City of Port Lincoln
Seafood Capital of Australia

GALAH AND FERAL PIGEON CONTROL POLICY 1.63.1

1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes Council's active control framework for feral pigeons and, where required, galahs. It clarifies responsibility by land tenure, commits Council to an annual targeted control program on Council property, prioritises key trouble sites and cooperation with relevant grain and site operators, and establishes the approval and safety controls for shooting, targeted chemical control (including poisoning), fertility or ovo-control, trapping and non-lethal measures.

2. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Active population control	A measure intended to reduce bird numbers or reproductive output, including shooting, targeted chemical control, fertility or ovo-control, and trapping followed by lawful humane dispatch.
Annual Bird Control Program	The documented annual package of monitoring, prioritisation, source reduction, exclusion, deterrence and active population control approved for Council property.
Council property	Land, buildings, facilities, structures, infrastructure and public places owned by Council or under Council management or control.
Culling	The deliberate humane destruction of birds as a population or impact management measure.
DEW	The South Australian Department for Environment and Water, or its successor agency.
Feral pigeon	An introduced, free-living pigeon (Columba livia), excluding a lawfully kept domestic or racing pigeon where ownership can reasonably be identified.
Fertility or ovo-control	A lawful product or method intended to reduce egg viability, fertility or reproductive success, including a product used under a current APVMA registration or permit.
Galah	The native bird Eolophus roseicapilla.
Priority site	A Council property or defined area ranked for treatment because evidence shows significant bird numbers or impacts and a reasonable prospect of effective control.

Term	Meaning
Targeted chemical control	The controlled use of a chemical product, including a poison or stupefying agent, to capture, incapacitate or destroy target feral pigeons, where the product and use are lawfully authorised and all label, permit, licensing, welfare and safety requirements are met.

3. TABLE OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Meaning
DEW	Department for Environment and Water
APVMA	Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority
PIRSA	Primary Industries and Regions SA
SA Health	South Australian Department for Health and Wellbeing
SWMS	Safe Work Method Statement
JSA	Job Safety Analysis
WHS	Work Health and Safety

4. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Galahs and feral pigeons can congregate where food, water, nesting and roosting opportunities are readily available. Excessive numbers can foul and damage assets, block gutters and drainage, increase cleaning and maintenance costs, create slip and equipment risks, affect amenity and contribute to public health concerns.

Feral pigeons move between properties and are strongly influenced by accessible food, grain spillage, waste, water, nesting and roosting opportunities. Council control is most effective when key trouble sites are identified and nearby attractants are addressed. Council will therefore work with relevant grain handling, port, transport, food and major property operators to improve the effectiveness and durability of control, while each owner remains responsible for its own property.

Council only undertakes bird control on Council-owned or managed property and does not provide a culling service for residential or commercial property. At the time of adoption, feral pigeon numbers are the primary operational concern. Galahs are not currently causing comparable impacts but remain within scope so Council can respond lawfully if future evidence justifies action.

5. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Council employees, contractors and consultants involved in assessing, approving, procuring, delivering, monitoring or reporting bird control activities;
- galah and feral pigeon control on Council property;
- cooperation and information-sharing with neighbouring owners and operators where this improves outcomes at priority Council sites; and
- annual and reactive activities funded or authorised by Council.

This policy does not:

- make Council responsible for controlling birds on private residential, commercial, industrial, port, transport or other non-Council property;

- create an entitlement to a Council-funded service, guarantee that every affected site will be treated, or guarantee that a particular population level will be achieved;
- authorise any method that is not lawful, humane, safe, technically suitable and properly approved;
- prevent Council from exercising a separate statutory power or duty where a public health, safety, nuisance, development, environmental or other regulatory matter is independently engaged; or
- apply to other animal species unless expressly approved as part of a separate program or policy.

6. POLICY CLASSIFICATION

This is a Council policy. Council adoption is appropriate because the policy is public-facing, defines the scope of a Council service and provides the governance framework for potentially lethal, chemical and fertility-control methods.

7. POLICY POSITION / COMMITMENT

Council recognises that persistent feral pigeon impacts, and any future material galah impacts, may require active and sustained population control. Council will not rely solely on deterrence or proofing where a documented assessment indicates that those measures alone are unlikely to produce a meaningful or durable reduction in impacts.

Council will prepare and deliver an Annual Bird Control Program for priority Council sites within the total budget adopted for the relevant financial year. For feral pigeons, the program will actively assess and, where lawful, safe, humane, technically suitable and affordable, use one or more of the following methods: shooting; targeted chemical control, including poisoning; fertility or ovo-control; trapping and capture; exclusion, proofing, source reduction and deterrence. Methods may be used sequentially or concurrently.

For galahs, Council may use shooting or other approved controls where impacts justify action, subject to the current native wildlife, permit, DEW code, animal welfare and firearms requirements. Chemical or fertility control of galahs will not occur unless it is expressly authorised by all relevant authorities and laws.

Council will concentrate available resources on evidence-based priority sites and work with relevant grain and site operators to reduce attractants and improve the timing and effectiveness of control. This cooperation does not transfer responsibility for non-Council property or commit Council to fund work on it.

8. POLICY PRINCIPLES

Principle	Application
Active and proportionate control	Council will use population-reduction methods where evidence indicates they are necessary and proportionate; active methods are not automatically deferred until every non-lethal option has been exhausted.
Priority sites and source control	Council will focus resources on ranked trouble sites and work with relevant grain and site operators to address nearby attractants that reduce the effectiveness of control.

Principle	Application
Responsibility follows land and control	Council manages Council property. Owners and occupiers remain responsible for attractants, proofing, nesting, roosting and pest control on their property.
Lawful and humane treatment	Every method must comply with current legislation, product approvals, permits, licences, codes, label directions, animal welfare requirements and approved treatment documents.
Target specificity and public safety	Risks to people, property, owned birds, protected species, non-target animals, water, food, the environment and workers must be assessed and controlled.
Integrated management	Active population control should be combined with practical action on food, water, grain spillage, waste, nesting and roosting opportunities so that treated sites are not rapidly recolonised.
Evidence and continuous improvement	Baseline information, activity data, incidents, expenditure and outcomes will be recorded and used to refine future programs.
Budget discipline	The adopted annual budget is a total funding ceiling, not a commitment to treat every site or use every method. External contributions and grants may expand the program.

9. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

9.1. Responsibilities and Service Boundaries

- Council-funded control under this policy is limited to Council property.
- Private residential, commercial, industrial, port, transport and other property owners or occupiers are responsible for controlling birds and managing food, waste, grain spillage, shelter, nesting and roosting opportunities on their property.
- Council will not provide or fund a routine private-property pest-control service. Requests relating to private property will receive general information and referral to an appropriately licensed pest controller.
- This policy does not authorise Council-funded control on non-Council property. Any exceptional joint project must be separately considered and approved under Council's budget, legal, procurement and delegation framework.
- Council may separately use any available statutory investigation, compliance or enforcement power where a distinct legislative issue is established. This does not make Council generally responsible for the bird population on the relevant property.
- Owners and operators whose sites contain significant food or roosting attractants remain responsible for effective controls on their property. Council will seek practical cooperation where action on those sites would improve the effectiveness of Council's program.

9.2. Priority Sites and Operator Cooperation

The Annual Bird Control Program will be based on ranked trouble sites rather than an unfocused city-wide response. Site selection will consider observed bird numbers, complaints, Council asset impacts, safety, public health and amenity risks, accessibility, proximity to attractants, likely effectiveness and value for money.

Cooperation and consultation with grain operators is intended to improve Council's control methods and reduce rapid recolonisation. It does not make Council responsible for birds or attractants on non-Council property and does not create an entitlement to Council funding. Cooperation and consultation with third party sites assists Council to:

- identify clusters, movement patterns and the relationship between priority Council sites and nearby grain, food, water, nesting and roosting sources;
- engage relevant grain handling, storage and transport operators, port operators, food and waste businesses and major property owners connected to priority sites;
- seek timely action by each operator on its own property to reduce grain spillage, accessible feed, waste, water, nesting and roosting opportunities;
- share non-sensitive observations and align source-reduction or control timing where lawful and practicable;
- protect operational security and comply with property access, privacy, safety and procurement requirements; and
- document stakeholder contacts, agreed actions and any limitations that may affect site treatment.

9.3. Annual Bird Control Program

The Document Owner will prepare an Annual Bird Control Program for each financial year. The Responsible General Manager must approve the program before procurement or operational activity begins. A method involving targeted chemical control or fertility or ovo-control also requires Chief Executive Officer approval of the method-specific treatment plan.

The annual program plan must, as applicable:

- identify and rank priority sites using complaints, inspections, population observations, asset damage, cleaning and maintenance records, public health or safety impacts, known attractants and proximity to grain or other food sources;
- state the species, site boundaries, baseline conditions, intended outcomes, measurable targets and proposed timing;
- identify source reduction, proofing, exclusion and deterrence work on Council property, together with stakeholder action that is likely to improve the durability of the result;
- set out the proposed active control method or combination of methods, the evidence supporting selection and any alternatives considered;
- confirm current legislative, permit, product registration or APVMA permit, licensing, DEW code, procurement, insurance, work health and safety and environmental requirements;
- allocate the total available budget across assessment, advice, contractors, products, site controls, communications, monitoring, disposal and reporting;
- include stakeholder, public communication, access, exclusion, incident and emergency arrangements proportionate to the risks; and
- specify records, performance measures, completion reporting and review requirements.

Additional reactive activity may be approved during the year where a material asset, public safety, public health or amenity risk arises. Reactive work remains subject to available budget and the same legal, welfare, approval and safety controls.

9.4. Method Selection and Integrated Control

Method selection must be based on the target species, site, population behaviour, likelihood of success, public and worker safety, animal welfare, non-target risk, legal availability, cost and the likelihood of recolonisation. No method may be used merely because it is familiar or available.

For feral pigeons, active population control may commence without first exhausting every non-lethal option where the documented assessment shows that prompt population reduction is justified and the selected method can be lawfully and safely delivered. Practical source reduction, proofing and roost management must still be incorporated where they will improve the durability of the result.

For galahs, any applicable DEW requirement to consider or document non-lethal methods must be met. The current species status, permit position and DEW guidance must be confirmed before each campaign.

9.5. Shooting

- Shooting may be used for feral pigeons and, where lawful, galahs when the site and circumstances allow a safe, humane and effective operation.
- Shooting must be undertaken by a competent, appropriately licensed and insured specialist contractor unless the Chief Executive Officer has approved an alternative delivery model and Council has verified equivalent competence and controls.
- The treatment plan must address species identification, safe direction of fire and backstops, firearm and ammunition suitability, range, neighbouring property, public exclusion, traffic, noise, timing, weather, lighting, police or other notifications where required, wounded-bird follow-up, carcass recovery and disposal.
- Shooting of galahs must comply with the current DEW Code of Practice for the Humane Destruction of Native Birds by Shooting in South Australia and any permit conditions. Council will apply equivalent humane principles to feral pigeons where relevant.
- Shooting is to be conducted as a planned campaign with daily activity records, not as informal or ad hoc destruction.

9.6. Targeted Chemical Control, Including Poisoning

- Council will actively investigate targeted chemical control for feral pigeons and may use it where a current APVMA registration or permit expressly authorises the product and use, the use is lawful in South Australia, and the method-specific assessment demonstrates an acceptable humane, public safety and non-target outcome.
- No product, active constituent or use pattern is approved by this policy. The current product registration, approved label, APVMA permit, restricted chemical status, South Australian control-of-use requirements and operator authorisation must be verified immediately before procurement and use.

- Targeted chemical control may only be performed by a properly licensed and authorised pest control business and technician, with Chief Executive Officer approval of a written treatment plan and evidence of technical competence and insurance.
- The treatment plan must address bait or product security, target selectivity, pre-treatment site preparation, exclusion of people and domestic animals, non-target birds, nearby food and water, weather, storage and transport, supervision, recovery or capture of affected birds, humane dispatch where required, carcass disposal, emergency response, stop criteria, environmental protection and incident reporting.
- Council will not use targeted chemical control for galahs unless DEW and every other relevant authority expressly authorise the species, product, method and operator.
- Fenthion or any other cancelled, suspended or otherwise unlawful product must not be supplied or used.

9.7. Fertility and Ovo-Control

- Council will actively investigate and, where lawful and technically suitable, pilot or implement fertility or ovo-control for feral pigeons as part of the annual program.
- Use requires a current APVMA registration or permit and compliance with all South Australian control-of-use, licensing, label, animal welfare and environmental requirements. The policy does not assume that a particular product is presently registered or available.
- A pilot or program must include baseline population information, a controlled delivery or feeding protocol, non-target controls, ongoing monitoring, defined measures of reproductive and population effect, review points and a whole-of-life cost assessment.
- Fertility or ovo-control may be combined with shooting or other methods to obtain an initial reduction and reduce subsequent recruitment.
- Because fertility control generally requires sustained treatment and monitoring, long-term use must be supported by a whole-of-life cost assessment and be affordable within the adopted budget or approved external funding.
- Fertility or ovo-control will not be used for galahs unless expressly authorised by DEW and all other applicable law.

9.8. Trapping and Capture

- Trapping or capture must provide suitable shelter, ventilation, water and inspection frequency; allow prompt release of non-target or owned birds; and include a pre-approved lawful and humane outcome for target birds.
- Any trapping and carbon dioxide narcosis of galahs or other native flocking birds must not proceed without the required DEW permit, training, accreditation and minimum operator numbers.
- Traps must be secured against public interference and must not be operated where the site or weather creates unacceptable welfare or safety risks.

9.9. Source Reduction, Proofing and Stakeholder Action

Source reduction and exclusion are not a reason to postpone justified active control, but they are essential to prevent rapid replacement of treated birds. Council will implement practical controls at priority Council sites and seek timely action by nearby owners and operators on their own property.

- remove or secure food, waste and water sources and discourage deliberate feeding;

- work with grain handling, storage and transport operators, port operators, food and waste businesses and major property owners to reduce spillage and accessible feed;
- proof Council buildings and infrastructure using appropriate mesh, spikes, wires, barriers or other exclusion products;
- remove abandoned nests and reduce nesting or roosting opportunities where lawful and safe;
- use suitable deterrents and vary them where necessary to reduce habituation; and
- undertake targeted cleaning, maintenance and asset modification.

9.10. Contractor, Safety and Operational Controls

Unless the Chief Executive Officer approves an alternative delivery model, shooting, chemical control, fertility control and lethal trapping outcomes are to be delivered by an appropriately licensed, competent, experienced and insured specialist contractor.

Before work starts, Council must obtain and approve, as applicable:

- evidence of current firearms, wildlife, pest management, restricted chemical, training, accreditation and other licences, permits and authorisations;
- the current product label, APVMA registration or permit, safety data sheet and evidence that the proposed use is lawful in South Australia;
- a method-specific treatment plan, site map, risk assessment and SWMS / JSA addressing public safety, workers, nearby property, traffic, noise, protected and non-target species, weather, environmental exposure and emergency response;
- site access, security, exclusion zone, notification, communication and operational confidentiality arrangements;
- species-identification, target-selection, monitoring, injured or affected bird response, carcass recovery, disposal and incident arrangements;
- required insurance, procurement and contract documentation; and
- activity log and completion report requirements.

Council and its contractor have authority to stop work immediately where legal authority, animal welfare, public safety, target selectivity, weather, site security or another critical control is not satisfactory.

9.11. Budget and Prioritisation

- The Annual Bird Control Program must be scaled to the total adopted budget and any approved external contributions or grant funding.
- The annual budget is a total ceiling for the program and must cover assessment, technical or legal advice, procurement, products, permits, contractors, site preparation, exclusion, communications, monitoring, recovery, disposal, incident management and reporting.
- The policy does not commit Council to treat every reported site, use every method, fund work on private property or achieve a specified population reduction.
- Priority will be given to Council sites with the highest evidenced asset, safety, health or amenity impacts and to actions with the strongest expected effect, including action supported by nearby grain and site operators.
- Work beyond the adopted budget requires separate approval under Council's budget and financial delegation framework.

9.12. Procedure and Supporting Operational Documents

A separate controlled procedure is not required at adoption. Site, species and method requirements vary and may change with legislation, permits, product approvals, DEW codes and contractor methods. The mandatory operational sequence and controls will instead be documented through controlled templates and approved records, including the Annual Bird Control Program Plan, Method Approval Checklist, method-specific treatment plan, procurement and contract documents, risk assessment / SWMS / JSA and completion report.

The need for a procedure must be reconsidered after the first full annual program cycle, or earlier if Council brings active control in-house, a serious incident or audit identifies a process gap, repeated non-compliance occurs, or the program becomes materially more complex.

10. RELATIONSHIP TO LEGISLATION AND COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

Council may manage birds on Council-owned or managed property as part of its ordinary asset, public place, safety and service responsibilities. This policy does not transfer responsibility for non-Council property or create a general pest-control service. Any separate statutory investigation, compliance or enforcement action must be undertaken under the applicable legislation and delegation.

The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972, DEW permits and codes govern the status and lawful destruction of native birds. The Animal Welfare Act 1985 applies to humane treatment. Firearms legislation governs the possession, transport and use of firearms. Agricultural and veterinary chemical legislation, APVMA registration and permit requirements, and South Australian pesticide licensing and control-of-use requirements apply to chemical and fertility-control products. Work health and safety, procurement, records and delegation requirements apply to all Council activities.

Council's Feral Pigeons webpage and Fact Sheet 5-3-T2 must be maintained consistently with this policy, including the private-property responsibility boundary, the annual program, the priority-site approach and the availability of active control methods subject to approval.

11. RELATIONSHIP TO THE DELEGATIONS REGISTER

This policy does not confer a statutory power, authorisation or appointment. Decisions, contracts, expenditure, permits, statutory notices and enforcement action must be made by a person with the necessary delegation, sub delegation, authorisation or appointment under Council's current Delegations Register and applicable legislation.

12. COMMUNICATION

- The adopted policy will be published on Council's website and SharePoint and communicated to relevant employees, contractors and site managers.
- Council's Feral Pigeons webpage and fact sheet will be updated to explain the responsibility boundary, annual program, priority-site approach and referral pathway for private property.
- Method-specific communications will be proportionate to safety, animal welfare, operational and reputational risk. Council may withhold exact timing or site details where disclosure could compromise safety, security or effectiveness.
- Only an authorised spokesperson may make public statements about an active operation or incident.

13. TRAINING

Employees responsible for the program must be briefed on this policy, responsibility boundaries, approval requirements, records and incident escalation. Council must verify contractor qualifications, licences, permits, product authorisations and competency before engagement. Method-specific training and accreditation required by DEW, SA Health, PIRSA, APVMA permit conditions, firearms legislation or another authority must be current before work begins.

14. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

All relevant program records, approvals, correspondence, operational documents, incidents and reporting records must be captured in Council's corporate records management systems.

15. MONITORING AND REPORTING

- The Document Owner will monitor delivery, expenditure, compliance, incidents and effectiveness against the Annual Bird Control Program.
- A completion report will record sites, methods, treatment dates, target numbers or other activity measures, non-target outcomes, incidents, complaints, expenditure, effectiveness, lessons and recommendations.
- The Responsible General Manager will review the completion report and determine priorities for the next annual program.
- Material incidents, legal or welfare non-compliance, significant budget pressure or a substantial change in service or delivery arrangements must be reported to the Chief Executive Officer and, where appropriate, Council.
- Council will be informed through ordinary service, budget, annual business plan or specific Council reporting where the matter is material or requires a decision.

16. NON-COMPLIANCE

Suspected non-compliance must be reported immediately to the Document Owner or Responsible General Manager. Work must stop where a critical legal, animal welfare, public safety, product, permit, species-identification or environmental control is not met. Council may suspend or terminate a contractor, notify the relevant regulator, initiate an incident investigation, require corrective action and take disciplinary or other action consistent with law and Council policy.

17. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Following adoption, the former Galah and Pigeon Culling Policy will be revoked and archived.
- The Feral Pigeons webpage and Fact Sheet 5-3-T2 will be updated.
- The Annual Bird Control Program Plan, Method Approval Checklist and Completion Report templates will be finalised under Chief Executive Officer authority.
- During implementation, the Document Owner will map and rank key feral pigeon trouble sites and engage relevant grain and site operators on source reduction and coordinated timing.
- The 2026/27 program will be prioritised and delivered within the adopted budget and any approved external contributions.

18. RESPONSIBILITY

Role	Responsibility
Council	Adopts and reviews this policy; determines the annual budget; and considers any additional funding or matter requiring Council approval.
Chief Executive Officer	Ensures appropriate governance and resourcing; approves chemical and fertility or ovo-control treatment plans and any exceptional joint project outside Council property; and receives significant incident reports.
Executive	Provides oversight of material legal, animal welfare, public safety, budget, reputation and cross-departmental matters and considers reports before Council where required.
General Manager Environment and Infrastructure	Approves the Annual Bird Control Program; confirms budget, procurement, legal, safety and welfare controls; reviews completion reports; and escalates material issues.
Manager Property and Sustainability / Document Owner	Owns and reviews the policy; assesses and prioritises sites; prepares and implements the annual program; works with relevant grain and site operators; and manages procurement, permits, product checks, contractors, communications, records, incidents and evaluation.
Managers and site managers	Implement source reduction and proofing on affected Council property; support access, notification, exclusion, operations and incident response; and report bird impacts.
Employees	Use current public information; do not arrange or undertake unauthorised control; follow site controls; and promptly report incidents, affected or injured birds and suspected non-compliance.
Contractors	Comply with legislation, permits, product labels, APVMA permits, codes, licences, approved treatment and safety documents, animal welfare requirements, contract conditions, stop-work requirements and reporting obligations.
Governance, Records, Procurement, WHS and Communications	Support document control, delegation and legal checks, procurement, contractor and WHS assurance, records capture, policy publication, website updates and public communications.

19. POLICY DOCUMENT CONTROL TABLE

Policy Name	Galah and Feral Pigeon Control
Folder ID:	6032
Policy No.	1.63.1
Version:	2
Policy Classification:	Council
Document Owner:	General Manager Environment and Infrastructure
Responsible Department:	Environment & Infrastructure

Responsible General Manager	General Manager Environment and Infrastructure
CEO Authorisation for Internal Policy:	N/A
Last revised date:	14 December 2020
Policy Adopted Date:	19 October 2026
Minute Reference:	CO 26/252
Next review date:	This policy is to be reviewed every 4 years after adopted date or following significant change to legislation or positions/principles included within this policy.
Applicable Legislation:	Local Government Act 1999 (SA) National Parks & Wildlife Act 1972 (SA) National Parks and Wildlife (Hunting) Regulations 2011 Animal Welfare Act 1985 (SA) Firearms Act 2015 (SA) Firearms Regulations (SA) Agricultural and Veterinary Products (Control of Use) Act 2022 (SA) and Regulations 2017 Controlled Substances Act 1984 (SA) Controlled Substances (Pesticides) Regulations 2017 (SA) Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA) Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (SA) State Records Act 1997 (SA)
Related Policies:	Procurement Policy Risk Management Policy Work Health and Safety Policies
Related Procedures:	
Related Documents:	Delegations Register City of Port Lincoln Feral Pigeons webpage Feral Pigeons: Management & Control Fact Sheet 5-3-T2 DEW Code of Practice for the Humane Destruction of Native Birds by Shooting in South Australia (updated 2026) DEW Code of Practice for the Humane Destruction of Flocking Birds by Trapping and Carbon Dioxide Narcosis in South Australia Current APVMA product labels and permits, where chemical or fertility control is proposed Annual Bird Control Program Plan, Method Approval Checklist and Completion Report

Date	Endorsed by	Council/Exec resolution No.:	Description of changes/reason for review
19/10/2026	Council	CO 26/252	Due to periodic review cycle