

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC



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Bass Coast Shire Council

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25 June 2021

Re: DAMP-Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025: Cats

PICS supports the May 2016 Bass Coast Shire Council declaration, under the Domestic Animal Act, the Orders for the compulsory desexing of new cats, unless exempt under The Act, for registration and the sunset to sunrise cat curfew. This was an important step in supporting our community and our environment and we believe will bring positive social, economic and environmental outcomes to Bass Coast.

PICS believes the time has now come to extend the cat curfew to a 24/7 containment order, where cat owners must keep their cat on their property **at all times**, for the protection of their pet's welfare.

Council website has particularly good information on the responsible ownership of cats, which identifies 24/7 cat containment as best practice. Contained cats live a longer and healthier life; safe from the hazards that roaming incurs. (RSPCA webpage) The Cat Protection Society of Australia also supports 24/7 cat containment for the "protection of the cat's welfare".

The following information is on the BCSC website under Pet Registration: "Contrary to popular belief, cats do not have to roam. Providing their basic needs are met, cats can enjoy longer and healthier lives when safely contained to the property."

Serious problems can occur if cats are allowed to roam outdoors, particularly at night (around 80% of accidents involving cats, happen at night). Roaming cats can get hit by cars, injured in fights, catch fatal diseases like feline AIDS or become lost.

Roaming cats also kill native wildlife - even well-fed cats will hunt. Roaming cats can annoy neighbours too, by spraying, fighting, yowling, and digging in gardens." ([Responsible Cat Ownership -Training Course](#) © The State of Victoria, June 2016 Authorised by the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, 1 Spring Street, Melbourne.)

Information about Feral cats and the devastation they cause Economically, Environmentally and Socially are well documented on relevant websites and publications. A 24/7 cat containment order would reduce the likelihood of domestic cats mating with Feral cats and may minimize cat abandonment, where domestic cats can turn 'Feral' in two weeks.

Recent CSIRO research has reported that..."pet cats live at much higher densities, so the predation rate of pets per square kilometre in residential areas is 28–52 times larger than predation rates by feral cats in natural environments."

<https://www.publish.csiro.au/wr/WR19174>

As our residential population increases, so will domestic animal ownership, putting more pressures on our community and our fragile environment which is highly valued by Bass Coast residents and the many tourists upon whom our economy depends.

A 24/7 cat containment order would yield better protection for these much-loved pets and provide social, economic and environmental outcomes for all our communities, shire wide.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Nottle', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeff Nottle

President

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters on which we live and work. We pay respect to Community Elders and Respected Peoples of the past, present and future.