

Prologue

Dick Murray, Urban Management Conference Convenor

This will be our 13th consecutive Urban Animal Management conference (UAM). The conference venue is refreshingly different in 2003. Caloundra is a bit off the usual beaten track of capital city conference destinations and is interesting as a consequence. We are grateful indeed for the generous support of the Caloundra City Council in hosting our conference this year. We also acknowledge the contribution of other regional councils including especially, Pine Rivers Shire.

2002-2003 has been a busy year for the UAM Advisory Group with dog aggression management and animal management officer (AMO) training issues taking centre stage. Great progress has been made in both these areas and this is reflected in this year's conference activities.

Conference elements this year include:

AMO training: The Animal Control and Regulation Training Package (ACR TP) is presently being worked through the final stages of its completion by ANTA and the RTCA and our UAM committee is determined to see this training out there and happening as soon as possible. The introductory AMO training package that will be delivered in conjunction with this conference will involve a full 2.5day program. This program of instruction will lead directly into the ACR TP for those Council employees who want to go on with this formal Certificate 4 level qualification. The program will also provide essential 'starting' knowledge for anyone new to the job and looking for occupational 'induction' training.

Lecture themes: A tremendous amount of material will be covered in these proceedings. This material can be summarised under the following headings: indigenous community animal management, public education, dog aggression management, pest animal control, barking nuisance, research initiatives and principals of UAM service.

Conference workshop: The conference workshop session this year will be dealing with dog aggression management and barking. We hope to complete the wrap on our National UAM Dog Aggression position statement... and we hope to start a new one for barking if time permits. Those delegates who attended the Melbourne and Alice Springs conferences will be aware of how our UAM Dog Aggression position has developed and I'm sure, be interested to help it to completion this year.

UAM Website: don't forget that all registration details and program details for this conference are available on line. A veritable treasure trove of UAM reference material in the form of all our conference papers from all our previous conferences is also accessible free of charge, off the net. For access to the UAM website, delegates are encouraged to go to www.ava.com.au and then click the UAM button. All is revealed – and you will be amazed.

As always, conferences are nothing without delegates and I would like to thank all those who have been able to support this conference by their attendance. Lastly and possibly most importantly, I would like to express my gratitude to our magnificent crew of speakers – all very busy people – all who have put in the mighty effort to prepare and present for this year.

Feel welcome, settle in and enjoy Caloundra UAM 2003.