



Conducting a DOG & CAT CENSUS

 **amrric**
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Animal Management in Rural and
Remote Indigenous Communities

What is an animal census?

An animal census is a community-wide collection of companion animal health & population data, that is completed via door-to-door community engagement. In simpler terms, this means information about the cats and dogs within a community is recorded at each and every house.

During this process, the team taking the census record certain information about each animal, whether the animal is a boy or girl, how old they are, whether or not they are desexed, their size and what colour they are. An animal census can also include health information for each animal, for example, their body condition (weight), the number of fleas and ticks seen, and signs of skin problems such as hair loss.

More information on how to measure health information for a census can be found [here](#).

How to do an animal census



- An animal census is completed by going door-to-door to every household, business, and organisation in your community and asking them about the dogs and cats that they own or are caring for, and recording information about the dogs and cats living in these locations.
- In the weeks before the census is due to start, it's a good idea to advertise the census via community noticeboard, radio and social media, to make sure the community are aware that the census is happening.
- An animal census provides a great opportunity to distribute preventative medicines like parasite prevention, which can also help to improve community engagement.

How to do an animal census (continued)

- An up-to-date map of your community is important so you can cross off houses and buildings as you go, making sure that every community member is included.
- A census can take a long time to do – a few days to a few weeks depending on the size of your community. Plan on at least one day for every 40 houses
- Information about each dog and cat in the community can be recorded using a spreadsheet or the AMRRIC App.
- Make sure that members from the local community are included as part of the census team to improve community engagement and help to build local capacity.



Why is an animal census important?

An animal census is an important part of managing the size, health and reproductive status of dog and cat populations in your community, which is important for planning veterinary programs. It also provides important information that can be used to plan for emergencies in your community, like floods, heatwaves, bushfires, and cyclones.

A census helps communities to understand:

- The overall health of the community's dogs and cats
- What medical treatment(s) the dogs and cats might need
- How many animals need to be desexed to stabilise the population
- If there is a new disease or one that can make people in the community sick
- How many dogs and cats there are and where they are in the community.

