

21<sup>st</sup> September 2025

Moiria Shire Council Animal Management

Email: [info@moira.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@moira.vic.gov.au)

### **Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029**

Animal Care Australia (ACA) is a national incorporated association established to lobby for real animal welfare by those who keep, breed and care for animals. Our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care.

Animal Care Australia is currently recognised by Animal Welfare Victoria as a key stakeholder in the review of Victoria's Animal Welfare Act and its associated regulations. Animal Care Australia is directly consulting and advising during that review, including the future revision of Codes of Practice for the keeping of all pets.

Animal Care Australia encourages continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale, and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species, including pets, companion animals, animals used for educational or entertainment purposes or kept for conservation.

Animal Care Australia is engaged with state governments to develop more appropriate model Local Laws and model Subordinate Local Laws governing the keeping of animals in each state. Nationally, Animal Care Australia is finding Local Councils placing restrictions and permit requirements on their residents which do nothing to improve animal welfare and tend to lead to greater non-compliance.

#### **Page 10 of the DAMP states:**

***"Over the past 4 years animal registrations have dropped, and complaints have risen"***

Animal Care Australia would remind Council that this past four years has fallen under a 'cost of living crisis' and the aftermath of the Covid 19 pandemic which saw a massive uptake of dog and cat ownership. Animal Care Australia notes Council's registration fees are generally 'affordable' however this does not prevent the general consensus within society that residents stepping forward to register their pets AFTER the required age/timeframes will result in punishment.

Ironically, these factors are acknowledged on page 13 as the reasons for animal surrenders!

Council should consider newer approaches that encourage registrations - a 'carrot' rather than the 'stick'.

Animal Care Australia commend Council's 'First ride home free' program waiving fees for impounded pets with current council registration and no prior offences.

Animal Care Australia commend Council for implementing a 'Lost pets' page on Council website to display impounded pets to assist with reclaiming rate

Animal Care Australia commends Council for investigating:

- 'Desexing vouchers' in December 2026,
- introducing first registration free or a minimal payment for all dogs and cats that are under 6 months of age during June 2026
- discounted microchipping scheme in July 2027

Looking at the number of off-leash areas, there are a good number of them, but most are multi-use, and are only available to dog owners if no other activities are on, and then only during daylight hours. Animal Care Australia recommends could be some dog-only off-leash areas designated that do not subjected to other activities taking over.

#### **Pound related:**

The Pound opening hours are listed as 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday, and weekends are appointment only in the draft DAMP. However, on page 34 in Appendix 4, it states: *“Pound is owned and operated by Council and is open during office hours by appointment only”*. Which is correct? If the latter, then that needs to change to give residents more opportunity to collect impounded pets in a timely manner and not accrue the extra \$10/day sustenance fee.

The pound stats provided indicate a relatively high dog reclaim rate, but cats not as good. This may be due to a high “unowned” cat population (non-microchipped stray pets, abandoned ex-pet cats, and wild born cats) in the Shire.

Pet registration figures are surprisingly low for a population of c.30,522 (2021 Census). There are no figures that indicate how many actual households are in the Shire, however using the current national stats that around 69% of households nationally own at least one pet, it is easy to state there are MANY more cats and dogs owned as pets than registered.

Many cat (and dog) owners will have 2 or more cats and may be averse to having to pay an annual fee for the excess animals’ permit (having more than 2 on any residential/ <8ha property, on top of the annual registration fees. They simply can’t afford the costs of desexing them all, and registering them all, plus the excess numbers permit fees every year.

It is worth noting of the 51 infringements issued a large proportion of those were registration/ renewal related. It is also worth noting NSW has a one-off lifetime registration fee for all cats and dogs, but adopted dogs (from pounds, shelters, or rescues) are lifetime registered for no fee at all. At the very least, maybe Moira Shire could look at waiving the initial registration fee for animals adopted from the pound.

#### **Animal Management Officers:**

The training schedules proposed are supported however why hasn’t the Cert IV Animal Control and Regulation) training been completed for the 2 officers that have been in the role for 20 and 25 years respectively? As it stands, only the Technical Officer is slated to do the Cert IV course during the period of this DAMP, and they and one other officer are slated to complete 2 other animal related training programs in 2026. Surely Council realises animal welfare and animal control matters are continually changing and should require more regular re-training regardless of how long an officer has been in their role.

#### **Education and information:**

A number of the objectives outlined throughout the draft DAMP include utilising Council’s website for the purpose of notification and education. Animal Care Australia commends this as it is a modern means of ensuring access to information, however, to find the information less tech-savvy residents need to understand where and how to search for it. The flaw lies in non-English speakers/readers finding that information when the website is all in English. Equally, unless residents know it is there, they will not necessarily be any wiser in regard to responsible animal ownership. Such information should be easy to access, should be promoted via mailouts (yes, an old-school approach – but one that does not end up in email junk/spam folders) and promoted via leaflets at local pet stores, veterinary practitioners etc.

Animal Management Officers could also visit schools, TAFE, and other community-based groups to actively promote responsible animal ownership and compliance with the relevant laws Council should also closely consult with community-based groups to perform this face-to-face education, especially any pet/animal keeping associations.

### **In closing:**

It is necessary to call your attention to animal restrictions within the **Community Amenity Local Law 2023** - in the hope that while Council is reviewing the Domestic Animal Management Plan you will consider approving amendments to Local Laws taking into consideration our feedback and provide the opportunity for residents to keep their pets, in particular, birds (other than poultry) without the need for permits.

#### **6.1 Animals, birds and poultry**

***a) A person must not, without a permit, keep any livestock, birds (including pigeons), poultry, fowl hen or song bird on any property in a residential area.***

**For birds other than poultry, the requirement (6.1) to have a permit in order to keep a pet bird is ABSOLUTELY NOT SUPPORTED.**

**Why should a child need a permit to keep a pet budgerigar or an elderly couple to keep a canary?**

**To top this off, our attempts to find the fee for the permit failed. Council's website links the *Keeping of animals permit* to the form for registering dogs and cats and does not provide any additional information for other animals or fees.**

There are hundreds of avian species routinely kept in Victoria and every species has its own specialised management, husbandry, enclosure size and welfare requirements. Placing a permit requirement on keeping pet birds is simply ill-founded.

We STRONGLY recommend the removal of the permit requirement/restriction and insert: 'To be kept as appropriate to species, size of cage/aviary or bird room'.

The blatant species-bias against birds and song birds shows a clear lack of knowledge regarding bird keeping and its enormous breadth and management techniques.

#### **6.4 Poultry**

***a) A person must not keep on a property in a residential area or commercial area a number of fowl hens greater than ten mature birds.***

6.4 Poultry actually contradicts 6.1.

Animal Care Australia would like to request a meeting to discuss further collaboration to ensure a policy that aligns with the needs of your pet keeping residents.

Animal Care Australia's primary objective is 'education over regulation' and always commend Councils wherever they seek to further the education of their residents. We recommend viewing our online document: [Council Animal Management Plans](#)

Should you require further details please do not hesitate to reach out as we would be happy to meet with you and further discuss this matter.

Kind regards,



Michael Donnelly  
President

0400 323 843

[president@animalcareaustralia.org.au](mailto:president@animalcareaustralia.org.au)

## **About Animal Care Australia**

As a nationally recognised animal welfare organisation, Animal Care Australia encourages continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale, and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species, including pets, animals used for educational or entertainment purposes or kept for conservation, and in particular native birds, reptiles, and mammals.

Animal Care Australia was founded in early 2018 to establish an organisation run solely by volunteers to lobby for real animal welfare. With extreme animal rights and animal liberationist ideologies influencing government legislation, regulation, and policy at our expense and to the detriment of our animals and pets, it has become necessary to provide government with a balancing voice.

By uniting the broad spectrum of animal groups, collectively we offer an experienced, sensible approach to animal welfare.

By educating our members and the public about the importance of treating animals with kindness and respect for their needs and promoting the humane treatment of animals to improve animal welfare outcomes, Animal Care Australia is in the unique position of lobbying and advocating for all animals within our care.

Animal Care Australia provides priority to the following:

- advocating for stronger welfare outcomes
- advocating to increase education of the public in animal welfare and best care techniques
- educate the public on handling their animals with kindness & respect and the importance of their needs
- educate the public in the differences between animal welfare and animal rights