



News release

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## **DROP IN NUMBER OF DOG ATTACKS IN SA**

The number of dog attacks in South Australia decreased in the 2007/08 financial year, according to figures provided by councils and the Department of Health to the Dog and Cat Management Board.

The 2007/08 figures show a 13% reduction in the number of attacks reported to councils and a 30% reduction in the number of people hospitalised as a result of dog attacks compared to the 2006/07 figures.

<b>NUMBER OF REPORTED DOG ATTACKS/HARRASSMENTS</b>				
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>REPORTED TO COUNCILS</b>			<b>HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS</b>
	<b>Metropolitan</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
2007/08	1,393	796	2,189	160
2006/07	1,540	978	2,518	230
2005/06	1,467	708	2,175	184
2004/05	1,613	793	2,406	190
2003/04	1,564	715	2,279	163
2002/03	1,635	775	2,410	132
2001/02	1,873	775	2,648	136
2000/01	1,460	535	1,995	118
1999/2000	990	464	1,454	140
1998/99	670	421	1,071	131

The Executive Officer of the Dog and Cat Management Board, Dr Deb Kelly, congratulated the councils on this achievement.

“There are always random fluctuations in data, but this improvement is certainly significant, so on behalf of the Board I wish to thank the councils for their contribution in this reduction,” she said.

“The Dog and Cat Management Board is working very hard with councils and the community to ensure that the benefits of dog ownership are retained, while negatives such as dog attacks are reduced.

“This is being achieved through a combination of research and community education programs, such as the Delta Dog Safe program, and the We are Family program launched at this year’s Royal Adelaide Show.”

Dr Kelly said that despite the dog attack figures for the 2007/08 financial year being a significant improvement on the 2006/07 figures, there was no room for complacency.

“The community must continue to act responsibly in the selection, management and training of their dogs for the safety of their friends, family and neighbours,” she said.

The tips on the following page will help owners and potential owners ensure their dog is an asset, not a problem.

**Media contact: Dr Deb Kelly – 8124 4801 or 0417 801 094**

## **Potential dog owners**

### Select the breed most suitable to your circumstances

- Factors that must be considered include:
  - your environment
  - your time availability
  - the age of your family
  - the original purpose for which a particular breed was developed
  - the cost of responsible ownership, including desexing, training, vaccination, socialising, feeding and housing.
- Visit [www.goodownersa.com](http://www.goodownersa.com) or [www.pedigree.com.au/select/](http://www.pedigree.com.au/select/) to access a select-a-dog program to help in identifying a dog that fits your criteria and circumstances.
- Visit [www.dogssa.com.au](http://www.dogssa.com.au) to find the date of the next dog show in your area, which will give you the opportunity to talk to breeders.

## **Existing dog owners**

### Supervise or separate

- A dog of any breed has the capacity to bite. Take precautions with not only your own dog but any dog interacting with your baby or toddler.
- The ‘We are family’ program, purchased by the Dog and Cat Management Board, informs parents of the potential risks to babies and toddlers from dog bites while providing the knowledge, skills and strategies to ensure that interaction with the family pet is conducted safely. Phone (08) 8124 4962 to obtain a copy of the program materials.

### Look after your children

- The Delta Dog Safe program, sponsored by the Dog and Cat Management Board, teaches practical and dog friendly methods to reduce the incidence of dog bites among junior primary aged children.
- Visit [www.deltadogsafesa.org.au](http://www.deltadogsafesa.org.au) to locate information to help teach your children how to be safe around strange dogs, or book a Delta Dog Safe program for your school.
- Let sleeping dogs lie. Never disturb a dog when it is asleep or eating.
- Approach with caution. Ask the owner before patting any dog.

### Be a responsible dog owner

- Understand your dog’s needs as a breed and why it was developed.
- Understanding the breed characteristics will help you choose an appropriate dog for your family’s circumstances and also help you take the necessary precautions to ensure that existing dogs do not pose a threat to family members.
- The importance of training and socialising your dog cannot be underestimated.
- Visit [www.gooddogsa.com](http://www.gooddogsa.com) to access information including fact sheets, a calendar of doggie events, a dog services locator, and fun games for kids.