



Introducing...

Mariko Lauber is the Project Officer- Domestic Animals in the Domestic Animals Branch of Biosecurity Assurance, Regulation and Compliance at the Department of Environment and Primary Industries. Mariko has worked for the Department since 1998 in various roles relating to animal welfare and domestic animal management. Mariko has an Agricultural science degree and a PhD in animal welfare. In her current role, Mariko manages major legislation projects including the review of the Code of practice for the operation of breeding and reading establishments.



Community programs - promoting responsible pet ownership

The Victorian Government has long held the view that education is the key to promoting and ensuring animal welfare and maintaining minimum standards with respect to legislative compliance; so much so, that the Domestic Animals Act 1994 offers compulsory training in responsible dog ownership as an alternative to fines and convictions for repeat breaches of the Act. The Responsible Dog Ownership Course (RDO) is a free online training course that provides participants with an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as a dog owner and seeks to educate the average pet owner about their dog's welfare needs; focusing on understanding general dog behaviours, nuisance behaviours and enrichment as a tool for improving welfare. The development of the RDO and its subsequent release to the general public has resulted in the development, and legal provisioning, of subsequent courses. This paper will review the suit of educational tools now offered by the Victorian Government.