

2010 AIAM CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

RECOGNISING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Dr David Whittingham

Psycare, Queensland

WHAT IS THE MANAGING AGGRESSION PROGRAM?

Dr David Whittingham¹, Mr Geoff Irwin²

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The aim of the Managing Aggression Program is to provide public contact staff with the confidence and strategies to prevent and manage workplace violence and aggression.

The program has been developed because of the number of reported instances of physical and verbal abuse against staff.

Our statistics have shown that staff most at risk include city parking, environmental health compliance, licensing and approvals, lifeguard services, animal management, local law enforcement, commercial services and development compliance. Although they are not alone customer service staff, library and administration staff have also reported incidents of unacceptable violence and abuse.

What Council has been doing

- Since 2006 Council has been working on ways to make working life safer for staff with public contact.
- The Executive Leadership Team sought approval to develop a program to help prevent and manage violence and aggression against staff.
- A steering committee was formed. It includes representatives from Health, Regulatory and Lifeguard Services, Commercial Services, Development Compliance, Workplace Health and Safety and Human Resources
- 'Change champions' have been selected from all units involved. These representatives have attended workshops and will become the link between 'on-the-ground staff' and management.
- They have been selected to help promote positive change and communicate the program through the various stages with fellow employees.
- Council and the management team are committed to change and support the Managing Aggression Program as a way to creating a safer working environment for staff.

What the research highlighted

Research by PsyCare found that incidents ranged in severity from chronic verbal harassment to behaviour likely to be criminal in nature with verbal aggression the most frequently form of workplace violence.

Data gathered indicated that City Parking, Environmental Health, Animal Management and Libraries reported the greatest number of incidents, with verbal aggression the most frequent form of violence.

Incidents included:

- parking staff being spat on, threatened with death, pushed and almost run over
- library staff hit with paper, having bottles of water and books thrown at them
- Local Law staff have been threatened with being shot, cut off in cars and shouldered
- waste and refuse staff have had bins thrown at them
- Animal Management staff have been met with a rifle and tailgated

Council's review of existing procedures and policies revealed responses to this issue varied between work units and that there needed to be a consistent approach to managing and reporting across the organisation.

What we doing now

PsyCare has been engaged to drive the Managing Aggression Program.

Background work included a staff questionnaire, focus group sessions, work site observations, protocol and procedure analysis.

An intensive training program was developed and has been delivered with executive and team support.

The program includes strategies at various levels.

- **Individual** – training to prevent and manage aggression, and monitor morale and stress levels.
- **Team** – promote team support through training, cohesion and morale activities, problem solving, monitor morale and distress using workplace health and safety tool and promote a culture of feedback.
- **Corporate** – develop, implement and promote zero tolerance initiatives, promote executive commitment, develop and implement a risk management procedures, centralise reporting, promote partnerships with the community and agencies such as the Queensland Police Service, support staff, promote employee assistance services and early intervention.
- **Community** – increase community awareness through various media and programs.

Other actions that are currently being researched:

- Embedding a QPS officer within the organisation. Currently performing an environmental scan of other similar organisations who have an officer embedded.
- Notable Incidents Register. Reviewing previously called Notable Persons Register to make information capture more robust and ready.
- Figtree/RMIS system. Reviewing current processes to capture all data including verbal threats and make system more accessible and user friendly.

What is the end goal of the program?

The end result will be a safer working environment and less stress for Council staff

THE BOARD MODEL FOR STATE-WIDE DOG AND CAT MANAGEMENT: DOES IT WORK?

Mr Ben Luxton

Dog And Cat Management Board

Does it work?

The Dog and Cat Management Board is the only statutory authority of its kind involved in the oversight of companion animal management in Australia. Replacing roles once held by, or in conjunction with Government Departments, Ministers, Local Government Associations and Local Councils, the Board provides oversight to the management of cats and dogs in South Australia.

Now into its 15th year of existence, does it work? What have been some of the challenges to the operating framework, what has been achieved and what still needs to be tweaked for improved performance?

Discover the benefits and challenges of a Board model for the oversight management of cats and dogs in your state from this presentation.

Presenter: Dog and Cat Management Board representative.

HOW ARE FENCED DOG PARKS USED IN ADELAIDE?

Susan J. Hazel¹ and Ben Luxton²

¹ University Of Adelaide, ²Dog and Cat Management Board

Fenced dog parks are provided by councils in Adelaide as places for people to exercise and socialise their dogs off-leash. However, since fenced dog parks were established, no formal analysis of their use has been performed. In this study undergraduate animal science students at the University of Adelaide will collect data relating to both the people using dog parks, and how they and their dogs interact with the different facilities provided. The students are enrolled in a course which includes urban animal management, providing an authentic assignment for them. Over 40 students are enrolled in the course, enabling a large amount of data to be collected in a short time frame. It is hoped the results will help in developing improved interpretative elements which build knowledge and lead to informed and compliant behaviours within dog parks.

TYING IN THE COMMUNITY: The role of community engagement in supporting an effective Animal Management Program and what you can do to make it work.

Mrs Louise Laurens

Moreton Bay Regional Council

Despite the best attempts of the officers in the field any animal management program will be fighting an up hill battle if an effort is not made to introduce or re-enforce the responsible companion animal ownership message. Despite widely changing demographics within it's area the Moreton Bay Regional Council has set out on a number of novel paths to both inform its community of the needs and requirements and to help them achieve a better understanding of their pets and the communities needs.

This paper details the following innovations and initiatives that have seen a hugely positive outcome for both the council and the community and will detail how these can be implemented at a Local Government Level anywhere in the country:

1. PetSmart program visits groups ranging from under 3's to year 12. This program specifically aims to reduce the number of bite injuries received by children. A secondary benefit is increased community awareness of rights and responsibilities of pet ownership.
2. The development of a crying cd and standalone ante-natal program to help smooth the introduction of a new born into a family with pets.
3. The training of an 'Education K9' who assists with school visits and provides an excellent opportunity for children to interact and build confidence with an animal and reinforces the lessons learned.
4. Microchipping programs throughout the community – during 2009, MBRC microchipped over 2500 pets at community days

PROMOTING SENSIBLE SELECTION – SELECT AN OWNER: PUTS EMPHASIS ON COMPATIBILITY, IN THE HANDS OF THE DOG.

Mr Ben Luxton

Dog And Cat Management Board, South Australia

Puts emphasis on compatibility, in the hands of the dog.

How often do we hear about “the wrong dog, the wrong background, the wrong history in the hands of the wrong person in the wrong environment”. The Dog and Cat Management Board's newest online tool promotes the importance of sensible selection when considering pet acquisition. Select An Owner has been developed after many months of research, to provide an interactive questionnaire to encourage “would be” dog owners to consider the minimum requirements of the breed/breed group prior to acquisition.

Designed to ask the most pertinent of questions, match those answers to the requirements of the considered breed, Select An Owner puts compatibility emphasis in the hands of the dog.

Used by Animal Management officers in South Australia to provide advice to people on inter breed compatibility or behavioural issues with dogs, Selecta An Owner has received positive feedback from dog breeders, councils and the community. This presentation presents a review of the development of this resource and its value as a tool for the promotion of the Dogs 101, Sensible Selection message.

THE PRINCIPLES OF MAKING ANIMAL MANAGEMENT LOCAL LAWS

Mr Trevor Green

Redland City Council

Many Animal Management supervisors have the extra responsibility of making or amending their council's local laws. For those that don't, they should be involved in providing input into the making of the laws that they are asked to enforce. Their laws should be practical, balanced and legally sound.

Often Councils are influenced by community groups and issues which place pressure for the laws to be weighted a certain way. The presentation aims to provide an understanding of:

- Where the need for new provisions initiate from
- Alternatives to laws
- The legal framework for making local laws
- Research
- Community engagement
- Implementation

TO ACT OR NOT TO ACT? MANAGING A COUNCIL'S LIABILITY EXPOSURE IN THE EXERCISE OF ITS LEGISLATIVE POWERS

Ms Cimon Burke

Wallmans Lawyers

Legislation confers an array of powers and duties upon councils and AMOs. These powers are, in most cases, discretionary in nature meaning the decision to exercise them must be properly assessed on a case by case basis. However, sometimes a *failure* to act (or a failure to act adequately) can have liability implications for a council if that council (or an officer of council) is found to have been negligent.

By way of example, consider the situation where a council that has been made aware of a dangerous dog which poses a significant risk to public safety, takes inadequate steps (or none at all) to manage that risk. Where the dog causes injury or damage to any person or property, the council *may* be liable in negligence. The decision to act or, indeed not to act, is, therefore, an important one.

Effective management of a council's exposure to liability in the exercise of its powers can be achieved through diligent and carefully considered application of statutory powers, and, therefore, an understanding of these matters is essential. This paper, in reference to cases which have progressed through the Courts, addresses the principles relating to the application of a council's statutory powers in 'real-life' scenarios in a manner which minimises the council's exposure to liability.

EDUCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN COMPANION ANIMAL WELFARE DURING DISASTERS

Ms Hayley Squance

Massey University

All personnel who are involved in or who want to become involved with animal welfare planning, response during disasters and recovery should be trained and credentialed to reduce the risk of injury to personnel and the animals involved. This includes human first responders such as fire and police, emergency managers, animal management personnel, veterinarians, veterinary paraprofessionals and volunteers.

The ability of personnel to perform assigned tasks safely and adequately, follow emergency procedures, and carry out the disaster relief plans depends on the quality of training provided.

This presentation will discuss the recommendations from research conducted by Hayley Squance on what the educational and technical requirements of personnel involved in animal welfare during disasters.

TIPS AND TRAPS FOR YOUNG PLAYERS: INVESTIGATIONS AND BRIEF PREPARATION

Ms Kate Oliver

Norman Waterhouse Lawyers, SA

LEARNING TO BEHAVE: THE SCIENCE BEHIND ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR AND MANAGEMENT

Dr Linda Marston

Monash University, Vic

Over the last 10-15 years there have been significant changes in the way dogs and their owners are trained. Techniques once common only in the training of exotic or dangerous animals are now regularly applied to dogs. There has also been a huge explosion of interest in understanding canine cognition i.e.

how dogs think, and it appears that the millennia of selectively breeding dogs to be human companions and workmates has resulted in the creation of a species that understands human communication and emotions significantly better than our closest evolutionary relatives, the primates. It is also becoming increasingly apparent that dog behaviour is not 'watered-down' wolf behaviour but something quite different and this is causing us to re-evaluate many long-held beliefs about pack behaviour and how they apply to dog training. This presentation will present a brief overview of learning theory, the role of punishment and reward, consistency and the setting of appropriate limits. Recent relevant research will be presented and there will be some discussion regarding the on-going controversy regarding coercive and rewards based training techniques

THE 5 NEEDS OF PERFORMANCE™

Mr David Harding

Excelerate Learning And Development Australia

The key to performance, whether team or individual performance, lies in meeting the 5 Needs of Performance™. Despite any variance you may care to think of between one team and another, one individual and another - differences in task, skills, experience, organisation and more - these 5 needs are fundamentally the same for any team or any person. So much so that in an organisational context they are as essential to performance as water and food are to human survival. Accordingly when met they enable performance and when not met they compromise or disable performance.

Not through coincidence these same 5 Needs, when met also contribute positively to us being happier at work and when not met these are commonly causes of unhappiness at work.

Through an understanding of the 5 Needs we can plan and achieve a higher level of performance as individuals or as teams and be happier in the process.

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VIOLENCE RISK INTERVENTION IN PRACTICE AND AGGRESSIVE DOG OWNERSHIP

Dr David Whittingham, Psycare, Qld

The need for public contact staff to have knowledge and skills regarding violence risk intervention is related to a number of factors, including increasing rates of violence in the community, policy directions, which emphasise public health approaches and zero tolerance strategies for violence, and the least restrictive environment and mainstreaming of mental health services; professional and public concerns about negligence, liability, and accountability (Harrison, 1997); and significant numbers of clients of mental health services who have contact with the criminal justice system (Schellenberg, Wasylenki, Webster, & Goering, 1992), some whom may be customers of Councils.

Additionally, there has been an increased awareness of risk in the mental health field. This has been made manifest by the body of literature consistently reporting an association between mental illness and an increased risk of violence (Lindqvist & Allebeck, 1990; Mulvey, 1994; Steadman et al., 1998; Swanson, Holzer, Ganju, & Jono, 1990). Despite such useful articles, there is limited guidance as to how this massive literature can be integrated to assist real life practice with individuals in the community. How do you identify possible risk factors for aggressive dog ownership, and use this information to enhance safety and community management of animals? A violence risk intervention in practice model will be outlined and proposed to assist the identification of risk factors, safety management strategies and employee support.

WHY PET OWNERS DON'T ALWAYS DO THE RIGHT THING

Ms Vanessa Rohlf

Monash University

Companion animal management behaviours are typically enforced through local government regulations, and it is the task of Animal Management Officers (AMOs) to ensure that owners within their municipality

comply with these regulations. While most pet animal owners comply with animal management regulations, there is a minority of owners who, for a number of reasons, are not compliant. It is this subset of people that AMOs must engage with on a daily basis. Understanding the psychological basis of non-compliance is the first step towards encouraging proactive change. By applying information gained from literature reviews and research papers, centered on human-animal interaction research, and theories of deviance and civil disobedience, this paper will assist AMO's in gaining a better idea of why pet owners do the things they do.

DEVELOPMENT OF A VALID AND RELIABLE ASSESSMENT TO MEASURE AMICABILITY IN DOGS

Ms Tammie King, Dr Linda Marston, Dr Pauleen Bennett

Anthrozoology Research Group, Animal Welfare Science Centre, Monash University

An easy-to-administer scientific assessment that can reliably measure the behavioural tendencies of individual dogs is urgently needed. This paper provides an update on development of the Monash Canine Amicability Assessment, which aims to identify and quantify easy going, friendly, non aggressive, relaxed and sociable behaviour in individual dogs. The protocol, presented at AIAM 2009, involves exposing dogs to an unfamiliar environment and an unfamiliar person in the presence and then absence of their owner. The standardised assessment is video recorded for later analysis. We are currently analysing data from a large number of companion dogs, to determine if specific behaviours correlate with owner and expert assessments. It is anticipated that this project will provide the first scientifically validated test of canine amicability, which will then be available for use by trained assessors to evaluate dogs in a transparent and legally defensible manner. Preliminary findings will be presented at this session.

SCIENCE AND DOG TRAINING: GETTING IT OUT OF THE LAB AND INTO PRACTICE

Dr Linda Marston

Monash University

This session will take some of the techniques and theory discussed in the 'Learning to behave: the science behind Animal behaviour and management' session and apply them to the number one dog-related complaint received by councils, barking. Recent technological advances such as the 'ABS Bark Count Collar' and more recently Peter Maddern's 'Remote Individual Dog Bark Specific Noise Monitor' are likely to be invaluable not only in determining if there is a barking 'problem' but the pattern of barking could be helpful in determining the cause of the barking and identifying the intervention utilised. The paper presentation will also describe how these methods were used to train shelter dogs to be quiet.

DEVELOPING STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR DOG MANAGEMENT BY COUNCIL

Ms Andrea Malone

Local Government Association, SA

In late 2008, the Acting Ombudsman of SA criticised the regulatory approach taken by a number of Councils, particularly in relation to their compliance actions and administrative procedures. Many of the criticisms concerned actions relating to the regulatory compliance procedures for dog management. The Local Government Association recognised that that good administrative procedures and consistency in application across Councils would significantly benefit both citizens and Councils and developed a wide-ranging program to support Council Officers involved in regulatory and compliance activities. One of the major elements of the program was the development of model standard operating procedures for the management of dogs.

This paper describes how the Ombudsman's concerns provided the context for development of better administrative and regulatory procedures and the benefits of consistent procedures.

ANIMAL MANAGEMENT: IT'S AS EASY AS THE DNA ON A COTTON SWAB!

Mr George Sofronidis

Genetic Technologies, Vic

Not since the invention of the microchip has there been a better tool for animal management than the cotton swab. The information you can capture on a cotton swab by swirling it inside the cheek of an animal has revolutionised the way we manage animals. The ability to use DNA to solve questions on

both the identity of a breed and the individual can provide a valuable insight to inform animal management. Breed identification remains one of the most difficult areas of canine management. A recent study of shelter dogs showed that the results of visual breed identification by the experts differed from the results of DNA breed identification in 87.5% of the cases. Breed Identification Through Scientific Analysis (BITSAs) is a DNA tool which removes the doubt behind breed identification. How can BITSAs be used to ensure a sensible approach to breed restriction, dog attacks and animal management? How good to you think you are at identifying breeds visually?

HOW TO ENFORCE MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOURS WITHOUT FORCE

Ms Vanessa Rohlf

Monash University

The enforcement of companion animal management regulations is by no means an easy task. Animal Management Officers (AMOs) must be able to effectively manage the needs of the individual and the companion animal with the needs of the community. While information regarding animal handling and control is readily available to AMOs, information regarding the effective management of people is lacking. The aim of this paper is to communicate psychological theories of behaviour change and how they relate to the implementation of animal management policy. Practical applications of behaviour change models will be illustrated with the use of case studies, and special attention will be paid to facilitating change in the face of angry resistance.

DANGEROUS DOGS

Mr Steve Hearne

City of Onkaparinga

Does rehabilitation training work?

The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 requires that dogs, subject to a dangerous dog order undergo an approved training course.

The Dog and Cat Management Board's approved training requires the dog undergo a medical examination and full blood work prior to commencement of the training. This ensures that no underlying medical condition lead to the behaviour requiring the application of the order or will prevent successful rehabilitation of the dog.

This presentation will be separated into two components the first, from the animal management officer perspective, will review management of the incident and the implications to dog and owner of application of the order. The second from the dog behavioural trainer or vet will explain the requirements for clinical examination, the behavioural training components and include the indications and implications of success or failure of these components.

Presenters; AMO Steve Hearn, Onkaparinga Council,

Vet or dog behavioural trainer to be arranged.

Abstract submitted by Adele Steel, Urban Animal Management Officer, Dog and Cat Management Board

NSW DOG ATTACK DATA 2009

Mr Steve Larsen

Pittwater Council, NSW

In January 2009 it became mandatory for Councils in NSW to report all dog attacks reported to Councils within 72 hours of the attack being reported to Council. Prior to January 2009 Councils were required to report the dog attacks to The DLG manually now it is entered directly onto the Companion Animal Register and the dog attack is note dog against the microchip number also outcome of the investigation.

In the calendar year 2009 there were 2981 dog attacks reported to Councils of which Adults attacked - 1376, Children under 16 – 384, Dogs – 1203, Cats – 231, Livestock – 650 and other animals - 479. There was 1 death of a person recorded and 1129 deaths to animals.

The breeds that reported to cause the attacks were: Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Australian Cattle dog, German Shepherd Dog, American Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Rottweiler, Jack Russell, Australian Kelpie, Border Collie and Labrador/ Retriever. It was noticeable that the American Pittbull Terrier accounted for 18 attacks.

The figures relating to dog attacks are much greater than previously reported figures due to the legislation changes requiring Councils to report the attacks. The total attacks reported by Councils from 1996 to June 2005 were 3360 combined.

The dog attack reporting is an important tool especially to dispel myths regarding certain breeds and to enable Councils and Government Departments to target their audiences. It is apparent that the high number of adults attacked require a targeted education program relating to being attacked by a dog and the high number of dogs attacked indicate that more education is required relating to the control of their dogs. The number of children attacked remains high that indicates that the education of the children is not sufficient. It appears that the rural areas require special education considering the number on livestock.

Government and Council should start to address the problems relating to responsible pet ownership by expanding and targeting their educational programs using the produced dog attack figures as a basis for their programs.

The data supplied was compiled from dog attack data produced by the NSW Department Of Local Government.

DRAFT AIAM POSITION STATEMENT ON AMO TRAINING IN AUSTRALIA

Dr Dick Murray

President AIAM Inc

The value of training to the AMO and their employer will be researched and presented in order to initiate a training culture in our Local Government Organisations. The qualifications available will be explored and related to the roles and career paths of the AMO to assist in their choices. To complete the picture an overview will be given of the Registered Training Organisations which current have scope to offer these qualifications together with an explanation of terms such as recognition of prior learning and traineeships. From this a conclusion will be drawn as to how the current delivery of these qualifications relates to the virtual academy concept

DRAFT AIAM POSITION STATEMENT ON THE MANAGEMENT OF DANGEROUS DOGS

Dr Rick Walduck

Treasurer, AIAM Inc

Introduction

The Australian Institute of Animal Management (AIAM) when defining its statement of purpose acknowledged that an important role in its charter was to foster and support initiatives that offered practical and effective solutions to the management of companion animals.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a structural overview of factors considered pertinent to understanding the issues concerned with dangerous dogs and to encourage the development of protocols and procedures, that when implemented, will assist to minimise harm, physical or emotional, to humans and other animals.

Scope

This document is provided to interested parties who want to understand the issues pertaining to dangerous dogs in the community and seek potential solutions concerning reduction in dog attacks.

Definitions

Declared Dog – A dog that has been deemed menacing or dangerous by an authorised person or body.

Background

AIAM recognizes that there are multiple factors that may influence aggression in dogs. These include:

- Competence of the owner to adequately select, socialise, train and manage.
- Amicability.
- Environmental triggers.
- Degree of control.

Strategies

AIAM recommends :

- Heightened awareness through education of appropriate dog selection, socialisation and training.
- The development and implementation of educational programs for both adults and children.
- Education programs targeting 0-4 year olds
- Behavioural research to investigate aggressive incidents
- Genetic research to uncover inherited traits in the dog that may predispose to an aggressive incident.
- The development and implementation in all States and Territories in Australia the collection of information in a uniform way.
- The expansion of existing Declared Dog databases to record "incident" details.
- The effective communication and data exchange between Declared Dog databases.
- Identification with a Permanent Identification Device (PID) of all dogs with a Municipal/ Council declaration of Menacing or Dangerous and those dogs involved in a reported aggressive incident
- The linking of reported dog attack injury hospital data to existing Declared Dog databases nationally.

ZERO EUTHANASIA FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA UTILIZING FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

Ms Sue Hedley

SAFE

Since SAFE was begun in Karratha -7 years ago in 2003 thousands of lives of homeless cats and dogs have been saved across Western Australia. There has been no regular funds or facility and the success has been achieved through the passion of people who won't accept euthanasia of rehomingable pets as a "necessary evil". SAFE's aim is that 'no animal is euthanased due to lack of somewhere to stay'. SAFE is realistic about our world today that "forever" isn't commonplace in any relationship in the world of humans as well as animals. Nor is it necessarily something for anyone to aspire to. SAFE has taken so many animals to much happier situations where once guilt of an "owner" who has taken a "life" commitment could have stopped an animal's opportunity for rehoming. SAFE as an organization isn't interested in judging people but focusses on ensuring that every animal is wanted and in a loving home. SAFE's success is not limited by funds or cages in regards to who lives or dies but believes most homes can provide a foster home to a pet even as a one off situation. Even if a facility existed SAFE takes the human concept of deinstitutionalization on board and believes that there is no need for our pets to stay in a cage whilst waiting for rehoming, especially when there is an endless supply of homes to address this need. A facility utilizing cages would only be utilized for assessment of health conditions and behavioral issues. With SAFE's success through extensive use of foster care networks in working toward our aim we want to encourage others across the country to also tap into foster homes so no animal's life is ever in jeopardy.

MALAYSIA MAGIC

Ms Sharleen Jordan

CY O'Connor College Of TAFE

The project of improving Animal Control practices and standards in Malaysia is well under way with me returning from the second trip early February 2010 and another trip scheduled for later this year.

I will share some stories and photographs from my training courses and experiences working with Animal Control in Malaysia.