

ENCL: NO

## DARWIN CITY COUNCIL

DATE: 06/02/09

### REPORT

TO: COMMUNITY SERVICES/OPEN A

APPROVED: JB

FROM: GENERAL MANAGER COMMUNITY &  
CULTURAL SERVICES

APPROVED: DN

REPORT NO: 09C0003 DN:kl

COMMON NO: 1520352

SUBJECT: REGULATORY SERVICES MONTHLY UPDATE - DECEMBER 2008 &  
JANUARY 2009

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#### ITEM NO: 9.2

#### GENERAL:

#### PARKING

##### CBD Parking

During December and January staffing resources were increased for the purpose of carrying out CBD enforcement. New staff have been trained in CBD parking enforcement and three officers gained their motorcycle licence. Patrols of the CBD were carried out by rotating officers with one officer concentrating their patrols on the off-street car parks.

Handheld units were introduced on the 27 August 2008. Over the following months all officers were trained in the use of the machines. There have been a number of technical problems that are continuing to slow down the effective issuing of infringements. Infringement books are utilised if a particular hand held device experiences an operational fault.

##### Suburban Parking

Suburban parking officers carry out patrols of the following shopping centres: Cullen Bay, Fannie Bay, Parap, Nightcliff, Alawa, Casuarina, Hibiscus, Karama, Rapid Creek and Stuart Park. Due to staffing issues there was no dedicated officer for suburban parking for this quarter. Patrols were carried out when required by Public Places officers when no dedicated officer was available.

Council places a public notice advertisement in the Northern Territory News every six weeks advising the general public of the offence under By Law 101 (which relates to vehicles for sale in public places). Suburban officers patrolled the municipality for vehicles advertised for sale in public places such as the corner of Stoddart Drive and Tiger Brennan Drive, Stuart Highway opposite the Defence Force Establishment and Vanderlin Drive at Karama.

Parap, Rapid Creek and Nightcliff markets are patrolled every weekend. Patrol hours are between 9.00am and 12 noon on Saturdays and Sundays.

### **Public Places**

The Public Places officers and General officers investigate customer action requests covering abandoned vehicles, long grass, litter, storage containers on public places, stacking and storing of items in public places, and encroachment on to a public place from private property.

The aim of the public places program is to minimise as much as possible breaches of By Law 103, in particular persons camping/sleeping in public places and the obstruction of public facilities. Regulatory Services Officers undertook a task to reduce numbers of illegal campers at Mindil Beach, East Point, CBD car parks, Vestey's Beach and Nightcliff Foreshore. A total of 50 infringements were issued for illegal camping during a period of 3 weeks. This action resulted in the identified areas being cleared making it accessible for all public visitors.

This activity was actioned in conjunction with assistance from the Northern Territory Police reducing instances of anti social behaviour, such as consuming alcohol in non exempt areas and fighting. During this reporting period a new Night Patrol service continued to patrol and our officers liaised with them when necessary. Also the new First Response Group were still being proactive regarding people sleeping in public places, and intoxicated people in public places. Our Officers continue to liaise with the First Response Group and continue to enlist their help when needed.

### **ANIMAL MANAGEMENT**

#### **Control**

With increased staffing levels and the implementation of the new Animal Management By-laws, it has been a particularly busy period. The new animal pound has proven to be a great asset with an ability to handle the increase in impounded animals. The majority of dogs have been returned to their owners with RSPCA and the PAWS program both actively involved in re-housing any unclaimed animals from our pound.

No severe animal attacks were recorded, however there was a constant stream of low level attacks that were dealt with during this period, this may be attributed to a greater representation of our officers in the field and the increase in animal activity

during the “build up”. Dog pick ups and at large offences normally increase during the “wet” with more frequent storm activity.

With the introduction of Cat By-Laws there was an initial flood of complaints, this however moderated as we worked through the issues around the new laws and increased the number of cat traps available to the public. Substantial numbers of cats have been impounded during this period, however with the operation of the PAWS program re-homing of suitable animals has been successful.

The AIAM Annual Conference on urban animal management was held in Darwin 15 - 17 October, this was well attended by Regulatory Officers, the variety of presenters and the information provided was invaluable and will be beneficial in to our officers in future work practices.

## **Education**

This quarter has seen many barking dog complaints received and handled by the Animal Education Officer. With the start of the Wet season and many thunder storms approaching, an new advert was made to specifically address the issue of dogs escaping during storms. The TVC lets people know that help is available on the PetCare Helpline for advise on containing animals during storms. We continue to run a monthly advertisement in the NT News advising about Pet Registration and Microchipping and seem to have had an increased awareness about this issue since the ad has been running.

Animal Education has also embarked on a joint promotional campaign with the Climate Change and Environment section to help cut down on the amount of animal faeces left in public places. We have designed a type of POOch Pouch with the DCC logo and an environmental message “Help stop POOlution in Darwin” which can be attached to a dog lead and used to carry poo bags. This will encourage people to “do the right thing” if their dog should defecate while exercising in a public place. Suitable advertising and a media campaign to promote this, is currently being discussed.

In January, Council assisted the RSPCA with their first major fundraiser for 2009, being a preview screening of the movie “Hotel for Dogs” at Birch, Carroll and Coyle Cinemas at Casuarina. The public reception was overwhelming, with the movie selling out fast. I gave away approximately 200 rulers and stickers to many happy, young Territory children and answered many questions from mums and dads on the day.

With the school year beginning again soon, the Play it Safe school education program will be back in full swing to educate our young community members about dog behaviour and dealing with strange or aggressive dogs.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

THAT it be a recommendation to Council:-

THAT Report Number 09C0003 entitled Regulatory Services Monthly Update - December 2008 & January 2009, be received and noted.

**DAVE NEALL**  
**MANAGER REGULATORY SERVICES**

**JOHN BANKS**  
**GENERAL MANAGER COMMUNITY &**  
**CULTURAL SERVICES**

Any queries on this report may be directed to Dave Neall on 89300421