



## **Invasive animal problem needs one body in charge**

A single body should be given overall responsibility for the control of invasive animals in Victoria, the Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee has recommended in a report tabled in Parliament today.

The detailed report has 77 findings and 33 recommendations, following a 12-month investigation that heard from people across Victoria.

“Effective animal control programs require a co-ordinated, long-term, strategic approach,” said Committee Chair, Josh Bull.

“But the responsibility for invasive animal control is currently spread between multiple bodies.”

According to the Committee, having multiple government departments, agencies, community groups and private landholders involved with animal management can make it difficult for parties to collaborate and for programs to be sufficiently adaptable to take advantage of opportunities.

The Committee has recommended that a single body should be responsible for developing an overarching plan for invasive and pest animals. This should include identifying priority actions, ensuring programs take place, monitoring landowners' compliance, promoting best practice, facilitating collaborative efforts and publicly reporting on the effectiveness of programs.

The inquiry particularly focussed on the role of shooting in invasive animal control, including the role of recreational hunters.

“There was general agreement that recreational hunting cannot manage Victoria’s invasive animal problem by itself,” Mr Bull said.

“However, it may be part of the solution in some circumstances, if the hunting effort can be focussed at particular times and places and integrated into a broader control program involving multiple methods of animal control.”

The report includes findings and recommendations on when and how recreational hunters can be most helpful in terms of animal control. It considers a number of changes to recreational hunting permissions, regulations and practices that were proposed.

The Committee has also made recommendations about researching, monitoring and evaluating invasive species control programs. In addition, the report notes the importance of effective collaboration and

communication between government bodies, private landowners, the community, paid professional pest controllers and recreational hunters.

“Invasive animals are a significant problem affecting many Victorians,” Mr Bull said.

“They impact on agriculture by preying on livestock, consuming pasture and damaging fences. They harm the environment by killing native species, damaging native vegetation and competing with native animals for food. They threaten people’s safety and amenity through car accidents and the fear of being attacked,” he said.

“This report identifies some ways to improve our response to the problem.”

The report is available from the Committee's [website](#).

### **Media queries**

For media comment contact the Committee Chair, Josh Bull on 9740 4091.

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