



RANGER SERVICES PLAN 2012-2017

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<i>Department of Local Government (DLG)</i>	NSW Department of Local Government. A State agency responsible for providing advice and guidance on local government matters.
<i>Goal</i>	The broad purpose towards which each program is aimed.
<i>Objective</i>	The focus of each sub-program that contributes towards the program goal.
<i>Risk Factor Score</i>	A “demerit point” accrual, based upon assessment of various categories of premises at each inspection. While the particular point allocation for each item is to some extent arbitrary, the system does provide a degree of objectivity and consistency from one officer to another.
<i>LHPA</i>	NSW Livestock Health and Pest Authority. A regional agency constituted under the Rural Lands Protection Act 1989 who protect rural land on behalf of the community.
<i>Target Risk Factor Score</i>	The target score set for a given year. The system is designed to allow for continuous improvement, so that a new target can be set once the previous one has been achieved.

Introduction

1.1 General

The plan identifies the statutory obligations the Shire has in relation to law, order, animal control and public safety within the Warren Local Government Area as well as additional services that would normally be performed. The purpose of the plan is to provide a structured basis to the management of the various ranger services functions. It details activities to be carried out over a set period of time to achieve desired outcomes which can be measured and evaluated for effectiveness. The plan is based on a structured functional goal/strategies approach and forms part of the Health & Development Division Management Plan.

1.2 Strategic Links

The plan is linked to the current Warren Management Plan.

Principle Activity: Administration

Activity: Animal Control and Regulation Enforcement

Strategic Objectives: To provide dog, cat and other animal control services to meet the demands of the community.

The plan supplements both Shire's *Management Plan* and sets out the manner in which it is intended that Ranger Services functions will be undertaken over the next five years. The plan does not, and cannot, anticipate all community service activities of the section, and it should be recognised that many of these are responsive and unpredictable.

1.3 Programs

Programs reflect major functional areas in Ranger Services. Sub programs are components of programs which utilise common processes and activities to achieve the goals of the program. The plan is divided into the following programs:

Administration

Parking Management

Litter Control

Nuisances

Animal Management

Objectives and strategies in each of the sub program areas of the plan were developed in consultation with Health & Development staff.

1.4 Prioritising

The plan prioritises each sub program. The most variable factor in prioritising is the community expectation as expressed through community groups or the Council. Another factor that affects priority is legislative requirements. If a statutory activity dominates then the sub program is given the highest priority.

1.5 Performance Indicators

Performance indicators have been provided and classified according to whether they reflect workload, efficiency, effectiveness or community satisfaction. Indicators have not been used unless they answer to at

least one of these criteria, are easily measured and add some value to the service or understanding of it by their measurement.

1.6 References

Reference sources used in preparing this document include:

- Australian Rangers Federation
- WA Rangers Association
- Keep Australia Beautiful Council
- Clean Up Australia

1.7 Review

The plan will be reviewed on a as needs basis to facilitate alterations to priorities, if necessary, in light of changing community needs, and to enable progress to be assessed.

Who Is This Plan For?

This plan is intended to assist Council and officers in meeting their responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 1993*, the *Companion Animals Act 1998*, the *Roads Act 1993*, the *Impounding Act 1993* and the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*. It also aims to facilitate accountability and to assist the community in understanding both the obligations and functions of Ranger Services within the Shire's Health & Development Division.

Its stakeholders are therefore:

a) Internal:

- Mayor and Councillors;
- Council and its Committees;
- General Manager;
- Manager Health & Development;
- All divisional managers and staff; and particularly
- Health & Development staff.

b) External:

- Residents, ratepayers and visitors;
- Federal Government, particularly the Department of Territories and Regional Services;
- NSW Department of Local Government;
- Australian Rangers Federation

Who Prepared This Plan?

This Plan was prepared and compiled by: Manager Health & Development Mr E Love

What Resources Are Committed To Ranger Services By The Shire

Ranger Services is one of the functions performed by Council's Health & Development Division. The following staff have responsibilities within Ranger Services:

- Manager Health & Development (approximately 10% time);
- Health & Development Trainee Environmental Health Officer (approximately 5% time);
- Manager Health & Development Receptionist/Secretary (approximately 5% time);
- Ranger (approximately 60% time);

Two motor vehicles are allocated to the division's use.

Specialised equipment held includes:

- Live capture cat & dog traps
- Dog handling pole

- Snake handling equipment

The division is also provided with the usual office furnishings and equipment, protective clothing, reference library and so forth.

What Are Our Strengths & Weaknesses?

A SWOT analysis was undertaken during the development of this plan, to determine areas in which improvement is possible and what can reasonably be achieved.

Strengths and weaknesses primarily refer to internal factors, while opportunities and threats are related to the environment external to the organization.

<p>Strengths</p> <p>Autonomy given to staff – freedom to be innovative.</p> <p>High morale.</p> <p>Politically stable</p> <p>Reasonable level of community support and co-operation.</p> <p>Leadership at both Shire and Division level.</p> <p>Responsive.</p> <p>Adaptable.</p> <p>Financially stable</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>Low level of specialist knowledge and training.</p> <p>Limited specialist equipment.</p> <p>Limited Staff resources.</p> <p>Financial constraints.</p> <p>Inadequate computer based programs.</p> <p>Low frequency of the use of powers.</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>Close relationship with community.</p> <p>Established regulation base.</p> <p>Support from State departments.</p> <p>Community benefit.</p> <p>Networking with other Councils.</p> <p>Community support and co-operation.</p>	<p>Threats</p> <p>Economic rationalism.</p> <p>Lack of understanding of issues.</p> <p>Low community expectations.</p> <p>Resistance to acceptance of “Regulation”.</p> <p>“Cost shifting” by State & Federal Governments.</p>

Program: Administration

Goal

That financial and administrative systems are used effectively to facilitate efficient service delivery

6.1 Sub Program 1 – Financial Management

6.1.1 Explanation

Ranger Services' annual operating budget is approximately \$55,000. In order to maximise the service to ratepayers and residents within available funding it is critically important that these funds are carefully managed.

6.1.2 Objective

6.1.2.1 To ensure:

- timely completion of annual budget and financial plan preparation;
- best value for money in capital purchases;
- prompt collection of fees due to the Shire; and
- any surplus funds are identified as early as possible in the financial year.

6.1.2.2 To make the most effective use of staff time.

6.1.3 Priority: *High*

Successful delivery of all Shire services hinge upon sound financial and staff management.

6.1.4 Legislation/Standards/Guidelines

Local Government Act 1993

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

6.1.5 Strategies

Complete the annual Ranger Services draft budget in accordance with the Corporate timetable.

Thoroughly “test the marketplace” for both price and quality of goods before making any significant equipment purchases.

Accurately maintain records of all applications and premises for which permits are issued.

Maintain a Ranger Services Plan and Procedures Manual to which Health & Development staff will work and regularly monitor adherence to.

6.1.6 Performance Indicators

6.1.6.1 Efficiency

- Completion of budget to Corporate timetable.
- Completion of each year's work within the allocated budget.
- Adherence to the programs within the Ranger Services Plan.

6.2 Sub Program 2 – Service & Enquiries

6.2.1 Explanation

A significant proportion of the time of Shire staff is spent in dealing with the public, either in response to complaints or in provision of advice and assistance. All dealings should be conducted with professionalism and courtesy.

6.2.2 Objective

To ensure all letters and counter or telephone requests are dealt with courteously and, where a response is appropriate, promptly.

6.2.3 Priority: *High*

The community is entitled to the highest level of customer service.

6.2.4 Legislation/Standards/Guidelines

Health & Development Procedures Manual

6.2.5 Strategies

Develop a Written, Verbal or Telephone Request for Service Procedure to ensure effective and consistent handling of complaints from the public.

Respond to all requests within 5 working days, and to those which appear to involve a significant hazard or nuisance as soon as practicable. Ensure that all letters requiring a reply are responded to within 10 working days.

Maintain accurate records of action taken with respect to correspondence. (The reply, or other correspondence resulting from an investigation, may form all or part of such records, dependent upon the degree of detail contained.)

6.2.6 Performance Indicators

6.2.6.1 Efficiency

- Conformity with procedure.
- Response time to complaints (as measured under individual complaint categories within **Program – Complaints**).
- Response time to letters.

6.2.6.2 Effectiveness

- Percentage of repeat complaints (as measured under individual complaint categories within **Program – Complaints**).

6.3 Sub Program 3 – Policies & Procedures

6.3.1 Explanation

Various pieces of legislation empower Council to enforce their provisions. Policies may provide guidance to officers on how Council wishes legislation to be enforced.

Documented procedures are a valuable aid to providing guidance to, and maintaining consistency of approach between, Shire officers.

6.3.2 Objective

6.3.2.1 To ensure that adopted Council Policies related to law, order, public safety, animal control and other Ranger Services areas remain:

- relevant;
- complementary to one another; and
- consistent with other legislation.

6.3.2.2 To provide officers with clear, unambiguous guidance on the efficient and effective conduct of:

- routine tasks; and
- associated administrative procedures.

6.3.3 Priority: *Moderate to High*

While officers' professional acumen enables them to both undertake their duties and to clearly distinguish discrepancies between local laws/policies and interacting legislation, it is not appropriate that they be expected to make determinations in the event of conflict.

Consistency of policy and legislation, as well as the approach to various tasks, should be maintained at all times.

6.3.4 Legislation/Standards/Guidelines

Local Government Act 1993

Companion Animals Act 1998

Roads Act 1993

Road Rules 2008

Impounding Act 1993

Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997.

Health & Development Procedures Manual

6.3.5 Strategies

Review Council's Ranger Services related policies each July, recommend rescission of those no longer relevant and develop new draft policies for consideration by Council as appropriate to maintain consistency with recognised best practice and complement legislative requirements.

Maintain and review annually, the Health & Development Procedures Manual.

Undertake training and attendance at conferences.

6.3.6 Performance Indicators

6.3.6.1 Efficiency

- Completion of Policy review.
- Review of Procedures Manual annually.

Program: Litter Control

Goal

Reduce littering to a level that has negligible adverse impacts to the environment and amenity of public places.

7.1 Sub Program 1 – Promotion & Education

7.1.1 Explanation

Public education programs assist the Shire in achieving compliance and a sense of pride in our local communities. Visiting schools, community groups and displays in public places prove very useful in providing information regarding issues such as litter.

7.1.2 Objective

To provide sufficient, good information to influence community and industry behaviour against littering.

7.1.3 Priority: - *Medium to High*

Access to information facilitates this.

7.1.4 Legislation/Standards/Guidelines

Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997
Road Rules 2008

7.1.5 Strategies

Involve the Shire in Local, State and National campaigns to reduce and clean up litter.

Develop and maintain a list of all available appropriate promotion pamphlets and brochures published by the Shire and other agencies.

Ensure a maximum range, appropriate to the target group, of information pamphlets and handouts are available at the Shire Chambers and other outlets.

Support relevant NSW and Federal promotion campaigns with local displays.

Use local events as opportunities for education and promotion displays.

Deliver lectures and talks to schools and community groups as requested.

Use local papers for education campaigns and information.

Undertake training and attendance at conferences.

7.1.6 Performance Indicators

7.1.6.1 Workload

- Number of talks given to schools and community groups.
- Number of promotional campaigns actively involved in.

7.2 Sub Program 2 – Enforcement of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997

7.2.1 Explanation

The Shire is responsible for litter control. The Shire Ranger is authorised to enforce the provisions within the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 that relate to litter.

7.2.2 Objective

To utilise the powers conferred on the Shire by legislation to reduce the occurrences of littering to a level where it results in negligible adverse impact on the environment and amenity of the Council area.

7.2.3 Priority: - High

Legislative requirements.

Community expectation. Litter produces a negative first impression to visitors and indicates a lack of community pride. There is an expectation that the Shire will enforce the legislation.

7.2.4 Legislation/Standards/Guidelines

Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997
Educating the Community about Litter – DEC (2005)

7.2.5 Strategies

Provide adequate and suitable public facilities for the disposal of litter.

Regularly patrol public areas and routes to the refuse tip site.

Issue warnings and infringement notices in a constant and consistent manner.

Develop procedures for the enforcement of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 – Part 5.6A.

Liase with community event organisers to ensure adequate waste receptacles will be available at the events.

7.2.6 Performance Indicators

7.2.6.1 Workload

- Number of illegal dumpings recorded
- Number of warnings issued.
- Number of complaints regarding litter.
- Number of infringement notices issued.

7.2.6.2 Effectiveness

- Compliance with procedure.

Program: Animal Management

Goal

**Animals are well cared for and
do not adversely impact upon
the amenity of public places or
the wellbeing of the public.**

8.1 Sub Program 1 – Dogs

8.1.1 Explanation

Dogs are commonplace in the area kept both as pets and for working and hunting. The Companion Animals Act 1998 provides for how and where dogs may be kept. The Council is obligated under that Act to promote awareness of the provisions of the Act and endeavour to ensure it is made aware of regulatory control of dogs that is in its area. The Act empowers Council to take action where a contravention of the Act occurs.

8.1.2 Objective

- 8.1.2.1 To ensure all dogs kept in the Warren Local Government Area that are required to be, are identified and registered.
- 8.1.2.2 To ensure that dogs are kept in a manner consistent with legislation.

8.1.3 Priority: - *High*

Legislative requirements.

8.1.4 Legislation/Standards/Guidelines

Companion Animals Act 1998

Companion Animals Regulation 1999

8.1.5 Strategies

Regularly patrol public areas.

Develop procedures to identify potentially dangerous dogs and restricted breeds.

Develop procedures for the enforcement of the legislation.

Promote the identification and registration of dogs.

Financially contribute to desexing programs

Promote the desexing of dogs.

Collaborate with RSPCA on Companion Animals Welfare Scheme (CAWS).

Develop procedures for investigation of complaints regarding dogs.

Undertake training and attendance at conferences.

8.1.6 Performance Indicators

8.1.6.1 Workload

- Number of complaints regarding dogs.
- Number of infringement notices given.
- Number of dogs registered.
- Number of dogs impounded

- Number of dogs not under effective control (roaming).

8.1.6.2 Efficiency

- Adherence to procedures.

8.1.6.3 Effectiveness

- Number of dogs identified.
- Number of dogs registered.
- Number of dogs desexed in CAWS.

8.1.7 Injured Dogs

Council has a duty of care to ensure that any injured dog is seen to by a qualified veterinarian as soon as possible.

8.1.8 Euthanasia of Dogs

Dogs will be humanely euthanased by a qualified veterinarian, after being kept for the specified time period as required by the Companion Animals Act and Regulations.

8.2 Sub Program 2: Cats

8.2.1 Explanation

Pet and stray cats are commonplace in the area. The Companion Animals Act 1998 provides for how and where cats may be kept. The Council is obligated under that Act to promote awareness of the provisions of the Act. The Act empowers Council to take action where a contravention of the Act occurs. Cats potentially impact on public health and the amenity of the towns and villages.

8.2.2 Objective

8.2.2.1 To ensure cats do not impact adversely on public health, the environment or the amenity of the town and villages.

8.2.2.2 To ensure cat breeding is controlled.

8.2.3 Priority: *High*

Legislative requirements.

8.2.4 Legislation/Standards/Guidelines

Companion Animals Act 1998

Companion Animals Regulation 1999

8.2.5 Strategies

Develop procedures for the trapping of nuisance and feral cats.

Carry out trapping at the request of members of the public and a strategic manner.

Promote the identification and registration of cats.

Promote the desexing of cats.

Collaborate with RSPCA on Companion Animals Welfare Scheme (CAWS).

Undertake training and attendance at conferences.

8.2.6 Performance Indicators

8.2.6.1 Workload

- Number of complaints regarding cats.
- Number of cats trapped.

8.2.6.2 Efficiency

- Adherence to procedures.

8.2.6.3 Effectiveness

- Number of cats identified.
- Number of cats registered.
- Number of cats desexed in CAWS.

8.2.7 Injured Cats

Council has a duty of care to ensure that any injured cat is seen to by a qualified veterinarian as soon as possible.

8.2.8 Euthanasia of Cats

Cats will be humanely euthanased by a qualified veterinarian, after being kept for the specified time period as required by the Companion Animals Act and Regulations.

8.3 Sub Program 3: Livestock

8.3.1 Explanation

The Council has a health and safety role to ensure livestock are contained within private land or when being moved or grazed on public land do not pose a safety risk. The Council liaises with the LHPA Rangers to ensure livestock are adequately controlled and permits are issued.

8.3.2 Objective

To ensure livestock do not impact adversely on public health and safety when on public land.

8.3.3 Priority: *High*

Community expectations indicated through the number of complaints received.

8.3.4 Legislation/Standards/Guidelines

Roads Act 1993

Roads Rules 2008

Impounding Act 1993

Impounding Regulation 2003

Local Government Act 1993

8.3.5 Strategies

Regularly patrol public areas and stock reserves.

Develop procedures for the enforcement of the legislation.

Liaise with LHPA regarding the issuing of permits and enforcement.

Develop procedures for investigation of complaints regarding cattle and sheep.

Undertake training and attendance at conferences.

8.3.6 Performance Indicators

8.3.6.1 Workload

- Number of complaints regarding stock.

8.3.6.2 Efficiency

- Adherence to procedures.

8.4 Sub Program 4 – Removal of Deceased Animals

8.4.1 Explanation

Whether struck by a vehicle on the road or succumbing to natural causes, dead animals pose a health risk as well as an impact on amenity when left in public areas. Ranger services respond to notifications of dead animals and arrange removal and disposal.

8.4.2 Objective

- 8.4.2.1 To ensure dead animals remain in public places for the least amount of time possible.
- 8.4.2.2 To ensure reports of dead animals are responded to within the least possible time.
- 8.4.2.3 To ensure dead animals are removed in a safe manner.

8.4.3 Priority: - *High*

Public health issues.

8.4.4 Legislation/Standards/Guidelines

Companion Animals Act 1998 – section 11a

Road Act 1993

Road Rules 2008

8.4.5 Strategies

Develop and maintain procedures for the removal and disposal of dead animals.

Undertake training and attendance at conferences.

8.4.6 Performance Indicators

8.4.6.1 Workload

- Number animals removed.

8.4.6.2 Efficiency

- Response time to reports (as measured against the Target time of 2 hours).
- Adherence to procedures.

Program: Parking Management

Goal

**Vehicles do not
pose a risk to public or road safety.**

9.1 Sub Program 1 – Enforcement of Parking Legislation

9.1.1 Explanation

Vehicle parking is regulated and parking laws enforced to maintain the orderly use of parking facilities. Illegal parking can cause great inconvenience and in many cases be very dangerous to pedestrians and other traffic. Footpath obstructions, bus stops, access exit/entrances, ACROD (Disabled) bays and many other parking areas are regularly monitored. Abandoned vehicles impact on the visual amenity of an area and pose a threat to public safety especially where parts have been removed.

9.1.2 Objective

- 9.1.2.1 To ensure vehicles are parked in a manner that does not pose a threat to pedestrian or traffic safety.
- 9.1.2.2 To ensure abandoned vehicles do not adversely impact on the amenity of an area.

9.1.3 Priority: *High*

To protect public safety and the amenity of localities.
Legislative requirements.

9.1.4 Legislation/Standards/Guidelines

Road Transport General Act 2005
Impounding Act 1993
Road Rules 2008
Local Government Act 1993- s.650

9.1.5 Strategies

Regularly patrol public areas and parking restricted areas.
Regularly patrol the school zone during operative times.
Liaise with the Police in relation to infringements.
Develop procedure on abandoned vehicles
Undertake training and attendance at conferences.

9.1.6 Performance Indicators

- 9.1.6.1 Workload
- Number of warnings and infringement notices issued.
- 9.1.6.2 Efficiency
- Adherence to procedures.

Program: Nuisances

Goal

That all activities within the community are conducted in a manner which does not impact negatively on public safety and amenity or the environment.

10.1 Sub Program 1 - Nuisances

10.1.1 Explanation

A range of issues, which commonly result in community requests for service are covered under provisions of various pieces of legislation.

10.1.2 Objective

To ensure that the community are able to enjoy their rights to freedom from adverse affects to their comfort or health or to the local environment as a result of dust, odour, fumes, smoke and other nuisances.

10.1.3 Priority

Varies from low to high dependent upon each individual case, taking into account community expectations.

10.1.4 Legislation/Standards/Guidelines

Local Government Act 1993.

Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997

10.1.5 Strategies

Respond as quickly as possible to nuisance complaints which are lodged.

Attempt to achieve resolution to problems to the satisfaction of complainants by negotiation with offenders.

Develop procedure on how to investigate complaints

Undertake training and attendance at conferences.

10.1.6 Performance Indicators

10.1.6.1 Workload

- Number of requests for service.

10.1.6.2 Efficiency

- Response time to requests for service (as measured against the Target Time of 5 days).

10.1.6.3 Effectiveness

- Number of recurring requests for service.
- Number of rectification notices, orders or infringement notices issued.

