COCKATOOS IN URBAN AREAS

COUNCIL POLICY NUMBER	115
Date Adopted	20 August 2013
Scheduled for review	August 2018

SHIRE OF CAMPASPE

PHILOSOPHY UNDERLYING THE POLICY

The Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 includes an obligation for Municipal Councils to "*remedy as far as reasonably possible all nuisances in its municipal district*".

Nuisances are conditions that are *"liable to be dangerous to health or offensive".*

In determining what a state, condition or activity is a nuisance the following factors must be considered:

- The number of persons affected
- The degree of offensiveness of the state or activity.

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines to clarify the responsibility for the control of Cockatoos in urban areas.

POLICY IN EXPRESSED TERMS

Long-billed Corellas, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Galahs (referred to collectively as "cockatoos") are well known for damaging germinating cereal crops. They can also cause damage to:

a. Roost trees
b. Planted tree seedlings
c. Fixtures – aerials, light fittings, power lines, etc
d. Soft timber on houses and outdoor furniture
e. Bowling greens, ovals, golf courses, etc.

In some cases, there problems are merely a nuisance, in others, serious damage can be caused.

Cockatoos cause damage by eating and by chewing non-food items. Chewing maintains their beaks at the correct length and condition. Almost all problems caused by cockatoos relate to their eating or chewing behaviour. The severity of many cockatoo problems is due to the social nature of cockatoos – they do most things in flocks. Cockatoos always flock together to roost and at night the noisy behaviour of cockatoos can be a problem for nearby residents. Day roosts, used sometimes for several hours between feeding bouts, are often used repeatedly. Day roosts may also be casual or short-term rest stops.

Damage to Trees

Tree damage can have many causes, other than cockatoos. These include defoliating and sap-sucking insects; raised nitrogen content of soils, (especially where stock camp under trees); altered soil hydrology through soil compaction, or rising water tables; browsing by possums; fungal attack; and damage to roots by hoofed stock or machinery. Tree pruning by cockatoos, while usually obvious does not always result in long term harm.

Council Response

1. On Council owned or managed properties assess extent of tree damage by qualified arborist. Any response to be based on this.

Property Damage

1. On Council owned or managed property Council will assess and act to reduce damage.
2. Council does not have a responsibility for cockatoo damage on private property or within manufacturing premises. The responsibility rests with the respective property owner or business proprietor.

Noise

Community noise needs to be assessed in accordance with the Nuisance provisions in the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

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Cockatoo Control

Cockatoos are classified as "unprotected wildlife" under the Wildlife Act 1975 and may be destroyed when they cause severe damage to trees and crops. In urban areas shooting the birds is not permitted under the Firearms Act 1996. Control in urban areas is limited to:

a. Scaring the birds with explosive cartridges
b. The use of taped bird distress calls played with an amplifier
c. Ensuring structures are not attractive roost sites

EXCLUSIONS

Nil

HUMAN RIGHTS

This report has considered and complies with the Human Rights and Responsibilities contained in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

DEFINITIONS

Long-billed Corella	Cacatua tenuirostris
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Cacatua galerita
Galah	Cacatua roseicapilla

RELATED LEGISLATION

Public Health & Wellbeing Act 2008

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

REVIEW PERIOD

Five Years

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Public Environments Manager

APPROVAL HISTORY

Adopted	20 May 2008	**Minute Book Reference No**	12125 (Item 10.1)
Revised	20 August 2013	**Minute Book Reference No**	1041 (Item 6.3

Chief Executive Officer ..... Vern Bann .....

Dated ..... 20 September 2013 .....

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