

# Landowner advice on engaging a deer controller on private property



**CDMC**  
Cardinia Deer Management  
Coalition Incorporated

The intention of this information sheet is to give you, the land owner, advice and suggestions on issues you may need to consider when you are engaging a controller\* to cull deer on your property.

(\* The word "controller" in this document means a person with a firearms licence who may be engaged to control deer on private property.)

As the landowner, it is your responsibility to verify the credentials of any controller you wish to engage. We can not do this for you, nor can we give you any guarantee of performance or safety of any controller we may suggest for you. We recommend landowners have public liability insurance for at least \$20 million for each property.

## Your first contact with us

When you contact the Cardinia Deer Management Coalition Inc. (CDMC) requesting confidential help finding someone to control deer on your property, we will discuss your situation and your needs and help you decide if you wish to proceed.

If you do, we will arrange a controller/property assessor to visit you and make an initial assessment of your property considering safety issues, evidence of deer incursion and the likelihood of culling success.

If the assessment is positive, we can supply you with the names, contact details and references of some of our preferred controllers for your consideration. You can then select the controller that you believe is most suitable to your needs and contact them to arrange a meeting and property visit.

## Your first meeting with the controller

It is important you and the controller should feel mutually comfortable working with each other. Spend some time getting to know them. This is probably a good time to go for a short walk or drive with the controller to check out the suitability of your property for deer controlling. Many properties are not suitable for culling purposes; the controller will let you know. Ask about their experience in controlling deer and especially working with private landowners.

If you feel comfortable with the controller, ask to check their credentials before you go any further. The controller will be happy to show them and will appreciate your attention to detail. The required documents are:

- A current Victorian firearms licence
- Current membership of either the Australian Deer Association (ADA) or the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (SSAA)
- A current Game licence (deer) – not required by law but offers extra assurances
- Public liability insurance. We recommend a minimum of \$20M. Most controllers will have this as a part of their membership of ADA or SSAA
- You should already have contact details of two or three referees (property owners for whom the controller has culled.) If not, ask for them, then contact each of the referees.

Some of the issues you should discuss with the controller include:

- Apart from deer, do you have other feral species you would like controlled? Foxes? Rabbits?
- How often would you like the controller to be available to cull?
- What days of the week and times suit best?
- Communication:
  - What is the best method for you both? SMS? Email? Phone call?
  - Before and after each visit (strongly recommended)? Cull results?

- Property access:
  - Preferred entry gate
  - No go tracks, areas and paddocks
  - Allowed shooting zones. The controller will help identify the safest and best areas
  - Valuable stock areas
- Any known issues with neighbouring properties and property owners:
  - Valuable stock
  - Nearby house
  - Young children nearby, children play areas, etc
- Aspects of controlling:
  - Your controller may wish to use a “spotter” when hunting. This can be a good opportunity for mentoring inexperienced controllers. Are you OK with this?
  - Are you OK with using more than one controller on your property?
  - Spotlighting: are you OK with this? Will it worry your neighbours?
- Carcass management:
  - What do you want done with the carcass? Where can or can't they leave it?
  - Do you want any of the meat or do you want to butcher some yourself?
  - The controller will try to help here as best they can.

Once you have reached an agreement with the controller, you MUST sign an authorisation form giving the controller permission to cull deer on your property. The controller will supply you with this document. If a spotter is accompanying a controller, they will also need a signed authorisation form.

The controller may need to spend more time assessing and getting to know the property, especially if it is large or has a complicated terrain or shape. This may require several daytime visits.

### Culling events on your property

- Before the event:
  - Five or more days prior to the first cull your controller will letter drop all neighbouring properties telling them that culling will be occurring in their area. This will not reveal your name or address. It is done as a courtesy to your neighbours.
  - Your controller would normally contact you a couple of days before culling. This may not always be possible. You should discuss any special requirements you have with them. Good communication is critical to success.
- During the event:
  - Apart from noticing the controller arrive, you will not notice much else, as it is in their own best interests to be quiet and unobtrusive.
  - At some stage you may hear one or two shots. Rarely more.
  - There will be no shots after 10:30pm unless agreed previously with you
  - It may be up to an hour after shooting a deer before they leave the property
- After the event:
  - Within 24 hours, the controller will notify you and CDMC of the results of the cull

If you have any further queries, please email [info@cardiniadeer.org.au](mailto:info@cardiniadeer.org.au) or contact CDMC on 0428 434 655 (President Mike Hall)

#### Disclaimer:

Every effort has been made to make this information as accurate and complete as possible but no warranty or fitness implied.

The information is provided is the best and most complete available at the time of writing. The decision on if or what pest management strategies ( or controller) to use can only be made when individual site issues are considered and any persons on CDMC committee shall have neither liability or responsibility to any persons, organisation or entity with respect to any loss or damages arising from the information provided