# *Animal Management( Cats & Dogs) Act 2008*

*Queensland Government's Managing Unwanted Cats and Dogs Strategy*

Queensland **the Smart State**

Queensland Government
Department of Infrastructure and Planning

# The Queensland Government's Managing Unwanted Cats and Dogs Strategy

- *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008*
- Introduction of a voluntary code of practice for pet shops
- An education campaign
- Two-year pilot studies at 4 local governments
- State-wide statistical research

# Overview of legislation

- The underlying policy intent of the legislation is to reduce the unacceptably high euthanasia rates of cats and dogs.
- Based on the principles of responsible pet ownership and ensures that all owners take responsibility for cats and dogs in their care.
- There was extensive community consultation commencing with a discussion paper entitled “Managing unwanted cats and dogs” released for public comment in July 2007

# Overview of legislation

- There were over 5300 responses to the discussion paper and the majority of these responses indicated dissatisfaction with the then existing system of dealing with unwanted cats and dogs in Queensland.
- The responses supported mandatory registration and identification of cats and dogs and responsible pet ownership education.

# Overview of legislation

- The key stakeholders consulted during the development of the legislation included local government, the RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League, the Canine Control Council, the Australian Veterinary Association and the Australian Pet Industry Association.
- Ongoing consultation with key stakeholders throughout the drafting process.
- Supported by all Members of Parliament in December 2008

# Purpose of the legislation

- To introduce a consistent approach across all local governments to the management of cats and dogs through compulsory registration and micro chipping

- State-wide regulatory system for restricted breeds, menacing and dangerous dogs

- contribute to the reduction in euthanasia rates of lost /stray animals and impact positively on the local environment and the health and safety of the community

# Main Components of legislation

- Statewide system for the regulation of aggressive dogs
- System for managing the micro-chipping of cats and dogs through :
  - the licensing of PID companies to manage and hold data and
  - the keeping of a list of properly qualified Authorised Implanters
- Statewide approach to the compulsory registration of dogs and cats
- A focus on the health and safety of the community and the environment

# Department (DIP) Responsibilities

- The Department oversees the administration of
  - Regulated Dog data base
  - PID Registries – Licensed companies
  - List of Authorised Implanters
- Enforcement of provisions related to those responsibilities
- The Department allocated a further $649 750 to local governments to assist smaller rural and regional councils with the implementation of the legislation.

# Commencement

Legislation commences generally on 1 July 2009

- All local governments will commence regulated dog provisions on 1 July 2009
- Phased commencement of compulsory registration for cats and dogs and compulsory micro chipping for certain categories of cats and dogs as follows:
  - 10 South – East region councils, Toowoomba Gladstone & Central Highlands – 1 July 2009
  - All other local governments must commence these sections prior to 10 December 2010

# Responsibility of Local Governments

- Keeping Registers
  - Registers of Cats and Dogs
  - Regulated Dogs database
- Providing information to chief executive of the Department for the Regulated Dog Database
- Appointment of properly qualified and experienced Authorised Officers
- Enforcement and community awareness
- Set registration fees – must provide incentive for de-sexing

# Example of local government implementation

- Gladstone Regional Council is providing discounted registration fees for desexed and microchipped animals – up to a 75% discount and issuing desexing vouchers to owners of entire animals which will entitle the owner to a $15 discount off the cost of desexing at their local vet.

# Compulsory registration of cats and dogs

From the date when the local government commences the registration provisions :

- all cats and dogs must be registered with the local government
- existing dog registrations will be transferred as registrations under new legislation
- incentive for de-sexing in registration fees

Note: Working dogs and government owned dogs are exempt from compulsory registration

# Compulsory micro-chipping

From the date when the local government commences compulsory micro-chipping provisions:

- all cats and dogs under 12 weeks on date of commencement must be micro-chipped) *and*
- all cats and dogs subject to change of ownership through sale or gift  after commencement date

Note: Working dogs and government owned dogs are exempt from compulsory micro-chipping

# Authorised Implanters of Permanent Implantation Devices – PID (Microchips)

- Must meet the qualifications as set out in the legislation/ regulation

- Only an approved Authorised Implanter can microchip a Cat or Dog

- Authorised Implanters must provide PID licence register with data about microchip for the cat or dog

# Local Laws and AMC&DA

- If AMC&DA and a local law are inconsistent about a requirement, the local law is invalid to the extent of the inconsistency – particularly relevant with regard to
  - Registration provisions and
  - Microchipping
  - Provisions about dangerous and restricted dogs
- A local government may make a local law
  - Fencing/enclosures/curfews
  - that identifies the number of cats and dogs that can be kept by an owner in its local government area

# Education campaign

- *CatSmart* Education campaign and
- *Love Your Pet Week*.

# Voluntary Code of Practice for Pet Shops

- The voluntary code  was released in December 2008.
- The code provides guidelines for the care and management of cats, dogs and other animals sold through pet shops.
- It also provides guidelines on providing new owners with advice about controlling breeding, appropriate management of pet behaviour, registration and identification.

# Two-year pilot studies at 4 local governments

- Government funded four two-year pilot studies which will inform future policy development on mandatory desexing and cat and dog issues generally.
- Logan City Council has been allocated $84 000 to construct a dedicated Community Animal Desexing Clinic.
- Gold Coast City Council has been allocated $77 000 to introduce an Approved Breeder Permit scheme and a targeted education campaign that will focus on appropriate enclosures for pet cats.

# Two-year pilot studies at 4 local governments

- Townsville City Council has been allocated $68 000 to restart the CatScan program on Magnetic Island, which includes cat de-sexing and an education campaign.
- Moreton Bay Regional Council has been allocated $86 000 to work with local veterinarians to promote cat desexing and to utilise the RSPCA's Education Mobile Unit and Portable Animal Welfare Service throughout the council area.
- The pilot studies are expected to conclude in early to mid 2011.

# State-wide Statistical Research

The Queensland Household Survey conducted in November 2008 found that:-

- Of all Queensland households, an estimated 53.4 per cent either had a dog, a cat, or both.
- Of the people participating in the survey, 36 per cent of cat owners said their cat had a name tag.
- Cat owners had microchipped their cat in 33.7 per cent of cases.

# State-wide Statistical Research

- Many cat owners, 26.4 per cent, also said their cat was registered, even though only some local governments had provision for council registration of cats at the time of the survey.
- Most cat owners, 93.5 per cent, also said that they had their cat desexed.

Department of **Infrastructure and Planning**
PO Box 15009 City East Qld 4002 Australia
**tel** +61 7 3227 8548
**fax** +61 7 3224 4683
info@dip.qld.gov.au

**www.dip.qld.gov.au**