



DOGS ON PHILLIP ISLAND POSITION STATEMENT

PICS has considered the issues and challenges of the management of dogs and conservation on Phillip Island and formulated the following Position Statement:

- i) PICS acknowledges that companion dogs are important in the lives of many residents and visitors and that dogs require **off-lead areas** for exercise and socialisation.
- ii) PICS considers that the needs of dog owners must be **balanced** with the needs of wildlife and other beachgoers, who also have the right to beaches without the threat of free running dog disturbance.
- iii) PICS considers that the **existing management** of the increasing number of dogs on Phillip Island is **inadequate** and that compliance with and enforcement of necessary restrictions must be **improved**.
- iv) PICS do **not** support dogs' off-lead on beaches due to their disturbance to water birds and wildlife (including endangered Hooded Plovers) and nuisance to other beachgoers.
- v) PICS support the provision of suitable designated enclosed and enriched **off-lead dog parks** as an alternative to beaches.
- vi) PICS notes major issues with:
 - a) **compliance** of existing dog restrictions (both on-lead and "effective control" off-lead); and
 - b) lack of effective **enforcement** by Council and Nature Parks (in particular the fact that dogs on-lead designated areas are in effect used as dog off-lead).
- vii) PICS supports better **enforcement** of dog restrictions improved **signage** and better **community education** for responsible dog ownership and control.
- viii) PICS supports the formation of a **Dog Management Working Group** to discuss and attempt to resolve issues of dogs on Phillip Island, comprising of representatives from PICS, dog owner representatives/groups, Council and Nature Parks.

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