CONTENTS

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLANS ................................................................. 4
68A COUNCILS TO PREPARE DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLANS ........ 4
INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................... 5
CUSTOMER REQUESTS AND COMPLAINTS – ANIMAL MANAGEMENT ........................................ 8
1.0 TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS ................................................................ 9
1.1 CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA .................................................. 10
1.2 OUR FUTURE PLANS ....................................................................................... 11
2.0 REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION ............................................................. 12
2.1 CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA ................................................ 12
2.2 STATE GOVERNMENT ACTS, COUNCIL LOCAL LAWS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES .............. 15
2.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION / PROMOTION ACTIVITIES .................................. 16
2.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES .................................................... 16
2.5 SUMMARY ....................................................................................................... 17
2.6 OUR PLANS ..................................................................................................... 17
3.0 NUISANCE DOGS AND CATS ........................................................................ 19
3.1 CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA ................................................ 20
3.2 OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES .......... 24
3.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES .................................... 24
3.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES .................................................... 25
3.5 SUMMARY ....................................................................................................... 25
3.6 OUR PLANS ..................................................................................................... 26
4.0 DOG ATTACKS ................................................................................................ 28
4.1 CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA ................................................ 28
4.2 OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES .......... 29
4.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES .................................... 29
4.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES .................................................... 29
4.5 SUMMARY ....................................................................................................... 30
4.6 OUR PLANS ..................................................................................................... 30
5.0 DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS ........................................... 31
5.1 CURRENT SITUATION ..................................................................................... 31
5.2 OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES .......... 31
5.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES .................................... 32
5.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES .................................................... 32
5.5 SUMMARY ....................................................................................................... 32
5.6 OUR PLANS ..................................................................................................... 33
6.0 OVERPOPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA ....................................................... 34
6.1 CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA ................................................ 34
6.2 OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES .......... 35
6.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES .................................... 35
6.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES .................................................... 35
6.5 SUMMARY ....................................................................................................... 35
6.6 OUR PLANS ..................................................................................................... 36
7.0 DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES .................................................................... 39
7.1 CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA ................................................ 39
7.2 OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES .......... 39
7.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES .................................... 39
7.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES .................................................... 39
7.5 SUMMARY ....................................................................................................... 40
7.6 OUR PLANS ..................................................................................................... 40
8.0 OTHER MATTERS ............................................................................................ 41
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>OUR PLANS</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>OUR PLANS</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Domestic Animal Management Plans

Under Section 68A of the Domestic Animals Act, every Council must prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan, as follows:

68A Councils to prepare Domestic Animal Management Plans

(1) Every Council must, in consultation with the Secretary (of the Department of Environment and Primary Industries), 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.
INTRODUCTION
Location of Mildura Rural City Council and Population Information:

Local Government Area
Location: 500 km north-west of Melbourne
Area (2011): 22,330 km²
Pop. Density (2011): 2.5 person’s per km²
Major Centres: Mildura; Red Cliffs; Irymple; Merbein; Ouyen

Mildura Rural City Council (Council) is located in the far North-West of the state and is approximately 543 km from Melbourne/Victoria with its borders comprising of Swan Hill Rural City Council, West Wimmera, Hindmarsh, Yarriambiack and Buloke local government areas.

Mildura is located at the junction of three states – Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia. Council area covers approximately 10% of the State of Victoria and, as at May 2017 has a population of approximately 53,326. The population is expected to continue to grow into the future, at an estimated 0.8% per annum, estimated to reach 59,439 by 2031.

This document will guide domestic animal management by the Council for the next four years (2017-2021). The Plan identifies strategies and actions to implement the vision, aims and objectives for animal management and contains recommendations for a wide range of actions to be undertaken by the Council in a programmed approach during this time. These actions will enable Council to maintain a balance between the competing interests of animal management and to accommodate new requirements.

Council provides services that maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits to the people of Mildura’s Municipality. Animal management has become more diverse and demanding due to the introduction of various Acts and Orders. Knowledge of both human and animal behaviour is a must for those working in this field. There is growing recognition that enforcement of laws will not, on its own, result in lasting, voluntary changes in behaviours and needs to be supplemented by a range of non-regulatory approaches such as public education.
There is now considerable evidence to support our understanding of the benefits from owning pets. This implies a potential new role for Council in harnessing the benefits of animal and pet ownership or at least maintaining the ability of the community to continue to own animals or pets. In this environment, it is essential that Council take a strategic approach to managing animals and pets in its community.

This Plan will provide Council with a sound basis and direction from which it can plan, co-ordinate and make future decisions to meet the needs of the community for the years to come.

Every year the Council Local Laws department receives approximately 3000 requests relating to animal control and management issues. The majority of requests are comprised of:

- dogs at large/roaming
- barking dogs
- stray cats
- animal welfare issues
- dogs rushing and attacking

Pets are widely recognised for their physical and mental health benefits, their positive impact in the development of children’s social skills and self esteem, and their importance as companions for single individuals and the aged. Along with the positive impact that animals have on humans, there are accompanying challenges such as:

- noise and nuisance behaviour
- aggression, and
- the problem of stray or unwanted animals

Traditionally, pet owners in rural areas of our municipality do not seem to find animals at large or roaming an issue. Council recognises the need to look at ways of changing this thinking to reduce the occurrence of attacks on people, animals and livestock.

The purpose of the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017 – 2021 is to describe the current situation in terms of:

- data and context
- rules, regulations, laws and policies
- education and promotional activities
- compliance and
- future plans

The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017 – 2021 focuses on key animal management practices within our municipality which includes:

- registration and identification of domestic animals
- nuisance animals
- dog attacks
- dangerous, menacing or restricted breeds
- overpopulation and euthanasia
- a review of:
  - domestic animal businesses within our municipality
  - training and development of our local laws officers
  - future reviews of the Domestic Animal Management Plan
The process that has been applied in developing the Domestic Animal Management Plan involves several steps:

1. The development of the Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan
2. The community is asked to comment and/or make submission on the draft plan
   - Comments and submissions will be open between 29 September 2017 till 20 October 2017
   - The draft plan will be available in hard copy from each of Council’s Customer Service Centres/Public Libraries and Council Website
3. The community submissions that have been received are compiled and considered

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE
PREVIOUS FINANCIAL YEAR KEY STATISTICS 1 July 2016 – 30 June 2017

DOGS AND CATS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dogs registered</td>
<td>7591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs impounded</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs claimed by owner</td>
<td>481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs rehoused</td>
<td>514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs euthanised</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cats registered</td>
<td>1277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cats impounded (domestic and feral)</td>
<td>1030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cats claimed by owner</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cats rehoused</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cats euthanised</td>
<td>617</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CUSTOMER REQUESTS AND COMPLAINTS – ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dogs to collect</td>
<td>886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs wandering at large</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs rushing and menacing</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog attacks reported</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs barking</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog welfare</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog trap requests</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cats to collect</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat trap requests and wandering issues</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat welfare complaints</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock wandering and collection</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock welfare</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.0 TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

*Domestic Animals Act 1994, Section 68(A)(2)(b)*

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.

1.1 CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA

Mildura Rural City Council has eight (8) authorised Local Laws Officers that cover an area of 22,330 square kilometres.

As of 1st July 2017 there were the following animals registered within our municipality:

- 7591 dogs
- 1277 cats
- Seven (7) registered domestic animal businesses consisting of:
  - Three (3) Pet Shops
  - Three (3) Boarding Kennels
  - Council Pound

**Training**

A variety of training is offered and provided for all Council Authorised Officers; training options are reviewed annually to ensure they are relevant and up to date.

Training options include:

- animal handling courses
- animal behavioural training
- investigation and statement taking courses
- prosecution courses
- information technology courses and industry related seminars
- conferences, training and briefings from:
  - Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources
  - Mildura Rural City Council contracted Veterinary provider
  - Australian Institute of Animal Management Inc (AIAM)
  - Warner Institute of Business
  - other relevant Associations/Organisations

All Council Local Laws Officers have or are in the process of obtaining:

Continuous on the job training

Annual performance reviews help to identify any skills and training gaps which are used to plan future skills development.
## 1.2 OUR FUTURE PLANS

**Objective 1:** Maintain a detailed training register for individual officers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A training register has been created to record each officer’s name, completed training and additional training opportunities</td>
<td>Performance and Development Plan (PDP) in place at the start of employment</td>
<td>Annually reviewed to ensure accuracy and to determine whether proposed training goals have been met for each officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 2:** Ensure all authorised officers have completed their minimum training requirements within the first 1-2 years of commencing employment with Mildura Rural City Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify minimum training requirements for Local Law Officers and document in individual Performance and Development Plans.</td>
<td>Start of employment and ongoing</td>
<td>Progress is checked within the first six months of employment and again at the twelve month interval. Final check undertaken at 2 year interval</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 3:** Offer additional training opportunities for all Local Law Officers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify additional training opportunities e.g. prosecutions training, conflict management, time management, investigation &amp; case management and animal behaviour training/workshops.</td>
<td>Ongoing (as training becomes available) Performance and Development Plan currently in place</td>
<td>Annually reviewed as part of ongoing performance review by Local Laws Coordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11
2.0 REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

*Domestic Animals Act 1994, Section 68A(2)(c)(v)*

Outlines programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats.

*Other applicable sections of the Act would include Sections 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f).*

2.1 CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA

Responsible pet ownership begins from the moment a new animal is purchased or picked up. When choosing a family pet, think carefully about the breed or type that will best suit your family circumstances and your ability to give it the proper care it deserves. The basic care requirements would include allocation of time for training, exercising and playing with your pet on a weekly basis. A happy, healthy pet will be less likely to incur bad behaviours and thus less likely to cause issues or problems. These first steps are a good start to helping you meet your legal obligations as a pet owner.

Currently Council promotes responsible dog and cat ownership through the:

- Enforcement of legal requirements, including: identification and registration
- Education of pet owners about:
  - animal welfare issues which include food, water, shelter, exercise, disease prevention and parasite control
  - community issues which include roaming, nuisance, noise, faeces disposal and environmental damage caused by dogs
- Promotion of desexing through reduced registration costs
- Programs and initiatives communicated to residents via letters and information packs, through Councils web page and in the Councils monthly ‘Community Matters’ newsletter

**Current Objective:**

Maximise the number of registered and identified domestic animals (pets) within our municipality.

This objective is currently being achieved through a number of key initiatives which include:

- **Microchipping**
  All dogs and cats must be microchipped pursuant to the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* prior to registration. It is important to understand that:
  - Microchipping does not replace the requirement of pet owners to register their pet with Council
  - Residents are responsible for updating their contact details if they move or circumstances change

Microchipping is a painless, once off procedure performed by a vet. A permanent microchip is implanted into the loose skin (scruff) of a dog or cat’s neck providing the ability to identify the pet and locate the owners through the updated contact details obtained when the microchip is scanned.

On the 1st of May 2007 it became a mandatory requirement to microchip pets when registering with Council. Veterinary exemptions may be obtained in exceptional circumstances such as health.
• **Registration and Discounts**

It is an offence under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, for a dog or cat not to be registered within your local Council. From the age of three months, a pet owner must register their dog or cat by the 10th of April each year. Council undertakes random registration door knocks on an annual basis through the municipality to ensure compliance with current legislation.

The purpose of registration includes:
- Encouraging responsible dog and cat management
- Allowing lost dogs and cats to be reunited with their owners
- Providing proof of ownership

Discounted registration prices apply to:
- Pensioner Entire (non desexed) Dog and Cat
- Desexed Dog and Cat
- Pensioner Desexed Dog and Cat

Trend analysis shows that domestic animals generally end up at the Animal Pound due to out of date owner contact details or no microchip at all. Once domestic animals arrive at the Pound, they are placed on Council’s Lost Animal web page. If the animal owners come forward, there are mandatory regulations that need to be followed before the dogs and cats can be released from the pound which includes:
- Updating the owners contact details
- The dog or cat must be microchipped and registered with Council

**Council recommends that pet owners update their contact details with Council on an annual basis** through Council’s Customer Service department (03) 5018 8100.

• **Identification Tags**

When registering your dog or cat, pet owners will receive animal ID tags to place on their animal’s collar for identification purposes. Animal ID tags hold important owner contact details that help Council to make contact with owners of lost pets quickly which saves:
- pets from the additional trauma of being placed in Council’s pound for lengthy periods of time and
- pet owners the additional cost incurred from:
  - daily housing fees and
  - release fees

It is an offence under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, for a dog or cat not to wear a current Council issued registration tag. To assist residents, Council offers a free service to replace registration tags if they become unreadable or are lost.

For further information, please contact Council Customer Service on (03) 5018 8100.
CURRENT STATISTICS

DOGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINANCIAL YEAR 1 July – 30 June</th>
<th>REGISTERED</th>
<th>IMPOUNDED</th>
<th>CLAIMED BY OWNERS</th>
<th>REHOUSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/2015</td>
<td>7546</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/2016</td>
<td>7569</td>
<td>1076</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/2017</td>
<td>7591</td>
<td>1116</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DOMESTIC CATS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINANCIAL YEAR 1 July – 30 June</th>
<th>REGISTERED</th>
<th>IMPOUNDED</th>
<th>CLAIMED BY OWNERS</th>
<th>REHOUSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/2015</td>
<td>1269</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/2016</td>
<td>1330</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/2017</td>
<td>1277</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2 STATE GOVERNMENT ACTS, COUNCIL LOCAL LAWS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES


- Local Laws are a range of rules that Council enforces to ensure community safety and public order. All residents/ratepayers and visitors are responsible for complying with Council Community Local Law No 2.

Community Local Law No 2, Part 2 outlines a range of rules regulating the keeping of animals.

Community Local Law No.2 - 2.1 Keeping of Animals
A person must not, without a permit: -
- keep or allow to be kept more than four different types of animals on any one property at any time; or
- keep or allow to be kept any more animals or types of animal than set out in the following table:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF ANIMALS</th>
<th>MAXIMUM NUMBERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROPERTY AREA NOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EXCEEDING 0.5 HECTARE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cats</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Birds (includes Pigeons)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Mice</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea Pigs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferrets</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Rabbits</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigs</td>
<td>Not Permitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse/Donkey/Mules</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goats</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ostriches</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emus</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosters</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other agricultural animal</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In determining whether to grant a permit for the keeping of animals where the number exceeds that set out in the Table above, the Council must take into account:

- the zoning of the property
- the proximity to adjoining properties
- the amenity of the area
- the type and additional numbers of animals to be kept
- the likely effects on the owners or occupiers of adjoining properties
- the adequacy of animal shelters
- the effect on the property’s drainage
- any other matter relevant to the circumstances associated with the application

Penalty: 5 penalty units for any breach

- Council uses a range of policies and procedures to help guide decision making and provide services for the community. Local Laws Officers are authorised to seize or impound unregistered dogs and cats under the Domestic Animals Act 1994. Council has policies and procedures associated with the seizure and impounding of unregistered and/or unidentified dogs and cats (the Domestic Animals Act 1994).

2.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION / PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

Council’s current education and promotional activities include:-

- Advertising prior to registration due dates to remind and inform current and new pet owners about microchipping and registration requirements. The advertising mediums used include:
  - Councils Community News publication and website
  - the local newspaper
  - the local radio stations and
  - the local TV stations
- Extensive yearly doorknocking to inform and educate
- Extensive patrolling activity to inform and educate pet owners
- Sunraysia Animal Rehousing Group (S.A.R.G.) - Paws along the Murray Walk. Council uses this event to encourage pet owners to bring their dogs down to the river front to exercise and mix with other dog owners.

2.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

Council’s current compliance activities include:-

- Implementation of door knock program targeting unregistered animals
- Ringing all owners of non-renewed animal registration to ensure animal registrations are renewed
- Year round patrols of the municipality
- Publicising the requirement to register pets over the age of three months in the local paper
- Requiring impounded animals to be microchipped and registered prior to release
- Issuing notices and/or infringements for animals found unregistered
- Prosecuting owners of unregistered animals where infringements remain unpaid and animals remain unregistered
- Monitoring advertisements relating to animals for sale to ensure microchip numbers are provided
- Follow up checks regarding microchipping and registration on rehoused animals
2.5 SUMMARY

Due to the mixture of education and enforcement tools used to inform pet owners of their registration requirements, registrations of dogs and cats within the municipality have remained steady due to an extensive registration renewal and new registration compliance activities.

Over the next four years, Council anticipates having two Local Laws Officers out during May to July, doing random door knocking and checking for unregistered dogs and cats. Future targeted areas will include new subdivisions, past untargeted areas and small townships outside the Mildura urban area but still within the borders of our municipality.

Council officers also ring all owners that have not renewed their animal registrations from the previous year to ensure animals are kept currently registered and owner details are current and correct.

2.6 OUR PLANS

Objective 1: Ensure registration renewal of expired animal registrations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Laws Officers ring all owners with expired animal registrations,</td>
<td>Process commenced 2015 -</td>
<td>Animal registrations are current along with owners information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amnesty for non-renewed animals until all animal owners have been</td>
<td>ongoing for 2017 – 2021 DAMP</td>
<td>Maintenance of registration data to ensure departed and deceased animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reminded</td>
<td></td>
<td>are recorded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increased registration and renewal rates, more animals also being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>returned to owner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure all seized and impounded animals are microchipped and registered</td>
<td>Prior to every animal</td>
<td>Review annual increase in registration numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prior to release</td>
<td>released from the Pound</td>
<td>Review number of dogs and cats being impounded that are not registered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Increased promotion of registration requirements in the local media and on Council’s website

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prior to 10th April each year</td>
<td>Review local media campaigns to ensure registration is advertised and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>promoted annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Consistent and constant information available on Councils website</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Objective 3: Return of animals to their registered owners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Currently registered dog and cats found at large by Local Laws Officers will be returned to owner without charge on the first occasion where possible</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Encouraging responsible animal ownership and minimises currently registered animals at the pound. Increased opportunity for education in relation to responsible animal ownership and improve local satisfaction with Council Local Laws Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.0 NUISANCE DOGS AND CATS

*Domestic Animals Act 1994, Section 68A(2)(c)(vi)*

Outlines programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance. Other applicable sections of the Act include Sections 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

3.1 CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA

Nuisance behaviours include:

- Noise (mostly barking dogs)

Complaints to Council regarding noise have been at a similar number over the last few years. In an attempt to assist residents and reduce complaints, the Local Law’s department have developed information brochures that are supplied to residents regarding noise nuisances. Council suggests that residents speak to the animal owners of barking dogs in the first instance before reporting the incident to Council. It is Council’s experience that the vast majority of noise complaints, involve animal owners being unaware of the nuisance/issue that their pets are causing and are happy to look at ways of reducing the unwanted behaviour. In most instances, people do not want to confront the owners of nuisance animals and prefer to remain anonymous. All complainants to Council are kept confidential and are only for Council’s use.

Council has a standard operating procedure for barking dog complaints to ensure that all complaints received are handled in a consistent manner by authorised officers. The procedure steps out the required processes involved to register and investigate the complaint, liaise with the dog owner and surrounding neighbours and feedback to the complainant.

Noise, such as barking, will only be considered a nuisance if it is persistent enough to disrupt resident’s peace, comfort, convenience or quality of life. Once Council receives a barking dog complaint, Council will send out a Local Laws Officer to visit the owner of the barking dog to inform them of their legal requirements and offer some suggestions on how to stop excessive barking.

The process for dealing with nuisance animals (mostly barking dogs) tries to balance the interests and rights of both the dog owner and the complainant. Some cases may require the complainant and dog owner to keep a diary of the noise (barking dates and times) to assist in the investigation. After several complaints, Council authorised officer’s door knock neighbouring properties to see if it is affecting more than just the complainant before deciding on further action such as the issuing of a barking dog infringement. In Council’s experience, the majority of cases are resolved after the first complaint.

Statistics show that the majority of cases that involve dogs being a nuisance is a direct result of boredom or being visually stimulated by people walking their dogs past the property, cats on the fence or clouds in the sky.

These issues can be addressed through:

- training
- provision of toys
- blocking the visual stimulus (if possible) or
- increasing a dogs exercise time
Reasons why dogs bark can include:

- Territorial
- Playfulness
- Provoked intentionally or unintentionally by humans, wildlife or other domesticated pets
- Hunger or thirst
- Boredom
- Neglect
- Sickness or poor diet
- Attention seeking or communication
- Lack of space or exercise
- Separation anxiety

The preferable approach to the problem of barking dogs is prevention. There are several ways prevention can be assisted, including:

- Engaging dog in training or puppy school at a young age to prevent them from learning the nuisance barking habit
- Exercise and attention
- Avoiding spoiling
- Provision of a kennel to provide shelter and warmth for a pet
- Provision of a large, raw bone to draw their attention for long period of time
- Moving the pet to the backyard or away from the direct line of vision from people walking past
- Mental stimulation

- Wandering at Large (WAL)

Wandering at Large complaints reported to Council have remained at a steady number over the last four (4) years. The major reasons for wandering at large nuisance dogs is due to gates being left open or inappropriate fencing that makes it easy for animals to jump over, dig under or push over or through the existing fencing. In Councils experience most complainants do not want to confront the owners of nuisance animals and prefer to remain anonymous. The identity of all complainants to Council are kept confidential and are only for Council’s use.

It is against the law for:

- Dogs to wander the streets because they can cause vehicle accidents, damage to property, intimidate the public and knock down young children or the elderly. If a dog is found “at large” and seized by Council, it may be taken to the Council Pound and the owners could receive an infringement plus be liable for any pound fees incurred
- A member of the public to pick up a stray dog and keep it in their custody. The public have a duty of responsibility to return the stray dog to its owner, contact Council or take it to the Council Pound. If a member of the public contacts Council to pick up a stray dog, the animal must be kept secured on either a leash or in an enclosed space or else Council officers will not attend the request
- To walk a pet without being leashed. Local Laws Officers may issue infringements if caught
• Aggressive dogs

There have been instances where residents have had issues with animals entering their property that they were unable to contain due to aggression or inability to catch the animal. Upon request, Council has dog and cat traps available to assist customers in capturing the animal.

Members of the public are advised that if they see or come across an aggressive dog, not to approach it or put them self in harm’s way. Contact Council so that a trained Local Laws Officer can seize the dog.

The public are welcome to ring the Council after hours on 5018 8100 and select the Animal Emergency option.

• Dog Faeces/Litter

Failure by pet owners to pick up after their animal is irresponsible and has proven difficult to enforce. Council is reviewing its approach to animal faeces litter to incorporate strategies to educate, enforce and ultimately reduce the volume of animal litter found through the municipality. Animal litter is not just an inconvenience and eyesore, but can be hazardous.
• Cruelty to Animals (unnecessary harm)

There are many forms of animal cruelty. Some of the more identifiable forms of animal cruelty include:

- Neglect (lack of food and water)
- Failure to seek veterinary care
- Dog Fighting
- Beating, abusing, terrifying, or tormenting an animal
- Confining, tethering or transporting an animal in a way that is inappropriate for the animal’s welfare
- Abandoning or releasing an animal unreasonably

In the circumstances of an animal cruelty complaint, a Local Laws Officer will inspect the property where the animal is located and make a decision on whether to seize the animal, seek veterinary assistance (depending on the animals condition or situation) or otherwise.

NUISANCE DOG STATISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINANCIAL YEAR 1 July – 30 June</th>
<th>Barking Complaints</th>
<th>(Wandering at Large) WAL</th>
<th>Dog welfare</th>
<th>Rushing or menacing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014/2015</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/2016</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/2017</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Making a complaint to Council

When making any legitimate complaint to Council you will be required to:

- give your contact details (Name, Address & Phone number)
- keep a record of all incidents, such as how often a dog barks and for how long (e.g. time, how long).
3.2. OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Community Local Law, local Law 2 regarding Noise and Smell
  - 2.3 Noise and Smell
    For the purposes of this clause, “owner”, includes a person who keeps or harbours the animal or has the animal in his or her care for the time being whether the animal is at large or in confinement.
    (a) Each owner and each occupier of any land where any animal or bird is kept must ensure that the keeping of the animal or bird does not allow any noise, smell or discharge to emanate from the Animal or Animal accommodation which is offensive or interferes with the reasonable comfort or convenience of persons who occupy adjacent or nearby land.
    Penalty: 2 penalty units
    (b) The owner of a dog that defecates in a Park, in or on a Road that contains a constructed Footpath or maintained nature-strip, or any walking path or shared Footpath or any other Public Place that has constructed surfaces or equipment or fixtures provided for the enjoyment of the public, must remove the faeces and deposit it as litter in a lawful manner.
    Penalty: 2 penalty units
    (c) A Person in charge of any dog on any Road or other Council Land must carry a Litter Device suitable to clean up any excrement left by his or her animal and must produce such Litter Device upon request of any Authorised Officer or Delegated Officer.

- Process to ensure a consistency for capturing and securing dogs and cats minimising risk to animal’s property and staff.¹
- Process to ensure residents receive accurate legal advice and response to barking dog problems.²

3.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

Council provides information and education to residents regarding nuisance dogs. In the instances of barking dogs, Council uses a combination of proactive and reactive strategies to assist residents with this issue.

One of the reactive strategies is to provide suggestions and information to owners of nuisance barking dogs regarding barking hindrance devices such as:
  - Barking dog collars (as required with veterinary advice)
  - Pet safe Outdoor Ultrasonic Bark Control and Recording Devices

One of the Councils proactive strategies regarding nuisance barking dogs is for Local Law Officers to hold education sessions at schools within our municipality regarding the different types of techniques that can be used to reduce this type of nuisance behaviour.

¹ Mildura Rural City Council, Procedural Guidelines (Capture and Securing Dog and Cat Procedure).
² Mildura Rural City Council, Procedural Guidelines (Barking Dog Procedure).
3.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

Council's current compliance activities include:

- Patrons throughout the year
- Doorknocking program to identify unregistered animals
- Annual issue of registration notices
- Cat traps are used throughout our Council to reduce the number of feral cats and domestic cats wandering at Large
- Registration of animals released from the Pound

3.5 SUMMARY

Council has experienced a steady increase in barking dog complaints over the last couple of years. As the township is expanding with new and often smaller subdivisions there has been a steady increase in the density of living (residents living closer to one another). Coupled with an increase in pet ownerships, Council is expecting the noise complaints to continue to rise in the future.

As an approach to deal with increased barking dog complaints, Council is planning on delivering barking dog brochures to high problem/complaint areas, provide additional information via Council’s website and encourage pet owners to attend information sessions/workshops conducted by Council and rehousing groups e.g.: Sunraysia Animal Rehousing Group.
### OUR PLANS

**Objective 1:** Improve information to the public via mail outs and on Council's website regarding nuisance issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide education material about nuisance issues on the Council website e.g. Barking dogs, dogs and cats wandering at large, dogs rushing, etc</td>
<td>Material updated as required</td>
<td>Compare the number of nuisance complaints to the previous year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Material updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Media release/Council website views</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 2:** Reduce dog litter (faeces).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigate availability of collaborative marketing material to support education to reduce dog litter (faeces)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Work with other organisations to investigate material availability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Communicate/educate via Council's website measured by website views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of extra bins with free dog poo bag dispensers within the municipality each year</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Compare the number of complaints at the end of each financial year and evaluate feedback from the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make available portable dog litter bags to attach to dog leashes to clean up after their animal/s</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Compare the number of complaints at the end of each financial year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluate feedback from the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluate the number of bags that have been distributed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.0  DOG ATTACKS

*Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 68A(2)(c)(iii)*

Outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals
- also addresses Sections 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

4.1  CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA

Authorised Council Local Law Officers institute a thorough investigation for dog attacks which includes:
- Taking statements from all parties involved
- Obtaining vet reports, medical reports and photographs and
- Providing a report based on the investigation together with recommendations

Possible courses of action Council can choose include:
- Infringements (where non-serious injuries sustained - minor attack)
- Menacing/Dangerous Dog Declaration
- Prosecution in Magistrates’ Court
- Seek destruction/compensation orders by a Magistrate
- Seek mediation between parties
- Written warning
- No action

Where serious injuries have occurred to a person or another animal and there is enough evidence to form a prosecution (as defined by the Domestic Animals Act 1994), Council may decide to have the matter heard in the Magistrate’s Court.

A Minor Attack is where there is no evidence of broken skin.

A Major Attack is where the skin has been broken.

It is important to ring Council immediately after an attack so that a Local Laws Officer can attend and assist to the situation in a timely manner. A statement must be given by any witnesses as soon as possible to ensure appropriate action can be taken by Council officers.

Statistics regarding reported dog attacks over the last four financial years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reported Dog Attacks</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Community Local Law 2, Part 2 regarding Noise and Smell
  ➢ 2.3 Noise and Smell

- Community Local Law 2, Part 2 regarding the Keeping of Animals
  ➢ 2.1 Keeping of Animals

The owner applying for the permit pays a fee to Council and then a Local Laws Officer will door knock the neighbouring properties to see if anyone objects to them having more than the legal limit. Council also takes into account the number and frequency of previous animal complaints regarding the applicant.

If there are no objections and there have been no complaints regarding the animals, the permit can be determined. If an applicant does not adhere to the conditions of the permit or Council starts to get complaints regarding the animals, Council holds the right to revoke the permit at any time and the animal owner has to reduce the animals back to the maximum number of animals per property.

4.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

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

- Information regarding dog attacks is available at Council offices and on the Council website
- Educational talks at Schools, Sunraysia T.A.F.E. and Local Service groups (Lions, Rotary, APEX etc) regarding responsible pet ownership/what to do if a dog attack occurs
- Animal rehousing group; Sunraysia Animal Rehousing Group (S.A.R.G.) conducts educational talks to community groups e.g. (Scout groups and local schools)

4.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

Council is responsible for a number of compliance activities, which include:

- Responding to reports of aggressive dogs and dog attacks immediately. This service includes a 24 hour emergency call out service
- Seizing and holding dogs pending investigation/prosecution into a dog attack
- Increased patrols
- Proactive patrols of parks and streets in an attempt to reduce wandering dogs
- Issuing infringements for minor attacks
- Issuing infringements for wandering dogs
- All reported dog attacks within Council are recorded
- Seizing and impounding dogs in circumstances where the owner’s property is believed to be unsecured
- Follow up of seized animals due to being unsecured to ensure that the dog has been secured and issue infringements if required
4.5 SUMMARY

Serious dog attacks remain a major risk for Council despite the fact that they do not occur regularly. Statistically, dog attacks occur predominately in and around the family home including the footpath at the front of dog owner’s properties. Dog attacks on livestock are also an increasing issue in rural areas.

Council’s procedure for dealing with dog attacks is regarded a high priority. Local Laws Officers respond immediately to ensure minimal risk to the community.

Residents should be aware that every dog has the capacity to attack or bite and that children should be supervised around dogs at all times. Dog owners should be made aware of the potential implications if their dog is involved in an attack. Implications could include:

- Infringements
- Destruction of the dog/s
- Declaring the dog ‘Dangerous’ (Animal to be housed in a caged area on property, muzzled when walking in public, etc)
- Prosecution for a major dog attack

4.6 OUR PLANS

Objective 1: Improve resident awareness of safety around dogs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publicise key dog attack prevention messages (e.g. confinement of dogs to property, on leash laws etc) through media articles, mail outs and website information</td>
<td>Annually and ongoing</td>
<td>Number of reported dog attacks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objective 2: Minimise the incidence of dog attacks in the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education of key dog attack prevention measures through media articles, mail outs, website information and education programs</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Consider a community survey pre and post campaign, to measure any changes in knowledge about dog attack prevention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actively patrol areas to identify and reduce roaming, unsecure and/or unregistered dogs</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Media and information published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of dog traps to landowners who are having livestock attacked</td>
<td>As required</td>
<td>Reduction in reported attacks on livestock</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.0 DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

*Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 68A(2)(c)(vii)*
Outline 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
- also addresses sections 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

5.1 CURRENT SITUATION

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* defines restricted breed dogs as any one of the following breeds:
- Japanese Tosa
- Fila Brasiliero
- Dogo Argentino
- Perro de Presa Canario (or Presa Canario)
- American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier)
- Any cross breed of the above breeds

5.2 OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Council has developed policies and procedures to identify restricted breeds and to direct action regarding dangerous and menacing dogs by:
- Having a process associated with:
  - dogs that are declared dangerous
  - a dog that is declared menacing
  - a dog that is declared to be of a restricted breed
- Having a policy associated with the issuing of permits to keep more than two restricted breeds on one premises
- Having a procedure to provide details of dangerous dogs on the (VDDR) Victorian Declared Dog Registry
- Ensuring that all dangerous dogs are registered in Council’s Dangerous Dogs Register.
- Having a policy and procedure associated with the seizure and impounding of dangerous and restricted breed dogs
- Enforcement protocol associated with dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs (notices to comply, infringement notices, filing charges for prosecution)

**Declared dangerous dogs**
A dangerous dog declaration has effect throughout Victoria, and it cannot be revoked, amended or otherwise altered.
5.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

Council occasionally undertakes the following activities with other stakeholders

- Restricted breed and dangerous dog renewals are sent out annually and recorded with Department of Environment and Primary Industries
- Arrange annual dangerous dog inspections
- Media releases relating to legislation/changes/updates
- Media releases relating to differences between restricted breed dogs and dangerous dogs
- Provide information to the public on request regarding declared/dangerous dogs

5.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

Current compliance activities include:

- Council Animal Register (Dangerous Dogs)
- Inspections / audit of compliance
- Seizing dogs suspected of being Restricted Breed Dogs
- Prosecution / Infringements issued for any determined breach
- Annual inspections of all premises housing dangerous and restricted breed dogs
- Regular pro-active patrols of industrial areas, to identify new sites housing dangerous (guard) dogs

5.5 SUMMARY

Declared dogs in Mildura Rural City Council as at 30th June 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>30 June 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restricted dog breeds</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menacing dogs</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declared dangerous dogs</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Restricted breeds, menacing and declared dangerous dogs are not a significant problem within the Mildura municipal district. Low numbers mean inspections for compliance can be done routinely.
### 5.6 OUR PLANS

**Objective 1:** Ensure accuracy of registration database for restricted breed dogs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Cross reference microchip database with Council’s registration database of potential restricted dog breeds | Ongoing | Monitor and review of database for microchipping and registration  
Proactive follow up of complaints and related investigations |

**Objective 2:** Inspection and audit of all declared dog premises annually to ensure they are abiding by legislation requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure compliance of the Domestic Animal Act requirements</td>
<td>Annually - April</td>
<td>Audit form completed and signed by Local Law Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check all industrial properties within the municipality for dogs being used as guard dogs</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Check properties as complaints arise and complete the audit form as guard dogs are identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine and targeted inspections</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Inspections undertaken</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.0 OVERPOPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA

Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 68A(2)(c)(iv)
Outline programs, services and strategies to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats
- also addresses sections 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

6.1 CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA

Council’s current situation and data include:-

Euthanasia Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dogs left in pound mini pen</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs rehoused</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs euthanased</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cats left in pound mini pen</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cats rehoused</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwanted cats euthanased</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feral cats euthanased</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mildura Rural City Council Pound Mini Pens and collection of animals

The Animal Pound Mini Pen is a set of cages that is available for the public to place animals (dogs and cats) in during the day and after hours. The Animal Pound Mini Pens are used for lost, found or stray animals and does not cost anything.

Stray or unidentified dogs and cats are collected daily within our municipality. Once an animal has been collected, the Local Laws officer will attempt to reunite the animal with its owner via any identification. If there is no identification, the animal will be taken to the Council Pound located at 9184 Calder Highway, Irymple (between Irymple and Red Cliffs).
6.2 OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Council’s Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures include:

All Local Law Officers are authorised for the administration and enforcement of:

- Community Local Law No.2 - 2.1 Keeping of Animals:
  This covers the housing of more than two dogs or cats per property
- *Domestic Animals Act 1994* - Sec 82 Seizure of unregistered dogs or cats:
  An authorised officer of Council may seize a dog or cat that has not been registered (or there is no application for registration) within one month after:
  (a) being found guilty of an offence of not having applied to register the animal; or
  (b) being served with an infringement notice in respect of that offence

6.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES
Council’s current education and promotional activities include:

- Advertising in the local papers prior to animal registration as a:
  - reminder for current animal owners
  - a way to inform new pet owners
- Local radio station interviews
- Proactive activities in schools and via stakeholder organisations e.g.: Sunraysia Animal Rehousing Group (S.A.R.G.)
- School visits regarding responsible pet ownership and general education

6.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES
Council’s current compliance activities include:

- Annual registration is sent out to all current registered cat and dog owners
- Implementation of door knock program regarding unregistered animals between (May – July) and barking complaints as required
- Patrols are carried out throughout the year
- Cat traps are used throughout our Council to reduce the number of feral cats and domestic cats wandering at large

6.5 SUMMARY

Unfortunately steady euthanasia and overpopulation rates are a direct result of some animal owners not desexing their animals. High stray and unwanted cat numbers along with a high feral population within the municipality are proving to be hard numbers to reduce.

A current program underway with Sunraysia Animal Rehousing Group is assisting owners with the cost of desexing and other vet works, in an extra effort to reduce the overpopulation numbers.

Ongoing strong support from rehousing groups with current Section 84Y agreements and strong local rehousing means Mildura Rural City Council Animal Pound rehousing statistics remain strong.
### Objective 1: To encourage the public to de-sex their animals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage de-sexing of animals by increasing registration fees for entire (un-desexed) animals</td>
<td>Commenced 10th April 2013 and ongoing</td>
<td>Number of new registrations that have had their animals desexed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Vet Voucher Offer - in conjunction with local animal rehousing group SARG (Sunraysia Animal Rehousing Group)</td>
<td>Commenced 2nd August 2017</td>
<td>Number of desexed animals in the municipality will increase, especially with people who may require financial assistance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Objective 2: Decrease stray animals in the municipality to reduce overpopulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dog and cat traps available for residents to borrow</td>
<td>As required</td>
<td>Total requests for traps and animal collections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased promotion of registration requirements in the local media</td>
<td>Prior to 10th April each year</td>
<td>Review local media to ensure registration is advertised/promoted annually. Work with stakeholder organisations to educate pet owners about registration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Objective 3:** Increase the reclaiming and rehoming rates each year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enter into agreements with other bodies for rehoming, such as Shelters,</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>The number of rehousing groups are steadily increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehousing Groups, Community Foster Care Networks, etc</td>
<td></td>
<td>Council has put into place with approved rehousing groups, Section 84Y agreements to rehouse animals from Mildura Rural City Council Animal Pound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Section 84Y agreements for currency and undertake a review of the</td>
<td>Commence December</td>
<td>Monitor and review agreements for compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 84Y agreement template</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Section 84Y agreement currency and new template document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertise impounded animals online</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>We have a Lost Animals page as part of Councils website for the public to look for their lost animal/s or for possible animals available for rehousing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.0 **DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES**

*Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 68A(2)(c)(ii)*

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 - also addresses sections 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(d),(f)

7.1 **CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA**

Council’s current situation and data include:-

Mildura Rural City Council has Seven (7) registered Domestic Animal Businesses consisting of:-

- Three (3) pet shops
- Three (3) boarding kennels
- MRCC Animal Pound

All Domestic Animal Businesses are audited annually by Council on or prior to the 10th April each year.

7.2 **OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Council’s Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures include:-

Registered Domestic Animal Businesses are audited yearly and as required on receipt of complaints.

Council actively investigates the presence of animal businesses to ensure compliance with the relevant codes of practice and legislation.

7.3 **OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES**

Council’s current education and promotional activities include:-

- Providing information to registered Domestic Animal Businesses
- Promoting Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources information and codes of practices
- Advertising new legislation amendments

7.4 **OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES**

Council’s current compliance activities include:-

- Annual audits on all Domestic Animal Businesses (Pet Shops and Boarding Kennels)
- Provide all Domestic Animal Businesses with relevant Code of Practice
- Investigation reports
- Monitoring advertising sites
- Renewal / Registration process
- Inspecting suspected unregistered Domestic Animal Businesses
- Liaising with Councils Statutory Planning Department to ensure planning conditions are adhered too
7.5 SUMMARY

The Council has a low number of Domestic Animal Business’s and few recorded compliance issues. Domestic Animal Business Audits are conducted annually by Council officers to ensure codes of practice are followed and registration requirements met.

7.6 OUR PLANS

Objective 1: Annually inspect and audit all registered Domestic Animal Businesses and investigate any Domestic Animal Businesses suspected of being unregistered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit/Inspect all Domestic Animal Businesses at least annually</td>
<td>March - April Annually</td>
<td>Compliance with the Domestic Animals Act 1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage collaborative dialogue and foster partnerships with Domestic Animal Businesses</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Discussions and scheduled meetings outside annual audit requirements At least (1) meeting annually</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.0 OTHER MATTERS

*Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 68A(2)(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

8.1 CURRENT SITUATION / OUR CURRENT DATA

Council’s current situation and data include:-

- Due to current public demand and to promote responsible dog ownership, Council is looking into the possibility of having a permanent off-leash dog park within our Municipality. A trial is currently being undertaken in a temporary location. The trial will provide important evidence and feedback to determine the procedures and requirements for a permanent site.

The off-leash dog park(s) can assist in encouraging dog owners to not let their dogs run free in community spaces such as ovals.

There would need to be:
- time restrictions for off-leash exercise
- appropriate signage with a list of the rules for use of the off-leash park and a Council contact number
- available biodegradable bag dispensers for dog litter
- rubbish bins
- rules regarding the use of the off-leash park such as:
  * Dogs will need to remain under their owner’s effective control
  * Owners will need to carry a leash at all times
  * Outside the park dogs must be leashed
  * Dogs must wear a current Council registration tag on their collar
  * Owners requirement to pick up after their dog and dispose of waste in an applicable garbage bin
  * No digging allowed
  * Not allowing your dog to jump up on people or dogs
  * Owners not abiding by the park rules will be asked to leave

- Emergency Management Plan;

In the event of an emergency (e.g. flood/fire evacuation) the Mildura Rural City Council Pound will be used to accommodate resident’s pets (dogs and cats) as a temporary housing solution. This is in accordance with the Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

8.2 OUR CURRENT ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Council’s Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures include:-

Policies and procedures will need to be developed and endorsed by Council before an off-leash park is established on a permanent basis within the Municipality. Council will need to endorse/adopt the establishment of any off Leash Park following a process of community engagement, participation and conversation.
8.3 OUR CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

Council’s current education and promotional activities include:-

- Sunraysia Animal Rehousing Group (S.A.R.G.) – Paws Along the Murray Walk, open to the public to encourage them to bring their dogs down to the river front to exercise and mix with other dog owners and cheaper microchipping is offered for their pets
- Sunraysia Institute of Technical and Further Education (SuniTAFE) - Animal studies throughout the year
- Local school visits by appointment
- Volunteers at the Animal Pound
- Work for the dole – (Pound duties)
- Correctional Services – (Pound duties)

8.4 OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

Council’s current compliance activities include:-

- Off leash dog park rules and regulations to be established should a suitable location be identified and registered

**Domestic Animals Act 1994 Section 23**

**Dogs and cats on private property without permission**

- If a dog or cat has been present on private property on more than one occasion without the permission of the owner/occupier. The owner/occupier or an authorised officer may seize the dog or cat whilst present on the property
- The owner/occupier of a private property or an authorised officer who has seized a dog or cat under subsection (1- D.A.A.) must immediately notify the Council in that municipal district
- If an authorised officer seizes a dog or cat under subsection (1- D.A.A.) and is able to identify the owner. The authorised officer must, within 5 business days serve the owner with a notice of objection to the presence of that animal on private property
- If, after a notice under subsection (3- D.A.A.) has been served, the animal enters or remains on the private property, the owner of the animal is guilty of an offence and is liable to a penalty of:
  - * not more than 1 penalty unit for a first offence
  - * 3 penalty units for a second or subsequent offence
- A notice under subsection (3- D.A.A.) must be served either personally or by registered post
- A copy of a notice under subsection (3- D.A.A.) must be given to the owner or occupier of the private property within 24 hours after the notice being served
- In this section a business day means a day other than -
  - * a Saturday or Sunday; or
  - * a public holiday (under the Public Holidays Act 1993)
Domestic Animals Act 1994 Section 25
Cats found at large

- If a cat is found at large or not securely confined to the owner’s premises:
  - in a municipal district or specified part of a municipal district
  - in respect of which an order under this section has been made
  - during the hours specified in the order
  - the owner is guilty of an offence and liable to a penalty of:
    - not more than 1 penalty unit for a first offence;
    - 3 penalty units for a second or subsequent offence.

- A Council may, by resolution, make an order under this section
- An order made by a Council under this section must be published in the Government Gazette and in a newspaper circulated in that municipal district

8.5 SUMMARY

There is evidence and significant community interest regarding an off leash dog park within the Municipality. The majority of the public within our Council have a pet dog and would prefer to let their dog/s run free and off a lead. Off leash dog parks would be useful for people with working dogs or larger dogs as they will have a larger area to exercise. A trial for an off leash park is currently underway in association with the preparation of Council’s Public Open Space Strategy.

8.6 OUR PLANS

Objective 1: To reduce the number of dogs and cats wandering at large.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media articles to go into the local paper and Council’s website providing information about animals wandering at large</td>
<td>Ongoing - at least annually</td>
<td>Number of complaints that are recorded in Council’s database</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular patrols conducted by Local Laws Officers (as a proactive measure)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Number of complaints received and number of animals seized wandering at large</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Objective 2:** Establish an Off Leash Dog Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trial site to be established for an off leash dog park. Rio Vista Park – Mildura Riverfront due to strong public interest, as per previous Domestic Animal Management Plan</td>
<td>November 2017 (trial commenced September 2017)</td>
<td>Level of interest from general public via Surveys/Petitions to establishment of a permanent purpose built off leash dog park/s Establishment of a permanent off leash location with conditions of use Council endorsement of an off leash dog park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9.0 ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING

_Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 68A(3)_

Every Council must—

(a) Review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan

(b) Provide the Department of Environment and 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.

9.1 OUR PLANS

Council’s current situation and Data include:

Council will review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually to assess whether any amendments are necessary, to ensure that the plan is relevant and can be completed within the required timeframes. A copy will be sent to (DEDJTR) Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources Secretary showing any amendments that have been made.

**Evaluation:** Evaluate Domestic Animal Management Plan annually.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are there any amendments required for the Domestic Animal Management Plan? If so, please describe:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Endorsement of Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Summary</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have any amendments been made to the Domestic Animal Management Plan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Yes/No</td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<td>Has a copy been provided to Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources and Council for review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Endorsement of Council and to (DEDJTR) Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources</td>
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</table>

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring of actions contained within the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017 - 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Quarterly reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Individual owner plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Development Services Branch Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Development Services Branch Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mildura Rural City Council Annual Plan</td>
</tr>
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Mildura Rural City Council
108 Madden Avenue, Mildura
PO Box 105
MILDURA VIC 3502

GENERAL ENQUIRIES:
Phone: 03 5018 8100

www.mildura.vic.gov.au