



## Animal Approved Inspection Program (systematic)

### Introduction

Community safety is a priority for the Richmond Shire Council. To achieve this, the Council endeavors to work with our community to educate pet owners on their responsibilities and ensure pet owners are compliant with the requirements of owning a pet. An Approved Inspection Program (Systematic) is one strategy Local Governments can utilise to achieve this.

### Approved Inspection Program (AIP)

The AIP is a planned annual program coordinated by a Local Government Authority to confirm compliance with State and Local legislation. Section 113 of the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* states that a local government may, by resolution, approve one of two inspection programs;

1. A systematic inspection program; or
2. A selective inspection program.

*This section of the Act also outlines what the resolution must state:*

1. Type of program.
2. Time frames of the program.
3. Publication requirements (i.e. advertisement location).
4. The period of the program.
5. Where you can find the resolution.

### Why do Local Governments undertake inspection programs?

To ensure all animal owners are compliant with both State and Local legislation. The program increases awareness, compliance and education of residents regarding the laws and obligations of responsible pet ownership.

In particular the Richmond Shire Council will be focusing on (but not limited to);

- Animal registration.
- Cat and dog microchipping.
- Excess animals on the property
- Animal enclosures.
- Additional animal permits.
- Restricted breeds (dogs).

### Does the Richmond Shire Council have any rights to enter my yard?

Yes. The *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008 section 111 (h) (i)* provides the provisions for 'Powers of Entry' for an authorised person under an approved inspection program. However, generally the officers can complete the inspection without having to enter your back yard.

### Does the Richmond Shire Council have to provide me with information about entering my property?

Yes. The Richmond Shire Council will advertise the program dates at a minimum of two weeks out from the program commencing.

If you are home at the time of the inspection the authorised person must inform you, that they are an authorised person and state the reason for entering.

What if I am not home, does Richmond Shire Council still have the right to enter my yard?

Yes. As outlined in section 111 the Council Officer can enter your property without you being home. The Officer has a Standard Operational Procedure (SOP), which sets guidelines for how the program will operate. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. PVR – personal video recordings.
2. Evidence gathering.
3. Entering properties.
4. Respecting privacy for residents.
5. Interviewing (requiring an owner/ occupier to provide specific information).
6. Education/enforcement and compliance.

Will I be issued with a fine?

If you are found to be non-compliant with animal registration you will be issued with a Penalty Infringement Notice (PIN) for the breach found at the time of the inspection. You will also be issued with a Compliance Notice, giving you 14 days to become compliant. If you fail to become compliant within this timeframe you may be issued with an additional PIN.

How do I pay my fine?

You have 28 days from the date of issue to pay your fine. There are payment options stated on the back of the fine;

- Pay in full at the Richmond Shire Council Office.
- Write to Council expressing your concerns
- Elect to have a court hearing.

Can I dispute a fine?

Yes, you can challenge a fine issued to you if you believe you have a reasonable excuse as to why you were non-compliant. You must in writing lodge your concerns with Richmond Shire Council. The Council will review your request and respond to you in writing advising of the outcome.

What if I don't pay my fine (PIN)?

Unpaid fines will be lodged with the State Penitentiary enforcement Regulation (SPER) and an enforcement order will be issued. There will be additional registration fees added to your amount owing. If you receive an enforcement order, but do not act on it by the due date one of the following enforcement actions can be taken against you.

- Suspend your driver's license
- Direct your employer or financial institution to deduct funds from your pay or bank account.
- Register an interest over your property.
- Immobilize your vehicle
- Seize or sell your property
- Issue a warrant for arrest and imprisonment.

For any further information relating to this fact sheet, contact the Richmond Shire Council