

people & pets



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FROM URBAN ANIMAL MANAGEMENT
AN ADVISORY GROUP TO THE AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATION

Greetings all

It is New Year's Day today as I write the intro for this edition of *People & Pets*. It is a perfect time to get our new (UAM) year out of the blocks. With luck, the finished job will be comfortably in the mail and on our new UAM website just as soon as everyone gets back into their UAM "traces" after their Christmas break.



Dick Murray

Thanks to all who have assisted me by contributing the kind of quality copy that most editors have to beg for. I believe this edition is both interesting and informative.

The following items are addressed:

Canberra conference report from Michael Hayward (our eminent and esteemed UAM Group convenor) gives us a good wrap of how it all went and with no mention of streakers at the oval.

Plans for AMO training at the Hobart conference later this year are looking very strong – we just need the numbers to make it all happen now.

Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation – More information about traineeships and Registered Training Organisations involved in ACR course delivery.

Gold Coast City Council "TigerPlan" – See how Selina Neill from GCCC takes a trained tiger with her on the job now – and nobody gives her any lip anymore – ever! Not even Johnny Cohen! ... Seriously though, this is a terrific article contribution that attractively and thoughtfully digs down into the nature of the business of UAM.

Back on line (at last) – I have a rock solid guarantee that by the time this edition is finished and printed, our www.uam.net.au website will be up and carrying the e-version.



Comfortable new open style venue seating for delegates

Disclaimer – We have had a revision of the liability disclaimer included in this edition of *People & Pets*. Because our UAM community is such a close and friendly and interdependent one, in which contributing freely is a central theme, it is a grim comment on the how things are that a disclaimer like this even has to be necessary. But there it is and ours is a beauty.

That's it from me. Our next edition will be mostly all about our Hobart (August 06) conference program so all those on-line conference registrations can start flooding in via that new web access portal I already mentioned above. I hope you will enjoy the read.

Regards

Editor, *People & Pets*



John Snyder, Keynote speaker from HSUS



What is a tiger doing here? See page 5 to find out.

EVENTS CALENDAR

28-29 AUG 2006

AMO Training Sessions, Hobart

30 AUG-1 SEP 2006

UAM Conference, Hobart

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- New UAM website and contact information
- Canberra 2005 conference report
- AMO training
- Traineeships can save councils money
- Registered RTOs
- Take a walk on the wild side

New UAM website and contact information

By the time you read this, our long promised UAM (stand alone) website will be up and running. Reasons for the delay are many and not worth exploring here other than to say that we are up, we are on air, it's good and going to get better and better. The job of our UAM Group is to reach everybody we can in Animal Management to provide as much assistance and support as possible – we need that website – and it is back!

The website at www.uam.net.au includes all the material previously available on the UAM pages on the AVA website such as:

- Proceedings of previous conferences
- Current conference resolutions (previously position statements)
- Current and past issues of *People and Pets*
- Conference information, booking forms etc as they become available (April for Hobart in 2006)
- There is information about AMO training with links to the Animal Control and Regulation Training Package etc
- Our annual awards program will be featured

... All this and much, much more.

In order to sell as many left over copies of our last conference proceedings as we can to help our conference cash flow, UAM Group policy is for our most recent conference proceedings to be embargoed from the website for 12 months. After the year is up (and the next conference is on), those proceedings join all the rest for ready access on line by all interested parties.

**UAM CONFERENCE 2006
HOBART, TASMANIA
30 AUGUST - 1 SEPTEMBER
*Keep the dates free!!***



You can have a devil of a good time in Hobart!

Our new domain name provides us with a series of email addresses. These include:

- info@uam.net.au – for general contact and enquiries
- conference@uam.net.au – to contact the conference organizer regarding registration, facilities etc
- program@uam.net.au to contact the person responsible for the program (papers) at the next UAM conference – currently Shane Scriggins
- training@uam.net.au – to contact the person responsible for Animal Control and Regulation Training Package information and who organises training at the conference

Please use these email addresses to contact us as required.

We'll be happy to receive feedback on the website – it is an evolving organism and your help would be appreciated. Please send such suggestions to conference@uam.net.au



Wrest Point Convention Centre

Canberra Conference report

UAM Canberra 2005 attracted 186 registered delegates (includes speakers and trade exhibitors). This is a great number for an event held in a small city without the local support of the many of the large councils in other Australian cities.

All delegates were surveyed on the last day of the conference to give the UAM Group the feedback it needs to keep that pathway towards best practice in motion. The following brief summary gives an indication of how the Canberra conference was received.

- 86% believed the conference was effective or highly effective in providing practical solutions to real problems
- 78% believed the conference was effective or highly effective in providing information to assist the development of policy and legislation
- 76% believed the conference was effective or highly effective in presenting relevant new research and
- 65% said it demonstrated relevant products techniques and services.

This success is directly attributable to the quality of our invited speakers and the content of their presentations. The enthusiasm and involvement of delegates also helped and this was obvious not only during the social functions!



Please circulate *People & Pets* to:

- Animal Management Officers
- Environmental Health Officers
- Managers
- Team Leaders
- CEO
- Others Interested

If you received this by email but would prefer to receive a paper copy, please let us know!

Email to info@uam.net.au

Canberra Conference report cont...

Our keynote speaker was John Snyder from the Humane Society of the United States. John had along career in animal management working for County government in Florida before joining then HSUS with responsibility for companion animals, especially for Dangerous Dogs Policy. Despite a nasty infection caught while part of the Hurricane Katrina animal rescue effort, John delivered four excellent papers and was our most popular speaker. He was joined in two presentations by Mark Lawrie from the RSPCA, giving an Australian perspective on animal hoarding and the "animal abuse-child abuse-domestic violence-anti-social behaviour" link. John is pictured on page 1.


Some 32 papers were presented and these included the following:

- Popular behaviourist Dr Joanne Righetti delivered three very well received papers on "quick fixes in animal behaviour", "examples of successful barking management" and "handling dangerous dogs".
- Peter Chandler (NT) and Paul Frisby (Qld) with practical examples of barking management in their local authority areas.




Paul Frisby, from Rockhampton City Council

- Researchers from the Centre for Welfare and Ethics (Uni Qld) and Animal Welfare Centre (Vic) with recent data on risk factors for problem barking.
- Assessment of an RSPCA shelter temperament test, the sources of pets in Victoria and community attitudes toward unowned cats were among other initiatives and studies reported from animal shelters in Victoria.
- Shane Scriggins and Dick Murray presented a second paper on a bark recording collar which we expect to be enormously useful to councils investigating barking complaints and which should be commercially available in the near future.
- We looked again at the issue of domestic cats and wildlife, and at the new legislation regarding cats in the ACT, as well as a humane trap for the pest species the Indian Myna.
- A very valuable paper "Meeting In The Park: Are Dog Owners Who Talk To One Another Contributing To Social Capital?" by regular speaker Virginia Jackson, Town Planner and Social Analyst. The paper has recently been published in "Control" the publication of New Zealand Animal Control Officers. It dealt with issues of social contact and compliance deriving from groups of dog walkers in public parks – well worth a read.



SPECIAL PRICE!

MICROCHIP ALL POUND ANIMALS ON RELEASE




A Trovan FDX-B ISO transponder is available through Microchips Australia, in packs of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 or 200, with implant details forwarded to Central Animal Records, (www.car.com.au) the **FIRST** National microchip Registry to be accredited by the A.V.A.

CHIP & LIFE PACKS - Attractive price:

BASIC Pack - \$13.75 (inc. GST) per Chip & National Registry listing for Life including a numbered external collar tag, and full A4 sized Certificate of Identification forwarded directly to pet owner, and website access for owners to view and update their own details.

CHIPPING DAYS: We can assist & advise in hosting a chipping day within your Municipality, which helps to promote responsible pet ownership to your local residents. Promoted well, you will be surprised at the number of pets to be microchipped. All organised by Microchips Australia staff, utilising the services of the local Veterinarians. If interested, simply give us a call to discuss further.



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Canberra conference delegates also workshoped a conference resolution on Barking Management, which is nearing completion in its "full" form.

The latest version should be on our website by the time this P&P is printed and mailed. This document parallels conference resolutions (previously position statements) on microchips and dangerous dogs which emanated from earlier conferences and which have had an impact nationally.

Conferences like these always require a lot of work by many people – the national committee (UAMRG), Local Arrangements Committee, speakers, trade exhibitors, and of course the conference organiser. While all these are deserving of our thanks, I must single out Doreen Culliver from OnQ Conference Support. Doreen's experience and skills were very obvious, and were very positively remarked on by delegates. The food was hot and plentiful, everything ran to time, and she even vacuumed the floor of the venue prior to the conference dinner, in her long dress!

Doreen was also largely responsible for attracting the largest and best Trade Display we have had for many years. Our trade exhibitors contribute greatly both to the affordability of the conference and to the experience for delegates – meal breaks in the trade area become an opportunity to see the latest devices and training packages, as well as to catch up with friends from across the country.

Don't miss UAM 2006 in Hobart – the local arrangements committee have some good things cooking!

Michael Hayward, UAM Convenor

Dangerous Dog Database

Most recently, the dangerous dog incident grading system and need for a national database to record dangerous dog incidents was picked up by NCCAW and recommended for action to State Ministers by the Federal Minister.

The Dangerous Dog Database is now in roll out phase in Victoria, with two other States to follow very soon. These are colossal outcomes for UAM and a great credit to all the delegates who helped put the words together for all of our resolution statements.

A complete compilation of conference abstracts, speaker biographies and some photos can be found on the website:

www.uam.net.au

UAM 2006 - Hobart, Tasmania

30 August - 1 September

Full program with top notch presenters!
A social program equal to the best.

Venue: Wrest Point Conference Centre

A range of alternate accommodation options will be on offer.

Exciting Tasmania - stay on for a pre or post conference holiday....

AMO training

A 2-day AMO training program is being planned for our next (Hobart, August 06) UAM conference.

The theme for the Hobart conference is "Risks and Risk Management in UAM" and the UAM Group plans to run two concurrent AMO training workshops on this theme. It is planned that there will be an emphasis (among other things) on aggression, dog identification and breed recognition.

By now everyone in UAM will be aware that there is a nationally recognised training package for AMOs. This qualification is called "Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation – RUV 40104" and there are now a good number of Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) out there geared to deliver it.

At this stage, for our Hobart conference AMO training sessions, the competencies we plan to select unit material from are:

1. RUV4101A (**Implement and monitor the organisation's OH&S program**) and
2. RUV4203A (**Identify and respond to animal behaviour**)

Provided we get enough trainees registered for each of these concurrent streams, we will run both workshops.

Either or both will be pulled if numbers registered to attend are insufficient to allow us to pay our training providers.

It should be noted that neither of these workshops will complete the full competency attainment levels required under the Cert IV in ACR. There is not enough time to achieve that in the two days available. However, it is all useful knowledge for AMOs in the critical area of risks and risk management in UAM. The competency elements dealt with at these training sessions will be addressed so that either:

1. AMOs can just attend the Hobart training sessions and receive a "certificate of attendance" that may be considered as a partial credit for the units they attend, should they wish to carry on with their Certificate course somewhere else later on (and not necessarily with the RTO involved at Hobart).
2. Or alternatively, they can enrol with the RTO(s) involved in the Hobart conference AMO training to undertake and receive certification for the units covered. This option will require that these AMOs complete post-workshop workplace-based assignments and submit them to the RTO delivering the workshop.

It is anticipated that this training workshop will be delivered on the two days prior to the conference proper. Trainees will be encouraged to register also for the UAM conference itself held on the days following their training sessions to help their councils obtain best value for their attendance costs.

The full details of training costs and components covered at Hobart will be set out in the next (April 06) edition of *People & Pets*. There will be registration forms in that edition for the AMO training sessions as well as for the conference itself. At this stage we are only aiming to ensure that there is enough detail here to allow interested councils to flag the budget allocations that may be needed if they think this training program looks right for their AMOs.

- The UAM Group hopes that councils from all around Australia will see this as an opportunity to introduce newly appointed AMOs to the ACR training package.
- The Group hopes councils will also see it as an opportunity for their currently employed officers to brush up and refresh their knowledge levels.

At this stage this notice is a heads up for anyone interested. As was pointed out above, we will be looking for sufficient numbers to justify running this training program. So give it some thought and stand by for the next exciting episode when the registration forms are included in our April newsletter.

In the meantime, Geoff Irwin from Gold Coast City Council is heading up the UAM Group's training portfolio and he is contactable at training@uam.net.au

Please register your interest as soon as possible.

Fast tracking to qualification

All RTOs that I have spoken to regarding AMO training with the ACR TP – RUV40104, are keen to assist experienced officers to "fast track" to the attainment of their Cert 4 qualification via the "Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)" process.

Everyone who does not know how this works and who would like to know more is encouraged to contact the RTO of their choice to get the drum.

Dick Murray, Editor, *People & Pets*

Here are some of the comments made by AMOs who attended the 2005 Workshop in Canberra:

- "The simulated workshops were very beneficial and gave an insight as a future facilitator of how the people that will be participating are feeling and the different levels of emotions that are reached."
- "Overall I believe this course is excellent, especially for new officers."
- "Very impressed with Matt's style of presenting the course and his own personal experience and passion for what he was sharing was truly evident and refreshing. I have enjoyed learning a different approach to handling conflicts and obtained useful skills that will assist me with my work."
- "This Cert IV ... will lift our profession to new heights and introduce self confidence into our officers."

Traineeships can save Councils money

Both employers and individuals stand to save large amounts of money with traineeships. For example, the Queensland State Government under its current Industry Training Partnerships (ITP) initiative is paying employers up to 50% of course fees which can save an employer between \$750.00 and \$3000.00 over the course of the trainee's studies.

These traineeships are initiatives intended to help employers re-skill and upgrade the qualifications of their existing work force. Conditions generally apply however and traineeships are usually only granted to those individuals who have not completed prior accredited training under the Animal Care and Management Training Package. Enrolment positions may also be limited (eg in Queensland under the ITP initiative only 50 places have been made available for the 2005-2006 contract year).

Anyone interested in applying for a traineeship under which to study **Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation**, is encouraged to contact either their preferred Registered Training Organisation, or a New Apprenticeship Centre in their State.

Currently in various states of Australia, traineeships are being released to assist Animal Management Officers gain a **Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation**.



ACR won't leave you up the ladder with no place to go

Registered RTO's

There seems presently to be some misunderstanding about which Training Organisations are registered to deliver **Cert IV in ACR**.

The Local Government Training Package (LGTP) is intended to link to Cert IV ACR and facilitate the "carry across" of some competencies and competency elements for convenience and for efficiency in fast tracking dual qualification. But the Local Government package is *not* the same as the ACR package. RTOs registered to deliver the LGTP are not necessarily registered to deliver Cert IV ACR.

At the right is the list of RTOs currently registered to deliver Cert IV in ACR as copied directly from the National Training Information Service website (www.ntis.gov.au).

Take a walk on the wild side

What do tigers have to do with urban animal mangement?

Surprisingly, tigers have quite a lot to do with urban animal management, as a group of us at Gold Coast City Council Animal Management recently found out.

GCCC's Animal Management Section deals with an average of 12,000 complaints per year. Most of the problems we see are concluded to have arisen due to the pet owner's lack of knowledge or misunderstanding of their pet's behaviour. We subsequently have become committed to working proactively in assisting pet owners in dealing with their pet problems by providing them with the latest advice and information.

Traditionally, much of this information has been based on popular training methods and research of domestic animals. However, for the past two years we have decided to "think outside the square" and research the methods used in the management of other animal species in order to develop new work practices.

And you can't get much further outside the square than a tiger!

The Gold Coast theme park Dreamworld is the home of *Tiger Island*, a facility that features six Bengal tigers, one Sumatran tiger and two cougars. It is an educational conservation-based experience that enables people to get up close with and appreciate these awesome endangered species. The white & gold tigers play, wrestle and swim with their handlers each day without the constraints of enclosures, enjoying a relationship that is based on trust, respect and affection.

During our visit we had the opportunity to spend some time behind the scenes at the Island. Peel back the glossy PR layer and you find the success of the Island relies on constant, intensive management grounded to a commitment in understanding & responding to the tiger's natural behaviour and instincts. While we learnt many things on the day, this was the ultimate lesson for me; that to get the most out of the human-animal relationship you must firstly acknowledge and respect the animal's natural behaviour.

(RUV40104) Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation Training Providers

Delivery Organisations in ACT, NSW, NT, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC, WA

National Code	Organisation Name	Registering	Delivers In State or Territory
31088	Crampton Consulting Group Pty Ltd as trustee for the Hardwick Family Trust trading as Australian Veterinary Nurse Resource Centre, Animal Industries Resource Centre SAMFORD, QLD	QLD	ACTNSW NTQLD SA TASVICWA
30837	Department of Employment and Training trading as Brisbane North Institute of TAFE EAGLE FARM, QLD	QLD	QLD
90936	Em-Four Pty Ltd trading as Em-Four Pty Ltd GOULBURN, NSW	NSW	ACTNSW NTQLD SA TASVICWA
40161	Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education (TAFE SA) Programs delivered through TAFE SA South, TAFE SA North, TAFE SA Regional ADELAIDE, SA	SA	SA
3075	Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT) trading as Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT) PRESTON, VIC	VIC	VIC
3059	Swinburne University of Technology (TAFE Division) trading as Swinburne University of Technology (TAFE Division) HAWTHORN, VIC	VIC	VIC
21622	Warner Group Pty Ltd trading as Warner Institute of Business HAMPTON, VIC	VIC	VIC

The site to access this information - <http://www.ntis.gov.au> You will need to do some searching within the site and we hope to provide a link direct from www.uam.net.au

So how does this relate to urban animal management? Well, a common experience for today's AMO is the pet owner that finds it difficult to grasp or accept that their dog is just that - a dog. The owner humanises the dog and by denying the existence of the dog's natural behaviour, the owner is ill prepared for problems such as excessive barking or aggression. In particular, we have found that many dog owners refuse to acknowledge that aggressive behaviour in dogs is natural, eg: "Fido would never bite anyone!"

This type of thinking frequently has tragic consequences as the owners do not put any safeguards in place with regard to the management of their dogs and do not react appropriately to the predictors that signal something is about to happen.

The handlers at Tiger Island do not have the luxury for such narrow thinking. Quite bluntly, their lives depend on acknowledging that the animals they work with, although trained, are essentially wild and by nature, very aggressive. In fact, the tiger's success as a species in its natural habitat depends on that aggression. A tiger with no aggression very quickly becomes a very hungry tiger.

By acknowledging that aggression is a natural part of the tigers' behaviour, the handlers can be proactive in ensuring the tigers are managed so that opportunities for such behaviour are appropriately channelled.

In their unique relationship, the handlers at Tiger Island eloquently demonstrate that knowledge of the animal and its natural drives and instincts is the key to ensuring that it is managed to the benefit of all.

During our visit we found a number of parallels that could be drawn between the management of the tigers and cougars and urban animal management. To manage various issues the handlers may implement a number of measures including:

- Behaviour modification



Here you go then. Try some cat control on this one!

Take a walk on the wild side cont'd

- Removal of stimuli
- Environmental enrichment and modification
- Veterinary intervention.

Some of the examples we saw included:

- Two cougars were being temporarily housed in the western wing of the complex while their new enclosure was being built. The tigers were subsequently "eyeballing" the cougars, making the cougars nervous. Handling of the tigers became more difficult as they became increasingly fixated with the cougars presence. The handlers solved this problem by covering the cougars' enclosure with shade cloth. (*Removal of stimuli*)
- Female cougars are extremely noisy callers during oestrus. As the handlers have no plans to breed the cougars, the cougars have been desexed to prevent this noise nuisance. (*Veterinary intervention*)
- The tigers are attracted to some particular strong scents such as insect repellent, juniper and Singapore daisy and try to immerse themselves in the scent by repeatedly rolling in it and licking the source. The longer they do this the more "goofy" they act and they can become very possessive of the source. Some handlers have been bitten by a tiger stimulated by an overdose of insect repellent! To prevent this, the handlers have recognised the scents that have this affect and limit the tigers' exposure to them. (*Trigger recognition and environmental modification*)
- One of the male tigers had developed a habit of staying at the back of the exhibit near an access gate. In this position not only was he difficult for the park visitors to see, but he posed a danger to handlers entering the exhibit.

The handlers discouraged him from skulking in this location by keeping vinegar in syringes by the gate and squirting him every time he stayed too long and rewarding him with food treats when he moved to the front of the exhibit. (*Behaviour modification*)

It was almost disappointing in a way to see their methods were so, well, ordinary.

You expect some kind of superhuman animal handling skills, but the only thing that is extraordinary is their application. Where most pet owners give up or find that ignoring the problem is easier than striving to solve it, these guys persevere and the results are awesome.

During our visit we accompanied one of the tigers "Sita" on her daily walk. There were plenty of opportunities to come in for a pat, something we made the most of. After a while I couldn't help feeling a bit blasé about the whole experience until I noticed how intensely the handlers were monitoring the tiger. Every step, movement and twitch was noticed and responded to – we probably weren't aware of the half that was going on! It made me wonder just how much of our own pet's behaviour are we seeing? How much do we miss?

The tiger handlers don't miss anything and that reinforced the ultimate lesson for me.

It demonstrates what can be achieved when you commit to understanding and responding to the animal's natural behaviour and instincts. Now we only have to find a way to share this information with the community and get them motivated by it!!

There were many fascinating things that we saw and learnt during our visit and I could probably fill pages writing about it all. If you have an interest in animal behaviour and would like to learn new ways to approach old situations then it's worth your while to take a walk on the wild side and approach facilities such as zoos and wildlife sanctuaries to learn how they manage their animals. I guarantee that you will come out thinking differently.

Selina Neill
November 2005

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We would like to hear from you...

Have you or your Council implemented any interesting animal management initiatives? If so, we would like to hear about it.

Email information to info@uam.net.au

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