01

20 years of steady progress in animal management – the evolution of an institution

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President AIAM

In 1999, at the 7th National Urban Animal Management Conference at the Gold Coast, a think tank meeting was convened to determine what these conferences should be working towards going into the new millennium. No one, at that time, had to be told that something urgently needed to be done to improve the capacity of municipal Animal Management services to properly meet the needs of the Australian community. And no one had to be told, either, that Animal Management had proven, by that time, to be a much more complicated subject than anyone had been previously thought.

At that conference, senior specialist Animal Management Officers from each State, spoke to delegates about the (considerable) obstacles they faced in trying to properly execute their duties. There was remarkable uniformity of opinion on what most needed to be done. Consensus was quickly reached on "tagging" the five most pressing needs. These were all considered equally important and were listed as follows:

1. *Promote recognition* in the community of the importance of municipal Animal Management services and the value of Animal Management Officers (AMO) commitment to this;

2. *Advocate career pathing* through Animal Management training to Certificate IV level under the National Australian Qualification Framework standard;

3. *Encourage consistency* in legislation and compliance processes across Local and State Government boundaries in Australia;

4. *Support the provision* of sufficient resources to allow delivery of good quality Animal Management services; and

5. *Hold an annual national forum* for the sharing of progressive and innovative Animal Management ideas.

Subsequent to that conference and meeting in 1999, after the Australian Institute of Animal Management (AIAM) had been formed, in 2006 AIAM developed a "Statement of Purposes" that aligned the Institute's corporate identity with its role in endeavouring to

meet these needs. There has been much water under the bridge since 1992 when the first Urban Animal Management conference was convened in Brisbane and much has been achieved.

Introduction

From the outset, there has always a clear understanding of AIAM objectives, which is to ensure the continued delivery of annual national Animal Management conferences. There has also been a clear understanding of the reason for doing this, which is to promote best practices in Animal Management service delivery by Local Government in Australia. While in the beginning this was thought to be the entire story, it was in retrospect, only a statement of Institute *strategy*. It was not a complete statement of Institute *identity* and *purpose*.

When subsequently, a *mission* statement, a *values* statement and a *vision* statement were shaped to go with the *strategy* statement outlined above, a more technically correct account of the AIAM identity and purpose subsequently emerged.

AIAM identity and purpose

The key components involved in defining an organisations corporate identity routinely include understanding its vision, its mission, its values and its strategies. For AIAM this can be stated as follows.

→ *AIAM's vision* The goal of AIAM Inc. is to eventually see an Animal Management environment across Australia in local Government that is sufficiently resourced to shape a nation remarkable for being one of the most sensible, responsible and considerate in the world when it comes to municipal animal ownership. In other words, to have an Australian community in which companion animals have been harmoniously integrated.

→ *AIAM's mission* The mission of AIAM Inc. is to provide a mechanism for the effective promotion of such harmonious integration through an Animal Management service environment that has the following five basic operational goals:

- Develop recognition in the community of the value of municipal Animal Management services;
- Provide Animal Management Officers (AMO) access to career pathing through formal training of National Australian Qualification Framework standard;
- Encourage consistency in Animal Management legislation and processes across throughout Australia;
- Push for the provision of sufficient resources to allow the delivery of good quality Animal Management services; and
- Hold an annual national forum for the sharing of progressive and innovative Animal Management ideas.

→ *AIAM's values* The belief of AIAM Inc. is that by effectively promoting competent pet animal ownership, it can reduce community pet nuisance in the interest of facilitating harmonious urban animal integration.

→ *AIAM's strategy* The strategy of AIAM Inc. is to convene an Australian Animal Management conference each year for the purpose of sharing progressive ideas and gathering consensus on the methodology of best operational practices by:

1. Stimulating critical and constructive assessment of current animal management practice and performance in Australia;
2. Encouraging reflection about the essential role and purpose of Animal Management;
3. Supporting research and development in Animal Management;
4. Promoting continuing education for Animal Management Officers within an accredited national competency framework of relevant training package competencies;
5. Developing a repository of readily accessible quality literature on this subject;
6. Sharing knowledge and experience to build a collegiate sense of common purpose and mutual assistance in this industry;
7. Helping underscore the significant occupational health and safety issues associated with animal management;
8. Drawing together streams of consensus for nation uniformity on important matters pertaining to urban animal management policy and practice; and
9. Recognising excellence in animal management service.

Two questions kept coming up

With time, it became evident that even this description of AIAM identity and purpose was incomplete. It was incomplete in that it did not capture a meaningful description of what *exactly* "Animal Management" itself was. But, as the work of convening these AIAM conferences went on year after year, an understanding of this too, progressively emerged. During this time, two major questions constantly niggled in the "mind" of the Institute. These two questions were:

1. Why is this business so hard? And...
2. Why exactly, at the bottom of it all, is this important enough to warrant all the effort?

1. WHY SO HARD?

Perhaps the most important revelation in peeling this particular onion, lay in appreciating the fact that Animal Management is what might be called a "composite" discipline. It is a discipline that encompasses the full breadth of all of the following three *separate* sciences:

1. Animal behaviour;
2. Human (owner) behaviour; and
3. Community behaviour.

> ### Why so hard?
>
> Animal Management is a uniquely complex socio- behavioural discipline. There is nothing even slightly simple or easy about Animal Management.
>
> Appreciating this fact goes a long way to explaining why it sometimes seems such a comprehensively baffling business.

While each of these three components is in itself a separate scientific discipline, in Animal Management they all come together as a whole new and rather complicated (composite) entity. In this composite format, each of the three elements operates interactively with both of the others and it can be very complicated indeed.

Embedded in this complexity is the fact that *all* control and regulation centrally involves deprivation of freedoms and this fact makes the going consistently challenging. Brendan Bartlett presented an illuminating paper on this "deprivation" theme at the first Urban Animal Management conference in Brisbane in 1992.[1] It (unsurprisingly) makes things difficult to manage when the emotionality of animal ownership is connected with deprivation of freedoms. This complex "chemistry" occurs within

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1   Brendan Bartlett, 1992. The depriving face of control in urban animal management. In the Urban Animal Management Conference Proceedings 1992 - Text copyright © AVA Ltd

the boundaries of *all* Australian municipalities, *all* the time. And if that all sounds perhaps a little more complicated than anyone thought in the beginning... well, that's correct – because it certainly is!

2. WHY BOTHER?

To further understand the complete story of Animal Management, we also need to appreciate the full picture of *why* we do it. There are in fact three levels of understanding in the question of "why" as follows. On the face of it, Animal Management is a Local Government community service intended to realise the following two goals:

1. Reduce pet nuisance; and
2. Promote responsible and community considerate pet animal ownership.

Figure 1 shows the significance of animal related nuisance in terms of the weight of complaints on this subject to Townsville City Council. For Service Request, read complaint. This weight of complaint to councils about animal related problems is not unusual in a national context. Figure 1 supports the notion that pet animals can be a significant cause of public nuisance. So, the first layer of purpose for Animal Management, is to reduce community nuisance by promoting competency of animal ownership.

FIGURE 1

TCC Service requests 09-10
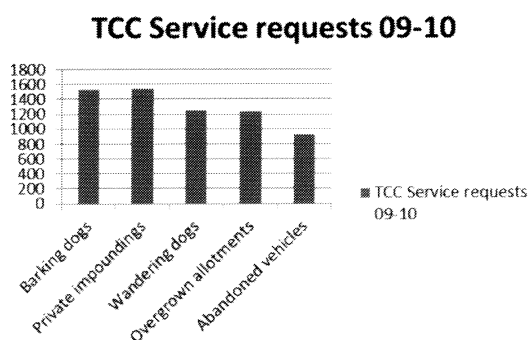
Behind this understanding, lies a second layer of purpose that relates to essential underpinning governance and "policy" matters for Local Government.

These governance and policy matters include aspects pertaining to public health, public safety and community amenity as illustrated for example by Figure 2. regarding dog attacks recorded by Townsville City Council in 2010/11.

FIGURE 2
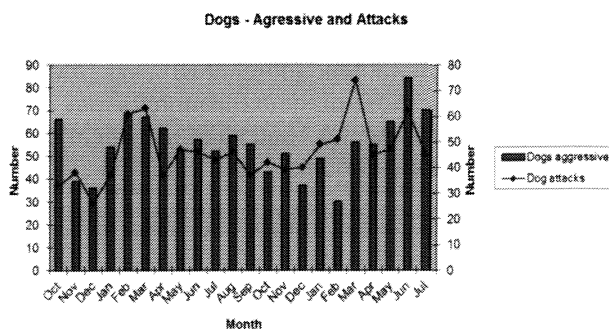
On careful examination, it can be seen that Animal Management is a municipal service that dovetails with Government's quadruple bottom line of obligation as follows:

1. Community (public health, welfare and amenity),
2. Economy (commercial activity and employment),
3. Environment (wildlife and habitat protection), and
4. Governance (transparency and integrity of community service delivery).

> It can be seen from this, that Councils provide animal management service because it is comprehensively in the best interests of the communities they should do so.

Then there is a third layer of Animal Management purpose that relates to why it is that so many people want to (and do) keep on keeping companion animals in our society. Without this understanding there is no fundamental baseline that truly justifies this whole Animal Management business. A summary of this third layer of understanding of *why* we do Animal Management is provided both succinctly and completely by Tamara Shardlow[2] as follows:

"Simply put, pets are an Australian way of life and clearly, one that we very much enjoy. Research shows that eight in ten Australian's have at some stage owned a pet, while every second home now plays home to a pet dog or cat. But if we peel back the generally agreed upon notion that a well behaved pet is rather nice to be around, we'll find a bank of research documenting why.

Across the past 30 years, the sheer weight of international and national studies that examine the relationship between companion animals and range of correlating human health benefits is staggering. Not only are pet owners psychologically[3,4,5],

2 Pers Comm Tamara Shardlow, PIAS. April 2012.
3 McConnell, AR, Brown, CM, Shoda, TM, Stayton, LE, Martin, CE, 2011, 'Friends with benefits: on the positive consequences of pet ownership', Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, vol.101, no.6, pp.1239-1252
4 Straede, CM, & Gates, GR, 1993, 'Psychological Health in a Population of Australian Cat Owners', Anthrozoos, vol. VI, no. 1, pp. 30-42.
5 Garrity, TF, Stallones, L, Marx, MB, & Johnson, TP, 1989, 'Pet ownership and attachment as supportive factors in the health of the elderly', Anthrozoos, vol. 3, pp. 35-44.

> Obviously there would be no need for Animal Management if companion animals were not the municipal community presence that they actually are... If there were no pets – there would be no problems – and therefore there would be no need.
>
> *But, then, who wants to be part of a totally no-companion animal owning society?*

physiologically[6,7,8], and, on the whole, generally more healthy than non-pet owners[9,10]; they also experience greater levels of community connection[11] and personal security[12]. So why should we be surprised to hear that the majority of owners regard their pet as "one of the family"?

In 1994, at one of the early National Urban Animal Management Conferences, David Paxton[13] presented a paper that explained the notion that humankind has "co-evolved" with dogs to the extent of there now being what might be called a "composite" man-dog phenotype. In other words, that co-existence of the two species may have come to involve a degree of genetic *binding* between the two species. David suggested at that conference: "that if the "co evolution – extended phenotype" model proves sound, it would follow that government policies which reduce access to dog keeping need to be appraised critically and not enacted until alternatives are considered". In other words: Public policies which do not take into account the needs of pets, may *not* cater for the needs of people either – because dogs and people have evolved convergently and have similar needs.

Animal management or animal welfare?

It has taken all of the past 20 years of Animal Management conferences for AIAM to come to a solid understanding of the relationship between Animal Management and Animal Welfare. It seems clear now that Animal Management *is* different to Animal Welfare and this distinction stems from a fundamental difference in the purposes of these two enterprises. The difference can perhaps be best outlined as follows:

→ **Animal welfare** is about people being considerate of the wellbeing of any animals they might keep,

→ **Animal Management**, on the other hand, is about people being considerate of their neighbours with respect to how they control the animals they keep.

It should be clearly understood that while Animal Management and Animal Welfare are not the same, they *are* strongly linked in the sense that they both involve animals, they both involve competency of animal ownership and they are both shaped by community values.

The key factor is consideration – consideration on the one hand, of the welfare of animals themselves and on the other hand, of neighbourhood. This mutual key (consideration) factor is why tangible and significant animal welfare dividends *do* routinely spin off from good Animal Management. Clare Connel from Auckland City Council presented an interesting paper on this very theme (of Animal Management delivering tangible and significant animal welfare spin offs) at the third annual conference of the Australian Institute of Animal Management in Geelong, Victoria, 2009.[14]

> Animal Management is what Local Government does in handling service requests associated with animal nuisance in the community.

When Local Authorities respond to nuisance being caused by dogs roaming at large, that is an Animal Management issue. It is an Animal Management issue because constitute an intrusive nuisance to neighbours, a predatory threat to wildlife, a possible danger to people and they create a real traffic hazard. Roaming dogs are routinely impounded by the council Regulatory Service officers because they are a public nuisance. By so doing, these straying dogs are *also* rescued from the real and serious risk of being run over by motor vehicles. This significant animal welfare is a benefit from the primary Animal Management activity. There are many other such animal welfare dividends that stem directly from good Animal Management practices.

6   Qureshi, AI, Zeeshan MM, Vazquez, G, Fareed, M, Suri, K, 2009, 'Cat ownership and the Risk of Fatal Cardiovascular Diseases: Results from the Second National Health and Nutrition Examination Study Mortality Follow-up Study', *Journal of Vascular and Interventional Neurology*, vol. 2, no.1, pp.132-135.

7   Vormbrock, JK, & Grossberg, JM, 1988, 'Cardiovascular effects of human-pet dog interactions', *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, vol. 11, no. 5, pp. 509-517

8   Friedmann, E, Katcher, AH, Lynch, JJ, & Thomas, SA, 1980, 'Animal companions and one year survival of patients after discharge from a coronary care unit', *Public Health Reports*, vol. 95, pp. 307 - 312.

9   Serpell, JA, 1991,'Beneficial effects of pet ownership on some aspects of human health', *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, vol.84, pp. 717-720.

10 Olbrich, E, 1995, 'Budgerigars in Old People's Homes: influence on behaviour and quality of life', *Conference proceedings at Animals, Health and Quality of Life, 7th International Conference on Human-Animal Interactions*, Geneva, September, 1995.

11 Wood, L, Giles-Corti, B, & Bulsara, M, 2005, 'The Pet Connection: pets as a conduit for social capital?', *Social Science & Medicine*, vol. 61, no. 6, pp. 1159-1173

12 Salmon, J, Telford, A, & Crawford D, The Children's Leisure Activities Study, *Summary Report*, Deakin University Centre for Physical Activity and Nutrition, 2004.

13 David Paxton, 1994. Community involvement and urban dogs - some ideas. In the Urban Animal Management Conference Proceedings 1994 - Text copyright © AVA Ltd

14 Clare Connel, 2009. The link between dog control and dog welfare. In the Proceedings of the third annual conference of the Australian Institute of Animal Management in Geelong, Victoria AIAM Annual Conference on urban animal management 2009. Presenter: Clare Connell, Auckland City Council, NZ

Process dissection

The above discussion is essentially about the "why" of Animal Management and the clarity we now have, after twenty consecutive annual conferences, in this respect has been beneficial. In more recent times, the Institute has sought to also gain a better understanding of the "how" of Animal Management.

To achieve this, an effort has been made to "unpack" Animal Management into its *operational* components or functions – as they relate to Local Government *processes*. The following "unpack" involves a breakdown into five key Animal Management service functions[15].

1. **Governance process** – Policy, Audit, Risk, Reporting, Legislation, Advocacy

2. **Planning process** – Strategic, Operational, Reporting, Advocacy

3. **Service delivery process** – Information, Advice, Education, Compliance/Enforcement, Partnerships/Relationships/Collaboration, Consultation, Advocacy

4. **Management efficiency process – Vertical/ Horizontal integration,** Informed decisions, Recruitment, Training, Mentoring, Continuing Education, Information Repository/Library, Advocacy

5. **Quality control process** – Service Level Agreements, Community/Councillors/Staff, Reporting/Benchmarking, Surveys, Audits, Review, Reinvent

Because Animal Management has historically tended to be a service "tacked on" to some other departmental entity in Councils, it is possible that clear functional dissections *specifically* for Animal Management may not in some cases have been carried out. "Unpacking" this and complex, important and often demanding service is a part of seeing how it all should come together in a framework that can be best understood.

Achievements

It is probably true to say that working out the "why and how" of Animal Management has taken all of the past twenty years of *doing* annual national Animal Management conferences to achieve. As a result of this, however, the Institute can now say with *confidence* that it knows what Animal Management really is. And there is now an equally clear appreciation of both how it *should* be done and what most needs to be done *now*. This is a fair achievement in itself and though it might seem (over 20 years past) to be pretty slow going, perhaps not so.

The following anecdote about Yosemite National Park from Tim Adams[16] is instructive in the context of this business of having to work it out as we went along.

"Sometimes it takes a while to develop a new idea to its completion. I was struck by this notion on a visit to Yosemite National Park in the Sierra Nevada mountain range in California: a park ranger told us the story of how even after the area became protected by law, pioneers and decision makers still hadn't finally resolved what it meant to be a National Park.

[The following is lifted from Wikipedia, and agrees with the story as told by the park ranger] – "Concerned by the effects of commercial interests, prominent citizens including Galen Clark and Senator John Conness advocated for protection of the area. A park bill was prepared with the assistance of the General Land Office in the Interior Department. The bill passed both houses of the 38th United States Congress, and was signed by President Abraham Lincoln on June 30, 1864, creating the Yosemite Grant. **This is the first instance of park land being set aside specifically for preservation and public use by action of the U.S. federal government, and set a precedent** *for the 1872 creation of Yellowstone as the first national park." (emphasis is mine)*

One of the most interesting parts of the ongoing story of National Parks in the USA – and Yosemite in particular – is that it seemed to take many decades before the Park was defined in a way we would now regard as a modern National Park. For example – in the late 19th century, the area suffered from overgrazing by sheep, and was home to an encampment by the US Army. In the early 20th Century a dam was built within the boundaries of the National Park to supply water and power to residents in neighbouring counties and San Francisco. The park was even subject to a bid for the Winter Olympics in 1932.

These days, preservation of the natural environment within the park is the priority. Car use within the Yosemite Valley is strongly restricted, with electric shuttle buses running instead. Feeding animals is banned, and the penalties for doing so are steep. Visitor numbers are managed closely, and the rangers conduct daily free tours on various topics relating to the natural environment.

Yosemite National Park was a whole new idea in the beginning. It has taken about 100 years for YNP custodians to work out how this land should be managed in a way we might identify today as a modern National Park. **In other words, it seemed to take a century for this National Park to figure out exactly what it meant to be a National Park.**[17]*"

15 Pers comm. Shane Scriggins NCCC, April 2012.

16 Pers Comm Tim Adams, PIAS. April 2012.

17 Pers Comm Tim Adams, April 2012

Perhaps we have done pretty well by managing to precisely define our Animal Management subject in just twenty years, after all!

It is important to note that the Institute does not dictate, or mandate, or legislate or regulate anything. What the Institute can and does do is to *advocate* the adoption of what are constantly shaping to be genuinely best practices in Animal Management. The Institute endeavours (through its annual national conferences) to facilitate consensus. The expectation is that with consensus comes change. It may be a slow process, but then as has been explained above, this is a very complex undertaking and perhaps slow and steady, in the end, might always been the best way to do it.

How to rate achievements?

How would delegates to this conference rate the Institutes achievements in terms of its originally stated mission goals and conference objectives as they were originally framed?

AIAM MISSION GOALS:

1. Develop recognition in the community of the value of municipal Animal Management services (0 – 10)
2. Provide AMO access to career pathing through Animal Management training of National AQF standard (0 – 10)
3. Encourage consistency in legislation and regulative processes across municipal and State boundaries in Australia (0 – 10)
4. Push for the provision of sufficient resources to allow the delivery of good quality Animal Management services (0 – 10)
5. Have a regular national forum (conference) for the sharing of progressive and innovative ideas. (0 – 10)

AIAM CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES:

1. Stimulate critical and constructive assessment of current animal management practice and performance in Australia(0 – 10)
2. Encourage reflection about the essential role and purpose of Animal Management
3. Support R&D in Animal Management (0 – 10)
4. Promote continuing education for Animal Management Officers within an accredited national competency framework of relevant training package competencies (0 – 10)
5. Develop a body of readily accessible quality literature on this subject

6. Share knowledge and experience to build a collegiate sense of common purpose and mutual assistance in this industry (0 – 10)
7. Help underscore the significant occupational health and safety issues associated with animal management (0 – 10)
8. Draw together streams of consensus for nation uniformity on important matters pertaining to urban animal management policy and practice (0 – 10)
9. Recognise excellence in animal management service. (0 – 10)

AIAM VISION:

Is the Institute realising its original vision of *"An Australian community in which companion animals have been harmoniously integrated and an Animal Management environment across Australia in local Government that is sufficiently resourced to shape a nation remarkable for being one of the most sensible, responsible and considerate in the world when it comes to municipal animal ownership"*? Well, that was a hell of a vision statement from the beginning and perhaps going to the moon might have been easier. But even so, this too is a pass or fail mark for others to make:

a. Are we closer now to having an Australian community in which companion animals are harmoniously integrated?... Y/N?

b. Are we closer now to seeing an Animal Management environment across Australia in which Local Government is sufficiently resourced to shape a nation remarkable for being one of the most sensible, responsible and considerate in the world when it comes to municipal animal ownership? ... Y/N?

Looking ahead

In March 2012, AIAM commissioned Philip Pogson[18] to facilitate a committee review to update the Institute's corporate direction and purpose. Identifying key opportunities and challenges for the Institute as follows was a central part of that process. In fulfilling its vision and objectives AIAM sees several key challenges and opportunities. These include:

Improving governance and coordination of legislation and regulation between State and Local Government and AIAM

State Governments have responsibility for enacting animal management legalisation but the regulatory accountability sits with Local Government.

18 Philip Pogson, FAICD. ACIS. Director, *The Leading Partnership*. North Sydney, NSW 2060 Australia

There has been a tendency for "knee jerk" animal management legislation in Australia and a lack of coordination between State and Local Authorities which frequently results in a lack of resourcing to enforce regulation in local government areas. One of AIAM's key goals is to improve the quality of legislation and to coordinate implementation through partnering local government and the animal management professionals employed on the "frontline".

Animal Management Officer (AMO) competence and training

The safety and competence of AMO is of major concern to the industry and AIAM. Great strides have been made in professionalising animal management work and it is important that ongoing sustainable progress continues to be made. This will be difficult as local government budgets in many parts of Australia are under ongoing financial pressure.

Resourcing and funding service delivery

As noted under governance and coordination, it is one thing to enact regulation, and it is another to ensure that there are adequate local resources available to enable animal management. Added to this is a progressive change in community attitude which now expects Local Government to resolve issues that tended previously to be tolerated or dealt with by the community itself. Nowadays people feel it is Councils problem to resolve all and any neighbourhood conflict issues. This huge shift in attitude has in turn brought about a lot of additional workload, expense and knee jerk reaction. Additional expenses are particularly the case in rural and regional areas/shires where animal management roles may be only part time and the distances great.

Issues of welfare and well-being

As Australia continues to urbanise and grow a complex set of issues around matters such as animal welfare, the human-animal bond, quality of life and the aging demographic are coming to the fore. In addition, there are opportunities and challenges related to our multicultural society and the differing traditions of animal welfare and the human animal bond that AMOs often have to deal with. Finally, indigenous communities also have a strong and unique relationship with their dogs. Remote aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in particular face special animal management challenges that are ably addressed by our sister organisation, Animal Management in Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities (AMRRIC). AIAM has a coordinating and cooperative role in bringing many of these issues and stakeholders together.

Engaging and partnering effectively with key stakeholders

There are many stakeholders, organisations and individuals involved in animal management. Efficiently and effectively meeting the communication requirements of our many stakeholders is a significant challenge for AIAM which is expected to require the application of increased resources over the coming years.

Fundraising and resourcing

AIAM relies heavily on a single event – our annual conference – to generate operating funds. We face a major challenge in trying to expand our income sources and creating a more sustainable business model which will enable us to set up some kind of permanent staffing.

Environment and social sustainability and equity

At the big picture level AIAM recognises that our society faces some major demographic challenges over the coming decades which are potentially far-reaching and which will provide the broader context in which AIAM seeks to pursue its objectives around effective and sustainable animal management.

The biggest breakthrough in 20 years

> One piece of innovative work stands out above all others.
>
> This was the creation of the South Australian Dog and Cat Management Board.

Looking back over the past 20 years of Animal Management activity in Australia, many useful innovative ideas have, in that time interval, been successfully converted into effective and progressive practices – practices that have in many cases been then shared across Australia. One such piece of innovative work, however, stands out above all others. This was the creation of the South Australian Dog and Cat Management Board. A brief history of this Board is as follows:

In 1992, Ken McCann[19] was commissioned by the Minister of Environment and Planning in South Australia to undertake a comprehensive administrative review of dog control in that State. This review centrally involved Ken McCann visiting *every* Council in South Australia and having lengthy discussions about Animal Management with the relevant officers in each case. It showed unusual insight on the part of the Minister that this research *was* in fact focussed on Local Government.

19 Ken McCann 1993. Dog control review. In Proceedings of the Second National Conference on Urban Animal Management, Penrith, NSW

It essentially sought to find out what Local Government in South Australia most needed from the State Government to be able do their Animal Management better.

Subsequent to that review by Ken McCann, in November 1994, the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources in the South Australian Government introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for the management of dogs and cats. This new Act repealed the existing *Dog Control Act 1979* that was not working. The purpose of the new Dog and Cat Management Bill was to implement the following changes:

1. A transfer of the full administrative responsibility for dog control from State Government to Local Government.

2. Amend existing regulatory provisions and include additional provisions relating to the management of dogs.

3. Include new provisions for the identification, control and regulation of cats.

The South Australian Dog and Cat Management Board (SA DCMB) was established as a body corporate under this Bill. The Board had/has the power to perform the following functions:

→ Contract and hold property in its own name

→ Advise Local Government on a wide range of issues relating to dog and cat management, including the development of dog and cat management programs

→ Distribute funds collected on behalf of the Dog and Cat Management Fund for purposes associated with dog and cat management.

→ Make recommendations on the setting of fees under the legislation which were uniform for all councils.

→ The principal function of the Board is be to assist and liaise with Local Government on the administration of dog and cat management and to achieve a high standard of consistency in the management of dogs and cats in SA.

→ The Board was to be the focal centre and disseminate information and knowledge to all councils, and be responsive to the needs and requirements of councils at all times.[20]

The SA DCMB, in terms of direct service value for money, a range of valuable services are provided for all Councils in the State. These include items such as:

→ Developing consistency of legislation and uniformity of regulatory processes across the State

→ Being able to directly link with (similarly set up) DCMBs in other States of Australia for the purpose of cooperatively working towards the development of *national* (interstate) consistency in Animal Management legislation and regulation

→ Providing recommendations to both Local Authorities and State Government in times of public / political media outcry over occasional stress incidents if / when they arise

→ Arranging / supporting / facilitating accredited training for Animal Management Officers

→ Undertaking compliance audits and benchmarking exercises that directly assist Councils in achieving and maintaining best practice standards;

→ Developing topical research projects and providing access to results that assist in the advancement of animal management capabilities;

→ Providing emergency assistance for local governments dealing with difficult / high risk / high stress animal management situations; eg Rabies, potential fatality, very difficult customer situation, work place safety emergency, natural disaster situation

→ Networking Councils to other Councils where "specialist" capabilities might be beneficial and available when needed;

→ Making recommendations to State Government regarding legislative initiatives;

→ Developing and sharing uniform (best quality) community awareness and public education methods and materials;

→ Promoting (Statewide) public awareness of the value and merit of community animal management services; and

→ Assisting with the provision of specialist legal support for Councils if / when needed.

The South Australian Dog and Cat Management Board has been a remarkable Animal Management initiative. It has stood the test of time and it has delivered. The Board's central magic lies in the fact that it places the oversight and the implementation of community Animal Management in South Australia, firmly in the hands of people who know what they are doing – Local Government experts.

Conclusions

It seems important that AIAM should keep doing what it has been doing with preparing and presenting its annual national Animal Management conferences.

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20 Ben Luxton Material from Conference presentation, The Board Model for State Wide Dog and Cat Management: Does it Work?, by Ben Luxton at the 2011 national Annual AIAM conference in Glenelg

While progress and innovation continues, while sufficient Institute office bearers continue to be available, while sufficient delegates continue to attend these conferences and while AIAM remains financially viable, the conferences should be able to continue playing the same constructive / cooperative role that it has thus far.

In a most immediate sense the two main "environmental" issue that need priority attention going forward from 2012 are:

1. Improve the capacity of State Governments to legislate competently for Animal Management.

2. Improve inter-State cooperation in identifying and applying and sharing best practices in Animal management.

> There is no doubt that this state based Animal Management model has proven to be the best Australian Animal Management legislative initiative there ever was.

If the *people* are the same, and the *animals* are the same and the *problems* are the same, then logically, the *solutions* of the problems (best practices) must also be essentially the same – both within and across State borders.

In order to achieve these two objectives, the Institute *strongly* recommends that *every* effort should be made to harness the power of South Australia's Dog and Cat Management Board model by replicating it in every State and Territory of Australia.

Acknowledgements

This Penrith, 2012 conference marks twenty years of direct involvement with the development of Animal Management service in the Australian community. The author wants to thank all the people who have shared this path during this time. They are too many to list, but they are champions all. Special thanks must go to Michael Banyard, who in the very first years of Urban Animal Management conferences, was instrumental in securing Australian Veterinary Association support and underwriting for the initial series of conferences.

In many ways, it is extraordinary what has been achieved over these past 20 years by "simply" convening these annual conferences and making sure that they kept on happening. This (conference convening role) is in truth as much as our voluntary Institute office bearers are able to manage alongside their other full time (and very demanding) jobs. There is a finite limit to what can be achieved under these circumstances. The author wishes it be known that all members of the AIAM Committee and

Executive contribute their service voluntarily and as a consequence of this generosity, AIAM has been not only an effective, it also has been cost effective.

About the author

Dick Murray currently holds the office of President of the Australian Institute of Animal Management. Dick was a 1973 BVSc graduate of UQ and an MSc graduate of JCU. He has been a North Queensland veterinary (companion animal) practitioner with a deep interest in animal management for about 40 years now. For work done in this field of endeavour he has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia, an Australian Veterinary Association's Meritorious Service Award, an AVA Gilruth Prize and Fellowship of the AVA.

The conference at which this paper was presented will be the 20th national annual Animal Management conference of a consecutive sequence of conferences that commenced in Brisbane in 1992. Dick has been centrally involved with all of these conferences and will willingly admit that all of the intervening years have been a continuous learning curve about the subject of Animal Management.

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