increase

Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Local Law No.5 Animals 2010 includes local laws on maximum numbers of domestic animals on certain size allotments, excess animal permits, appropriate animal accommodation including nuisance provisions and removing animal excrement on Council land. Extensive community consultation was undertaken in the preparation of this Local Law

Our Education/Promotion Activities

Council currently undertakes the following educational and promotional activities in support of nuisance offences:

- Barking dog kit for dog owners and complainants.
- Availability of brochures and educational information.
- Local Media Press Release

Our Compliance Activities

Council treats the issues of animal nuisance very seriously. Council currently undertakes the following compliance activities in support of nuisance offences:

- Vehicle patrols and nuisance complaint response.
- Cat trap hire services.
- Barking dog kits
- Issuing of notice to comply, infringements and prosecutions of non-compliance issues.

Summary

The most significant issue to Council relating to nuisance animals is barking dog complaints and dogs wandering at large. Numbers of complaints regarding nuisance cats are low and the number of cats impounded has reduced significantly also. The rate of complaint of wandering dogs has reduced however the number of barking dog complaints continues to rise, and this will be an area of focus in this Domestic Animal Management Plan

10.2. OUR PLANS

Objective 1: Reduce cat impounding rates by 2% per year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide education material about cat enclosures and nuisance issues to cat owners with registration renewals	Commencing 2021/22 pet registration year	Evaluate number of owned cats being impounded and complaints received for trespassing cats.
Assist residents with dealing with cat trespass / nuisance problems by purchasing an additional cat cages and provide them to local residents for trapping nuisance cats	Ongoing	Number of traps purchased Numbers hired out Number of cats impounded
Media release on responsible cat ownership	Annually	Evaluate number of owned cats being impounded and complaints received for trespassing cats.

Objective 2: Reduce dog nuisance complaints by 5% each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review of current orders and consideration of additional orders for "on lead" areas	Annually	Number of incidents involving dogs that are with their owners but not on lead.
Produce barking dog kit and procedure	2021/2022	Number of ongoing barking dog complaints
Review the number and placement of dog faeces bag dispensers and increase numbers in areas that require them.	Annually	Number of bags used in each area.
Media release on responsible dog ownership and nuisance issues	Annually	Evaluate number of dogs being impounded and complaints received for wandering dogs.
Ensure ongoing promotion of the health benefits of owning a dog and exercising your dog regularly.	Ongoing	In conjunction with Councils healthy living programs
Ensure ongoing promotion of responsible pet ownership, dog training and dog walking opportunities.	Ongoing	Evaluate number of new dog registrations.

11. DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

This section outlines programs, services, and strategies to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations.

Compliant with Section 68A(2)(c)(vii) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994, (and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

11.1. CURRENT SITUATION

Our data - Council declared dog figures 2019/20 and 2020/21 compared (see full Table in Part 2.8)

	2019/2020	2020/2021
Dangerous dogs registered	0	0
Menacing dogs registered	0	1
Restricted breed dogs registered	0	0

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Dangerous, menacing, and restricted breed dogs are controlled by the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*.

Our Education/Promotion Activities

Council currently undertakes the following educational and promotional activities, including providing information of dangerous, menacing, and restricted breed dogs:

- Information regarding declared dogs on Councils website;
- Availability of brochures and information regarding declared dogs.

Our Compliance Activities

Council treats all dangerous, menacing, and restricted breed dogs very seriously. Council currently undertakes the following compliance activities in support of such offences:

- Declaration of dogs in appropriate situations.
- Audits of potential areas housing dangerous dogs (guard).
- Registration and identification of dangerous, menacing, and restricted breed dogs including audits of properties containing declared dogs; and
- Updating of declared dog database.

Summary

Whilst there are currently no declared dogs in the Yarriambiack Shire Council, there is constant consideration is given to any dogs that are involved in any type of incident that they may be declared as dangerous. Council has adopted a policy that does not allow registration of restricted or declared dangerous dogs within the Shire.

11.2. OUR PLANS

Objective 1: Identify and register all Declared Dogs in the municipality.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Inspect all industrial properties in the municipality for dogs housed or kept for guarding purposes	Annually	All guard dogs either removed from premises or declared appropriately
Educate the community about what is a declared dog	2021/2022 & 2022/2023	Media releases and website updates

Objective 2: Effectively inspect and audit all declared dog premises annual to ensure they are following the keeping requirements.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Inspect all premises housing declared dogs	Annually	Compliance with requirements

12. DOG ATTACKS

This section outlines programs, services, and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals.

Compliant with Section 68A(2)(c)(iii) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994, (and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

12.1. CURRENT SITUATION

Our data - Council dog attack and rushing complaint figures 2019/20 and 2020/21 compared (see full Table in Part 2.8)

	2019/2020	2020/2021	Difference
Reported dog attack and rushing complaints	12	14	15% Increase

Our Education/Promotion Activities

Council currently undertakes the following educational and promotional activities in support of dog attack issues:

- Media releases
- Council website information.
- Brochures and information available at Council offices.

Our Compliance Activities

Council treats the issues of dog attack very seriously. Council currently undertakes the following compliance activities in support of nuisance offences:

- vehicle patrols and nuisance complaint response.
- dog attack (immediate - including 24-hour emergency service) call-out services.
- investigation of reported attacks including issuing of notice to comply, infringement notices and court prosecutions

Summary

The number of dog attacks reported has increased.

Confinement of dogs is a priority because the instances of wandering dog's increases risk to other pets, humans, and livestock, and consumes time and resources of Local Laws officers. Desexed animals are less likely to wander so Council will continue to encourage people to have their pet desexed.

Council will ensure there is information available on the importance of animal confinement at Council service centres and other key locations. Council will also encourage responsible pet ownership practices and continue to investigate methods of encouraging and assisting this behaviour.

12.2. OUR PLANS

Objective 1: Decrease number of dog attacks in the community by 2% each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Publicise key dog attack prevention messages (e.g., confinement of dogs to property, leash laws etc) through media articles, mail outs, website info.	Annually	Compare number of reported dog attack incidents
Develop dog attack enforcement and investigation policy	2021/2022	To be developed
Create dog attack database	2021/2022	Database to be used to identify “hot spots” and trends and patterns of attacks
Run an education campaign targeting dog attack issues	2021/2022	To be targeted at the issue at the time and evaluated at the conclusion of the campaign with comparison to previous data.

13. OVERPOPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA

This section outlines programs, services, and strategies to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats.

Compliant with Section 68A(2)(c)(iv) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994, and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).

13.1. CURRENT SITUATION

Our data - Council dog and cat euthanasia figures 2019/20 and 2020/21 compared (see full Table in Part 2.8)

	2019/2020	2020/2021
Impounded dogs euthanased	2	3
Impounded cats euthanased	84	73

Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council's pound and euthanasia policies are guided by the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*. Council operates under its own pound and policies and procedures in accordance with the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and code of practice for shelters and pounds.

Our Compliance Activities

Council currently undertakes the following compliance activities in support of increasing registration and thereby reducing euthanasia rates:

- renewal follow-ups for registration and identification for domestic dogs and cats.
- vehicle patrols and nuisance complaint response.
- registration of animals released from the pound
- Follow up of registration for animals notified as sold by domestic animal businesses; and
- Use of notice to comply, infringements where required, prosecution of owners with unregistered dogs and cats.

Summary

The number of cat's euthanased has shown a moderate decrease in the last financial year due to an increase in Cat registration, microchipping and desexing. Significant work has been done by Council in partnership with local animal rescue groups to rehome unwanted cats; this will continue to be a priority in this Domestic Animal Management Plan.

13.2. OUR PLANS

To decrease euthanasia rates of seized animals. Council plans to achieve this objective by increasing the registration rates, identification and return to owners will increase.

Objective 1: Identify all illegally operating Domestic Animal Breeding establishments in the municipality

Activity	When	Evaluation
Follow up of complaints relating to breeding establishments and monitoring of advertisements and excess pet registrations.	Ongoing	Compare number of council registered breeding establishments before and after campaign

Objective 2: Identify reasons for euthanasia of unclaimed animals

Activity	When	Evaluation
Create database to clearly define euthanasia reasons i.e. unable to be rehoused due to health/temperament issues rather than no new home available	Ongoing	Compare numbers of animals euthanased .

Objective 3: Reduce number of animals euthanased by 5% each year (not including wild, feral, or diseased animals)

Activity	When	Evaluation
Look at offering subsidised cat desexing program	Annually	Reduction of animals euthanased
Continue re-homing programs	Annually	Reduction of animals euthanased

Objective 6: Reduced number of wild and feral cats in the community.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Continue to offer cat trapping program to residents	Annually	Numbers of wild or feral cats impounded via trapping program

14. DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

This section outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations, and any related legislation.

Compliant with Section 68A(2)(c)(ii) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994, and also Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(d),(f).

14.1. CURRENT SITUATION

Our data - Council registered Domestic Animal Business figures 2015/16 and 2016/17 compared (see full Table in Part 2.8)

	2019/2020	2020/2021
Shelter/pound	1	1
Boarding facilities	1	1
Breeding/rearing establishments	0	0
Training facilities	0	1
Pet shops	0	0

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Domestic animal business registration is controlled by the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*.

Council will continue to investigate all reports on domestic animal breeding businesses and seek compliance for any non-registered domestic animal business by conducting door knocks and property inspections.

Our Education/Promotion Activities

Council provides information and guidance to every domestic animal business on the necessity of registration, the procedure, and the requirements to be fulfilled under the Act.

Our Compliance Activities

Council currently undertakes the following compliance activities in support of ensuring compliance with businesses registered and the identification of unregistered businesses by;

- Annual audits of registered businesses.
- Production of work plans to ensure DAB's meet the requirements of the relevant code of practice.
- Follow up of properties identified with excess animals and any complaints regarding suspected DAB's.

Summary

Yarriambiack Shire Council does not have many animal businesses. There are mandatory Codes of Practice for the operation of breeding and rearing establishments, boarding establishments, shelters, and pounds. Pet shops and breeding and rearing establishments. Council is obliged to ensure each establishment complies with the relevant Code of Practice with regular audits.

14.2. OUR PLANS

Objective 1: Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses in the municipality.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify all businesses that should be registered DABs in the municipality, using yellow pages (or similar, including online sites) identify businesses selling pets / pet products / services in the municipality. Follow up to determine whether they are and should be registered with council.	Annually	Compare number of registered DABs before and after activity
Media release to advise the public of the definition of a domestic animal business	2021/2022	Compare number of registered DABs before and after activity

Objective 2: Ensure compliance of all registered domestic animal businesses.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Audit all registered businesses	End of April of each year	Rate of compliance of registered businesses

15. OTHER MATTERS

This section provides for the review of other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district.

Compliant with Section 68A(2)(e) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994.

15.1. CURRENT SITUATION

Our data – Yarriambiack Shire Council has over the past few years experienced drought, fires and floods. This is an ongoing issue of concern and emphasis has been placed by the shire on preparation of a MEMP, other related sub plans and general emergency management procedures and processes.

While full responsibility for domestic animals in all circumstances rests with the owner of the animal, Council needs to consider issues of domestic animal management when considering evacuation procedures and emergency relief centres. Housing and feeding animals may become an important issue, when people bring domestic animals into relief centres or domestic animal businesses require evacuation.

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Provision for emergency management planning for domestic animals should be included within the MEMP. Council might also develop separate plan/procedures/contact lists as appropriate by the Emergency Management Committee of Council.

Our Education/Promotion Activities

Council may need to undertake community education about owner responsibility for domestic animals in emergency planning.

This may include the provision of advice/brochures/media releases on what to consider for pets in an emergency – include their needs as part of your emergency planning, e.g. food, water, bowls, bedding, cage, medication, registration and microchipping to help reunite pets with their owners after emergencies, external identification – e.g. collar with registration tag

Summary

Domestic animal management planning a municipal emergency can become a significant logistical issue, even though primary responsibility rests on the owners of domestic animals. Confusion, conflict and diverted resources can all result from a failure to consider domestic animals in evacuation and relief centres. The numbers of animals involved in domestic animal businesses could further aggravate these issues.

15.2. OUR PLANS

Objective 1: To ensure consideration is given to the management of Domestic Animals during emergency events.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review all emergency management plans relevant to domestic animals	Annually	Review results and any feedback after an event
Officers to maintain involvement in emergency management groups within the shire to ensure that the needs of domestic animals in the event of an emergency are met	Ongoing	Involvement of officers at emergency management meetings and discussions and input into sub-plans and organisational plans relating to domestic animals.

16. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING

This section provides for the annual review of the Plan and Annual Reporting.

Compliant with Section 68A(3)(a)(b)(c) of the Domestic Animal Act 1994 as below:

68A(3) Every Council must—

- (a) review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan*
- (b) provide the Department of Primary Industries' Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan*
- (c) publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.*

Our Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Process

Council will monitor performance of the animal management services that are detailed in this plan by reporting annually through the Councils established reporting system.

Review Cycle/Date for This Plan

Council has a comprehensive business planning and monitoring system in place. Any new initiatives or ongoing programs identified in this plan will be recorded in that system and reported against in accordance with any actions shown in the previous sections.

This system also feeds into Councils annual report.

This plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Local Laws Coordinator in conjunction with council officers and key stakeholders. A report will be presented to Council and any amendments made to the plan will be forwarded the secretary.

The plan will be reviewed, and a new Domestic Animal Management Plan will be completed on or before 30 June 2021.