

Controlling Deer on Private Land

Notes for Landowners



CDMC
Cardinia Deer Management
Coalition Incorporated

The law

In Victoria, deer are currently recognised under law as a protected species. However, in recognition of the rapidly increasing numbers of deer and the damage they do, the Victorian government has recently amended the status of deer on private land. Now, all deer species (except Hog Deer) are unprotected on private land if they cause damage.

In the past, a private landowner needed to apply for a permit to control deer, but this is no longer the case. Now landowners can control deer on private property without a permit, if they cause damage or injury to landowners' properties, infrastructure (e.g. fences), vegetation (e.g. plantations, pasture, orchards) or livestock. (For further information, visit the Game Management Authority website: www.gma.vic.gov.au/hunting/deer)

Some laws regarding hunting deer versus controlling deer are explained in the following table:

Laws relating to Deer Control	Controlling on Private land	Hunting on Public land
Must have gun license	Yes	Yes
Must have hunter's license	No #	Yes
Must have and carry landowner's written consent	Yes	No
Can use spotlights or thermal imaging device	Yes	No
Can use noise suppressors (silencers)	No *	No *
Can shoot from the road into the property	No	No
Can shoot deer in a neighbouring property	No ^	No
Must shoot with approved firearm specifications	Yes	Yes

although not legally required, we strongly recommend deer controllers have a deer hunting license as another layer of ensuring quality control

*the use of noise suppressors (silencers) is strictly regulated. Most amateur controllers will not have a license to use them. Some professional controllers do.

^ Only with the neighbouring landowner's written agreement.

You've decided you want to control deer on your land. What now?

There are several options a private landowner can pursue:

- If you have a Victorian firearm licence, you can control deer yourself on your own property
- You could ask for help from the Cardinia Deer Management Coalition to introduce you to a deer controller
- You could ask a reputable hunting association such as the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia or the Australian Deer Association to help you
- You could ask a neighbour or friend who knows a hunter, if they would be available to control deer on your property
- You could pay for a professional pest controller

Why we recommend you work through the Cardinia Deer Management Coalition (CDMC):

- We are local
- We focus on protecting biodiversity
- We are focused on community safety and humane deer reduction
- We have a close liaison with Pakenham and Emerald police
- We individually assess controllers for appropriate equipment, accuracy and a responsible attitude before we list them
- Controllers on our list are members of a reputable hunter association
- Controllers on our list have good referees
- We have strong protocols to foster better outcomes for landowners and controllers
- We have a strong interest in monitoring the effectiveness of deer control in our region. For this we need to know where deer are being culled, how many are being culled and by whom. We can do this best by monitoring the results of deer control in our area and evaluating our progress.

When you contact the CDMC for help controlling deer, we will discuss our vision, protocols and procedures and your situation and your goals with you. If you wish to proceed, we will organise an onsite visit by a property assessor to ascertain if deer control is a viable and safe proposition on your property. If so, we will forward you the details of several controllers from our list for you to choose from. Once you have selected a controller, please let us know. You can either contact the controller directly to organise a first meeting and property inspection or we can organise it for you.

If you are comfortable with the controller and you have arrived at a mutually acceptable agreement, you can decide to allow the controller to cull deer on your property. You must fill in and sign an authorisation form, which the controllers must carry at all times when controlling deer on your property. These are available from the CDMC or on the web.

For advice on your first meeting with a controller, please read our *Landowner advice on engaging a deer controller* information sheet.

For official government information, visit the Game Management Authority website:

www/gma.vic.gov.au

or visit the Cardinia Deer Management Coalition website:

www.cardiniadeer.org.au

Disclaimer: Whilst CDMC do assess controllers for several attributes, including accuracy, communication skills, licences before considering them for addition to our list, we cannot give any guarantees. It is the landowner's ultimate responsibility to carry out their own due diligence when selecting and engaging a deer controller, including making sure all documentation is current.