



Institute of Strata Title  
Management Ltd

## Media Release

Thursday, 8 April 2010

### More pets should live the high life

The Institute of Strata Title Management (ISTM) is encouraging owners corporations and pet owners to work together to make apartment living more pet-friendly.

David Ferguson, ISTM President said that pet owners need to be able to demonstrate they are responsible for owners representative committees to review applications favourably. While some owners corporations needed to re-consider their pets policy with a view the changing needs of modern lifestyles.

“Owners must also be conscious of the history of a building too. Don’t expect that as a new owner that it is a matter of just making application and it will be OK. Some people have chosen buildings based on their no pet policies and their opinions may not change overnight no matter how responsible the new pet owners are,” David said.

In 2009, two of the top 10 complaints made to the NSW Office of Fair Trading were about pets, specifically from people about others keeping pets without permission or those being refused permission to keep a pet.

“Yet there is plenty of evidence to suggest that pet ownership is good for our health and good for the health of our communities. The tangible benefits to the physical and mental wellbeing of pet owners have been confirmed by scientific research. Their owners are healthier and happier than non-owners<sup>1</sup>,” David notes.

Susie Willis from the Petcare Information and Advisory Service advises if you own an apartment and are thinking of getting a pet, the first step is to check with the owners corporation.

“Assuming you have the all clear, the next decision is what type of pet is best suited to your lifestyle. Many smaller dogs are suited to indoor living but some have endless energy and need a lot of attention and exercise. Examples of some breeds that may be suited to indoor living include Whippets, Chihuahuas, Pugs, Poodles, French Bulldogs, Boston Terriers, Bichon Frise and Cavalier King Charles Spaniels,” Susie said.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Companion Animal Council <http://www.acac.org.au/>



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“These breeds provide all the benefits of dog ownership, such as an incentive to exercise each day and socialise with other dog owners in the area, while being well suited to people with busy schedules and smaller living spaces.

“Cats are also well suited to apartment living. For busy people who are not often at home, a cat - or even two cats that can keep each other company – is ideal. Naturally clean, adaptable and with endless ability to snooze, a cat makes a great indoor pet.”

Being a responsible pet owner means realising that the pet is dependent on the owner for its welfare as being as being responsible for the impact the pet has on the neighbours and the general amenity of the property.

Mr Ferguson said ISTM believes that the benefits gained from pet ownership include increased harmony as long as the owners completely understand and carry out their obligation. Owners Committees should review whether resident wants have actually changed since the building was first built.

“To encourage people to do the right thing and not end up with a complaint being made against them a pet application form has been developed. The idea is to make it easy for potential pet owners apply to their Executive Committees for permission and for the committee to have all the information they need to make a decision. This includes vaccination details and microchip details (where applicable),” he said.

“Both apartment owners and tenants are encouraged to seek the appropriate permissions before committing to having a pet.”

Owners Corporations wishing to take the step and consider allowing pets on a case-by-case basis can download an application form from the ISTM website at [www.istm.org.au](http://www.istm.org.au).

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### **About the ISTM**

The Institute of Strata Title Management (ISTM) is the peak industry body for strata title management in New South Wales; promoting the role of the professional strata team and the value such a team adds to owners corporations in managing risk and a creating a harmonious strata living experience.

### **Australia – A Nation of Pet Lovers**

The Petcare Information & Advisory Service (PIAS) provides non-commercial information on socially responsible pet ownership. PIAS' website: [www.petnet.com.au](http://www.petnet.com.au) is suitable for children, although PIAS encourages parents to supervise any online access by their children.

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