

Dog and Cat Management Board

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020–2025

Updated 2021



**The effective management of
dogs and cats is an important
component of community
wellbeing**



Government of South Australia
Dog and Cat Management Board

From the chairperson

On behalf of the Dog and Cat Management Board, I present this five-year strategic plan for managing dogs and cats across South Australia. It is an evolving program based on informed decision-making.

Effective dog and cat management is an important component of community wellbeing and community expectations of dog and cat owner responsibilities and animal welfare is increasing.

The Board is committed to working effectively with local government and key stakeholders, providing support and keeping dog and cat management legislation under review.

The Board's previous strategic plan delivered the following significant actions.

- 🐾 Legislative change.
- 🐾 Mandatory desexing and microchipping of dogs and cats.
- 🐾 Helping to reduce unwanted litters and the high volume of animals euthanised in pounds or shelters. We've made the pet trade—particularly dog and cat sellers—accountable through mandatory registration. This is also bringing puppy farm operators into the open.
- 🐾 The introduction of the Dogs and Cats Online (DACO) system which combined 69 individual databases across the state and built relationships with long-standing and new key stakeholders. There is now a centralised point for managing the details of every known dog and cat in the state, such as microchip and desexing information, dog incident and breeder history.
- 🐾 Empowering dog and cat owners to register pets, update details and link microchip details at any time, on-line. Most importantly, lost pets are now easily identified and returned to owners and local government boundaries are no longer a barrier in this process.
- 🐾 Individual pet owners, the RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League and Vets are now registering and updating microchip details free of charge on DACO, eliminating national microchip database fees.

These achievements have delivered substantial savings for local government through reduced postage and administration costs, and streamlined annual reporting and registration processes.

Over the next five years, we will build on this work by delivering two key program areas. This five year strategic plan is supported by the Board's operational plan which identifies a number of priority actions which underpin the Board's objectives.

I look forward to this five year journey along with our other knowledgeable, committed Board members and staff.



David Parkin
Chairperson
Dog and Cat Management Board



Dog & Cat Laws

From 1 July 2018

Microchipping

All dogs and cats must be microchipped

Desexing

All dogs and cats born after 1 July 2018 must be desexed

Breeders

People who breed dogs and cats for sale must register as a breeder

Registration

One central location for dogs' and cats' microchip details, registration payments and breeder registration.

**DOGS AND CATS
ONLINE.COM.AU**



Introduction

The Dog and Cat Management Board (the Board) is a corporate body established by the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (the Act). The objectives of the Act are:

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

The Board comprises nine members appointed by the Minister. Four members are nominated by the Local Government Association and four by the Minister. The Chair is jointly nominated by the LGA and Minister. Board members are listed on the Board's website at dogandcatboard.com.au

The Board, which is subject to the direction of the Minister, administers the Act and associated regulations. Staff of the Dog and Cat Management Board unit are employed by the Department of Environment and

Water under a service level agreement with the Board. The Board's activities are funded through a portion of dog registration fees paid to South Australian councils and breeder registration fees through the Dogs and Cats Online (DACO) system.

The Board plays an important advocacy and consultation role in dog and cat management to peak bodies., it manages the DACO system and provides expert advice to the South Australian Government, the Local Government Association (LGA), and South Australian councils and staff.

The Board also takes a leadership role in community safety and education, with a focus on informed dog and cat ownership, and strategies to reduce:

- the incidence of dog attacks;
- nuisance caused by cats;
- unchecked dog and cat breeding; and
- euthanising lost and unwanted dogs and cats detained in pounds and shelters.





Board functions

The Board's functions are defined by the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (the Act) which are outlined here in simple terms.

- 🐾 Plan for, promote, and provide advice about the effective management of dogs and cats throughout South Australia.
- 🐾 Oversee administration and enforcement of the Act.
- 🐾 Keep the Act under review and make recommendations to the Minister.
- 🐾 Advise the Minister or the Local Government Association on operations relating to the Act or issues directly relating to dog or cat management in South Australia.
- 🐾 Undertake or facilitate research relating to dog or cat management.
- 🐾 Manage, maintain and enhance Dogs and Cats Online (DACO) system.
- 🐾 Develop policies, procedures and guidelines to administer dog and cat management.
- 🐾 Monitor council's administration and enforcement of the Act.
- 🐾 Undertake or facilitate educational and training programs relating to dog or cat management and the DACO system for authorised persons and industry groups.
- 🐾 Provide advice, support and assistance to councils about matters relating to the administration or enforcement of the provisions of the Act.
- 🐾 Accredit assistance dogs.
- 🐾 Accredit training programs for dogs and owners.
- 🐾 Keep and maintain registers pertaining to the Act.





- 🐾 Consider all proposed by-laws referred to the Board.
- 🐾 Fix fees and charges pertaining to the Act.
- 🐾 Carry out any other function assigned to the Board by the Minister.





Purpose of this plan

This strategic plan has been developed by the Board to guide its activities and communicate its strategic directions for the period 2020 to 2025. The strategic plan is supported by an annual operational plan which identifies priority actions for the current financial year.



Context of this plan

The effective management of dogs and cats is an important component of community wellbeing.

Key achievements that supported effective dog and cat management during the last strategic plan

- The coordinated review of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (the Act) led to significant changes in legal requirements (including compulsory microchipping and desexing, and registering all people breeding and selling pets).
- The design and build of Dogs and Cats Online (DACO), the first centralised register for both dogs and cats to replace individual council registers.

The development of this strategic plan has occurred in an environment where: the community has heightened expectations of dog and cat owner responsibility and animal welfare; there is a growing appreciation of the role assistance animals have in enhancing the lives of people living with disabilities; modified town planning approaches to urban infill and public space design need to consider dog and cat ownership; and greater consciousness about the pet-trade industry and unwanted pets.

Future challenges and opportunities identified by Board Members which will guide future decision making

Challenges

- Meeting the needs of diverse stakeholders.
- Addressing cat management and building consensus around cat management approaches.
- Resolving issues with the current legislation.
- Effectively engaging stakeholders and communicating key messages to target audiences.
- Managing current and future activities within a limited budget.

Opportunities

- Maximising the functionality of Dogs and Cats Online.
- Sharing effective dog and cat management outcomes nationally.
- Identifying dog and cat management interventions based on evidence and analysis.
- Building effective partnerships to reduce red-tape.





Our programs and priority actions — What we are going to do



To meet the objectives of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (the Act), the Board has identified two programs and set strategic directions under each program.

Program 1

Responsible ownership and effective management of dogs and cats

Strategic directions

- 🐾 Inform and educate the community about dog and cat management.
- 🐾 Equal focus on cat management to the same level as dog management.
- 🐾 Reduce the incidence of dog attacks.
- 🐾 Reduce the numbers of unwanted dogs and cats.
- 🐾 Support and encourage research on responsible ownership and effective dog and cat management.
- 🐾 Develop capacity to fulfill the requirements of the Act.

Program 2

Effective Board and organisational performance

Strategic directions

- 🐾 Reinforce an evidence based approach to addressing issues.
- 🐾 Ensure the Board and unit operate at a high level.
- 🐾 Maximise the benefits of DACO.
- 🐾 Ensure the quality of data.
- 🐾 Build and invest in relationships and partnering.
- 🐾 Collaborate nationally to manage dogs and cats.
- 🐾 Address policy and legislative gaps.
- 🐾 Effective financial management.





Dog and Cat Management Board

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A copy of this publication is available online

www.dogandcatboard.com.au