

## Prologue

Dick Murray — Urban Animal Management Convenor

2001 has been an extremely busy year for Urban Animal Management (UAM) across Australia and indeed also for the UAM Advisory Group (UAM AG) itself. Much has been achieved and yet, as always, there is still much more that needs to be done. This conference is the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive National UAM Conference. It has all the qualities of a great conference — innovation, creativity and instruction, all wrapped in an atmosphere of good presentation, great friendship and careful preparation.

### **National Dangerous Dog Policy**

The UAM AG's Dangerous Dog policy is a major priority at the moment. The objective of a national UAM Dangerous Dog policy is to provide interstate consistency in harm minimisation associated with the aggressive dog. Throughout Australia the dogs are the same, the people are the same and the injuries are the same. It stands to reason that the best remedies are going to be the same also. The tendency for dangerous dog incidents to draw 'political' knee jerk reactions is famous. There is always a lot of emotion with everyone running off in different directions. 'Ban the breed' and 'Shoot all the dingos' type responses don't ever solve much. But they will always keep on being trotted out when the pressure is on until there is a proper national policy approach to this whole issue. Without any doubt, maximum efficiency in the process of harm minimisation will come from a national coordination of effort and national pooling of resources. There are a lot of good reasons why the Urban Animal Management movement should be pressing ahead with a national UAM Dangerous Dog policy. There are lots of good reasons why everybody in urban animal management should attend the Melbourne conference so they can be part of the overall process.

### **Industry based Animal Management Officer (AMO) training package**

The UAM AG is pressing ahead with its support for an national AMO training package. The reason the next curriculum/competency development step had been given over to delegates at that conference is to ensure the security of industry relevance in the early stages of the proposed training package's development. It is fair to say that even the best training by the best trainers is still useless if it fails to be relevant to the real vocational needs of the targeted trainees themselves. The content and structure of useful training packages always has to be industry driven and the national annual UAM Conference this year provides the best possible opportunity to gather the ideas and the needs of the people who were working in this field of employment at this time.

### **This Conference**

Have a look at this year's conference program. The program is the product of a positively prodigious effort on the part of the conference organisers. One of the biggest challenges with this conference has been to fit all that material in the time frame available. The Melbourne conference has been very lucky to have such an energetic Local Arrangements Committee. It has also been very lucky to have such an outstanding speaker line up. Dennis Fetko (our international guest speaker) is up there with the best in the world on the subject of AMO training.

