

MIDDLE ISLAND PROJECT – DOG HANDLER

POSITION NO: 2154
OCCUPANT: Vacant
DATE: July 2026

POSITION CONTEXT & OBJECTIVE(S):

This position will support delivery of the Middle Island Project, to provide dog handling and care for the Maremma Dogs and participation in tourism initiatives.

The Middle Island Penguin Project (the Project) is a wildlife conservation project that uses the 'Warrnambool Method' to help protect the colony of little penguins (*Eudyptula minor*) living on Middle Island in Warrnambool.

Maremma Dogs protect the little penguin population on Middle Island from fox predation. The Maremmas are located on Middle Island intermittently throughout the penguin breeding season, normally October to March but can change depending on seasonal conditions

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:

Maremma Care and Training

1. Perform duties including feeding the Maremma dogs and monitoring dog behavior.
2. After hour call outs for dogs as required.
3. Handling and training of the Maremma dogs following guidelines and practices stated in the Middle Island Project Working Group Operation Plan and Best Practice Manual for the use of Livestock Guardian Dogs.
4. General care of the Maremma dogs including grooming and assessing the health of animals.

Maremma Movements

5. Undertake movement of Maremma dogs to support the project objectives.
6. Transportation of Maremma dogs to and from Middle Island, accommodation or other location as required.
7. Transportation of the dogs to vet appointments.

Tourism

8. Lead and Assist with the Penguin Protector Tours (education program).
9. Lead and Assist in other tourism initiatives.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA:

Applicants are required to address the below in their application:

1. Demonstrated experience and knowledge of working with dogs, including handling, training and husbandry.
2. Ability to take instruction and work under guidance as well as individually and as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
3. Ability to manage time and organise work schedules.
4. Demonstrated experience and knowledge of the Middle Island Project or other relevant conservation project.

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5. Ability to undertake public speaking and coordinate group activities.

The qualifications, skills and experience outlined in this position description are ideals to which the occupant will aspire. Unless specifically stated, they are not absolutely essential.

GENERAL EMPLOYMENT PROBITY CHECKS:

The incumbent must have and maintain a current Fit2Work (Police Records)

☒ YES

Working with Children Check

☒ YES

ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

Reports to:	Coordinator Natural Environment
Supervises:	Nil
Internal Contacts:	City Sustainability, Parks & Gardens, Flagstaff Hill, Middle Island Project Officer
External Contacts:	Veterinary, External stakeholders

ACCOUNTABILITY AND EXTENT OF AUTHORITY:

- Engage, work with and maintain a responsive and professional relationship with a range of stakeholders including internal contacts and relevant businesses/service providers.
- Work with Council staff at all levels across the organisation.
- Work as an effective project team member to promote efficiencies and good governance.
- Provide regular feedback and updates to the project officer/manager.

JUDGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING:

This position exercises significant independent judgement in regard to –

- Provide handling, care and training of the Maremma dogs.

SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

The following knowledge and skills are required to be utilised:

- Specialist skills in the area of environmental science or equivalent.
- Experience with dog handling training, care and husbandry.
- Specialist skills in public speaking and leading public presentations.

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MANAGEMENT SKILLS:

The following management skills are required to be utilised:

- On-ground management procedures are consistent with processes and strategies developed for the Project and other relevant organisations such as the Warrnambool City Council, Parks Victoria, Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.
- Operating standards are consistent with operational needs to provide high quality results.
- Ability to manage time and organise own work.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:

The following interpersonal skills are required to be demonstrated:

- Ability to undertake written and verbal communication.
- Ability to work under instruction and take guidance.
- Ability to work in a team situation.
- Sensitivity to confidential issues.
- Adaptability and flexibility.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:

The following qualifications and experience are required for the position:

- Qualification and/or experience in dog behaviour, training & handling.
- First Aid qualifications.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

The Terms and Conditions in this Position Description are to be read in conjunction with the General Terms & Conditions of Employment.

AGREEMENT:

I accept and agree to the duties in this Position Description. I understand that this Position Description is to be read in conjunction with the General Terms & Conditions of Employment and I agreed to abide by the terms and conditions stipulated therein.

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Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	

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ACCOUNTABILITY



COLLABORATION



RESPECTFULNESS



PROGRESSIVENESS



WELLBEING