

NSW COMPANION ANIMALS TASKFORCE

REPORT TO THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

October 2012

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Definitions

<i>AWAC</i>	means the Animal Welfare Advisory Council
<i>CA Act</i>	means the <i>NSW Companion Animals Act 1998</i>
<i>CA Fund</i>	means the Companion Animals Fund, comprising registration fees collected by councils and registration agents
<i>CA Register</i>	means the NSW Companion Animals Register
<i>CA Regulation</i>	means the NSW Companion Animals Regulation 2008
<i>Chief Executive</i>	means the Chief Executive of the Division of Local Government, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
<i>Companion animal</i>	means a cat or a dog (in line with section 5(1) of the CA Act).
<i>Desex</i>	means to render an animal permanently incapable of reproduction, usually by way of removing reproductive organs (often also referred to as ‘spay’ or ‘neuter’)
<i>Division</i>	means the Division of Local Government, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
<i>DPI</i>	means NSW Department of Primary Industries
<i>LG Act</i>	means the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
<i>POCTAA</i>	means the <i>Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979</i>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Companion Animals Taskforce was established by the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Primary Industries in 2011, to provide advice on key cat and dog issues and, in particular, strategies to reduce the current rate of cat and dog euthanasia.

In May 2012, the Ministers released a discussion paper prepared by the Taskforce for public consultation, which canvassed a range of priority issues identified by the Taskforce, presented key findings and set out a series of options to address them. A copy of the discussion paper is available at Appendix 1.

Over 1,400 public submissions were received, which were taken into consideration by the Taskforce in the drafting of this report. Further information about submissions is set out in sections 2 and 3 of this report.

A key theme highlighted in submissions is that cat and dog welfare and management is a whole of community responsibility. Put simply, it is the people who breed, sell and own cats and dogs who are ultimately responsible for them. Improving the community's understanding of this is crucial to ensuring better outcomes for cats and dogs.

Achieving significant change to community attitudes is a long-term endeavour. It is the Taskforce's view that the long-term commitment of the NSW Government to drive the recommendations contained in this report will be essential to ensuring such change is realised in the area of cat and dog welfare and management.

The Taskforce also acknowledges the ongoing work of the staff and volunteers of councils, pounds, shelters and rescue groups across NSW as crucial to improving outcomes for cats and dogs. Recommendations contained in this report aim to strengthen their capacity to undertake their important work.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS

This report contains 22 recommendations which together provide a strategy to: reduce the number of cats and dogs that are impounded and euthanased, improve the current regulatory framework around the breeding, sale and management of cats and dogs, and promote socially responsible pet ownership to the whole community.

The introduction of annual registration for cats and dogs (see recommendation 8) is a key component of this strategy. While the contentious nature of this recommendation is acknowledged, the Taskforce considers it to be essential, as it will:

- significantly improve the accuracy of data on the Companion Animals Register.
- provide a stronger incentive for owners to desex their cat or dog.
- regularly reinforce that owning a cat or dog is an ongoing commitment.
- increase the capacity of councils and the Government to undertake cat and dog management activities.
- bring NSW into line with all other Australian jurisdictions which require the registration of cats and dogs.

Recommendations for the Minister for Primary Industries

The Minister for Primary Industries has been identified as having responsibility for the implementation of the following recommendations.

Recommendation 1 - A breeder licensing system should be established and the Companion Animals Register should be updated to capture breeder licence information for each animal record (**with Minister for Local Government**).

Recommendation 2 - *The Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats* should be revised to ensure that the existing guidelines it contains become enforceable standards.

Recommendation 3 - Relevant animal welfare codes of practice should be amended to require the sellers of cats and dogs to display an animal's microchip number (or the licence number of the breeder of an animal) in all advertisements, and at point of sale in the case of pet shops, markets and fairs.

Recommendation 5 - An information sheet should be issued in relation to the advertising and sale of cats and dogs.

Recommendation 6 - Mandatory standardised information on socially responsible pet ownership should be developed to be given out at point of sale (**with Minister for Local Government**).

Recommendation 7 - Relevant animal welfare codes of practice should be updated to require that at least one staff member working in a pet shop, breeding establishment, pound or animal shelter must hold a *Certificate II - Animal Studies* qualification.

Recommendations for the Minister for Local Government

The Minister for Local Government has been identified as having responsibility for the implementation of the following recommendations.

Recommendation 4 - The Companion Animals Regulation should be amended to remove the existing provision that allows recognised breeders to sell unmicrochipped cats or dogs to pet shops.

Recommendation 8 - The Companion Animals Act should be amended to require cats and dogs to be registered on an annual basis.

Recommendation 9 - Cat and dog registration fees should be reviewed and set at such a level to provide an additional incentive for owners to desex their animals.

Recommendation 10 - The Companion Animals Regulation should be amended to require a cat to be registered from the time it is 4 months of age.

Recommendation 11 - The Companion Animals Regulation should be amended to allow cat and dog registration fees to be indexed to the Consumer Price Index.

Recommendation 12 - A new discounted registration category 'Desexed animal – purchased from a pound or shelter' should be established to further encourage the purchase of desexed cats and dogs.

Recommendation 13 - A grant funding program should be established for councils and partner organisations to deliver targeted microchipping, registration and desexing programs.

Recommendation 14 - Measures should be introduced to improve compliance with companion animal legislation data entry requirements.

Recommendation 15 - A community-wide socially responsible pet ownership education campaign should be developed (*with Minister for Primary Industries*).

Recommendation 16 - The socially responsible pet ownership school-based education program should be expanded to include the preschool age group.

Recommendation 17 - Comprehensive education material about the importance of confining cats to their owner's property should be developed.

Recommendation 18 - Funding should be provided for research into key cat and dog issues.

Recommendation 19 - Better practice guidelines should be issued to councils with a view to standardising impounding practices.

Recommendation 20 - The Companion Animals Register should be updated to provide a centralised impounded animal management tool for use by all councils, relevant State agencies and animal welfare organisations.

Recommendation 21 - The Ministers should write to the Minister for Fair Trading to request that barriers to cat and dog ownership in relation to residential tenancy laws be reviewed (*with Minister for Primary Industries*).

Recommendation 22 - An ongoing reference group on cat and dog management issues should be established.

Note: Section 6 of this report addresses those options contained in the discussion paper which were not ultimately supported by the Taskforce.

B. MATTERS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

The Taskforce suggests that the following issues be considered in further detail (a relevant responsible Minister or suggested coordinating body is identified for each):

- Allowing cats and dogs to be kept in retirement villages and nursing homes (*Companion animal management reference group – see recommendation 20*).
- Release of *Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Pounds and Shelters* (*Minister for Primary Industries and AWAC*).
- Developing further options for the management of cats (*Companion animal management reference group*).
- Comprehensive review and update of the CA Register (*Minister for Local Government and the Division*).

Further information is contained in section 7 of this report.

C. FORTHCOMING ADVICE ON DANGEROUS DOG MANAGEMENT

The Taskforce has also identified the issue of dangerous dog management as one requiring further consideration. However, due to the complexity of this issue, the Taskforce has determined that it will deal with this as a separate issue. The Taskforce has commenced deliberations on this issue and advice is expected to be provided to the Minister for Local Government by the end of 2012.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Companion Animals Taskforce was established by the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Primary Industries in August 2011.

The Taskforce Terms of Reference require it to inquire into:

- Euthanasia rates and re-homing options for surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs.
- The breeding of cats and dogs including the practices of ‘puppy farms’.
- The sale of cats and dogs.
- The microchipping and desexing of cats and dogs.
- Current education programs on ‘responsible pet ownership’.
- Any other high priority cat and dog issues that become apparent to the Taskforce.

The Taskforce is chaired by the Member for Charlestown, Mr Andrew Cornwell MP, and consists of representatives of the following organisations, invited by the Ministers to participate:

- Animal Welfare League NSW (AWL NSW)
- Australian Companion Animal Council (ACAC)
- Australian Institute of Local Government Rangers (AILGR)
- Australian Veterinary Association (AVA)
- Cat Protection Society of NSW (CPS)
- Dogs NSW
- Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW (LGSA)
- Pet Industry Association Australia (PIAA)
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals NSW (RSPCA)

Representatives of the Division and DPI also participate on the Taskforce.

2. DISCUSSION PAPER AND SUBMISSION PROCESS

In May 2012, the Ministers released a discussion paper prepared by the Taskforce to provide interested stakeholders, including industry and members of the wider community with an opportunity to have input into the development of strategies to address the issues it has considered.

The discussion paper canvassed a range of priority issues identified by the Taskforce, presented key findings and set out a series of options to address them. Finally, the paper posed questions about each issue designed to promote discussion and feedback.

A copy of the discussion paper is available at Appendix 1.

Submissions were open for a period of 8 weeks, closing on 1 July 2012. The submission process was coordinated by the Division.

During the submission period, the Taskforce Chair conducted the following targeted consultation sessions on the discussion paper:

- 23 May 2012 – AWL NSW Shelter, Kemp's Creek – attended by representatives of AWL NSW, Penrith City Council, Liverpool City Council, and Hawkesbury Animal Shelter.
- 25 May 2012 - Ballina Shire Council offices – attended by Ballina Shire Council.
- 14 June 2012 - RSPCA Sydney Shelter, Yagoona – attended by representatives of RSPCA, Auburn City Council, Bankstown City Council, PIAA, Dogs NSW, the AVA, and Renbury Farm Animal Shelter.
- 15 June 2012 – DPI offices, Orange – attended by representatives of Orange City Council, Bathurst Regional Council and RSPCA.

The views expressed at consultation sessions were also taken into consideration in the drafting of this report.

3. OVERVIEW OF SUBMISSIONS

1405 submissions were received by the closing date. All submissions received by the closing date have been taken into consideration. All effort has been made to incorporate into the recommendations contained in this report those suggestions which, in the opinion of the Taskforce, are practical and achievable.

Where a large number of comments were made in submissions about a particular discussion paper option, these have been outlined in the 'Discussion paper submission comments' section under each recommendation contained in this report.

A schedule of the names and organisations of those submitters who have indicated that they are happy for their submission to be made public is available at Appendix 2.

The detailed analysis of discussion paper submissions which was prepared by the Division and considered by the Taskforce in its deliberations is available at Appendix 3.

4. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

This report contains recommendations for the consideration of the Ministers, which aim to address the following key strategic objectives identified by the Taskforce:

SO1 - *Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs*

SO2 - *Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased*

SO3 - *Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle*

SO4 - *Improve standards for the breeding and sale of cats and dogs*

SO5 - *Improve public understanding of socially responsible pet ownership*

SO6 - *Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations*

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations contained in this section are intended to work together as a long-term strategy to achieve the objectives outlined in section 4 of this report. Relevant strategic objectives are highlighted for each recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION 1

A breeder licensing system should be established and the Companion Animals Register should be updated to capture breeder licence information for each animal record

Responsible Ministers

Minister for Primary Industries (lead) with Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO3. Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle

SO4. Improve standards for the breeding and sale of cats and dogs

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

The Government should establish a breeder licensing system under POCTAA. All people who breed cats and dogs for sale should be required to be licensed. It is considered essential that there be no exemptions to this requirement.

However, provision should be made for owners whose cats or dogs have a one-off litter (including cats or dogs that fall ‘accidentally’ pregnant) to obtain a temporary licence and consideration should be given to providing a discounted licence fee for such people.

Similarly, owners intending to breed their cat or dog intermittently should be required to obtain a licence only in the year they intend to breed their animal, and may choose not to renew their licence until such time that they intend to breed the animal again.

Licensing requirements

All breeders should continue to be required to comply with the standards contained in the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats* (the Breeder Code).

Inspections to determine compliance with the Breeder Code should be undertaken by dedicated RSPCA and AWL inspectors. Inspections should be prioritised using a risk based approach. However, the varying nature and scale of breeder operations should be taken into consideration when determining compliance.

Other licensing requirements should include:

- compliance with the proposed requirement to include a breeder licence number in advertisements for cats and dogs (see recommendation 3).
- distribution of proposed mandatory point of sale information (see recommendation 6).
- the holding of a *Certificate II - Animal Studies* by at least one staff member at a breeding establishment (see recommendation 7).
- compliance of breeder premises with council development control requirements (unless they are considered ‘exempt development’ under planning regulations).

Funding and costs

It is recommended that a user-pays system be implemented, comprising an annual licence fee payable by all breeders. The fee should be set at a reasonable level, so as to ensure the system is self-funding (including administration and inspections) but does not discourage compliance. The fee should also fund the enforcement of proposed mandatory microchip/breeder licence number advertising requirements (see recommendation 3).

A sliding scale of fees should be considered, reflecting the varying nature and scale of breeder operations. A concessional licence fee should be given for eligible pensioners. Consideration should also be given to indexing the fee to the Consumer Price Index.

A key cost is expected to be the establishment of a financial receipting and licence issuing system. Use of the Government Licensing Service (GLS) to manage these processes should be considered. This may be more cost effective than establishing a stand-alone administrative system to support breeder licensing, as GLS's existing software and hardware infrastructure could be utilised.

Related provisions

It is crucial that the breeder licensing system be integrated with the CA Register to ensure breeder licence numbers are linked to the microchip numbers of individual cats and dogs. Consideration should be given to providing access to the CA Register for relevant AWL and RSPCA officers for the purpose of enforcing the licensing system.

There should also be provision for the public to search a database of breeder licences, to determine if a breeder they are dealing with is currently licensed. The possibility of using the GLS for this purpose should also be investigated.

The licensing system should include a strong emphasis on breeder education, linked to a community-wide socially responsible pet education program (see recommendation 15).

Rationale

It is recognised that many responsible breeders operate within NSW. However, there are concerns that some unethical breeders contribute to the stock of unwanted cats and dogs in various ways, including: over-breeding; failure to comply with microchipping and registration requirements, resulting in more 'lost' cats and dogs; and failure to desex cats and dogs not intended for breeding.

Establishing a breeder licensing system would:

- enable better identification of breeders. Currently, the extent of 'puppy farming' in NSW is difficult to determine and enforcement action relies on complaints from the community. A breeder licensing system would ensure that more comprehensive information is recorded on the location and activities of breeders.
- ensure that all breeders comply with standards set out in the Breeder Code. Licensing should discourage less reputable/less sustainable breeders and help to distinguish them from breeders who are able to provide the required level of care for their breeding cats or dogs.
- require breeders to microchip the cats and dogs they sell, which will allow the ownership of animals to be tracked on the CA Register throughout their life, increasing the chance that impounded animals are reunited with their owner.
- bring NSW into line with Queensland and Victoria, and assist in achieving standardised breeder regulations across Australia.

It is noted that section 35(d) of POCTAA provides scope for the establishment of a licensing system for the "control of animal trades" under the relevant regulation.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of this proposal. However, 355 Dogs NSW members made submissions requesting an exemption from the breeder licensing requirements to be provided to members of registered breeder bodies. While the Taskforce acknowledges that Dogs NSW members operate under a robust registration system, it is considered essential that no exemptions be made to the proposed breeder licensing system. This will ensure that all breeders who sell cats and dogs operate under the same standards, and make a reasonable financial contribution to the licensing system.

A large number of submissions called for strict licence conditions to be imposed on breeders, including a limit on the number of cats and dogs allowed to be kept per breeder and the introduction of minimum time limits between litters. However, it is considered that tying licence approval to the Breeder Code will sufficiently regulate the conditions under which licensed breeders operate.

The Taskforce has endeavoured to incorporate other common suggestions into the proposed breeder licensing system described above.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 1). For comments made in submissions regarding development control requirements for breeding establishments see option 3.

RECOMMENDATION 2

The *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats* should be revised to ensure that the existing guidelines it contains become enforceable standards

Responsible Minister

Minister for Primary Industries.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO3. *Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle*

SO4. *Improve standards for the breeding and sale of cats and dogs*

Description

Enforceable standards of the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats* apply to all people who breed cats and dogs for sale. The Breeder Code also indicates a number of industry 'best practices' as guidelines within the document.

The Breeder Code should be revised so that the best practice guidelines it currently contains become enforceable standards. However, it is recognised that some existing guidelines may not be enforceable or may not be able to be worded in such a way that they become measurable standards. It is considered acceptable that these continue to be referred to as 'guidelines' in the revised Breeder Code.

It is also noted that certain legislative procedural requirements would need to be met in updating the Breeder Code, including consultation with AWAC and relevant stakeholders.

The revised standards should form the basis of approval criteria for a breeder licensing system (see Recommendation 1).

Rationale

- This would ensure a higher standard of care for cats and dogs in the care of breeders.
- As the Breeder Code is already established under POCTAA, it would also provide an easily implemented and enforceable basis for breeder licensing criteria (see Recommendation 1).
- It is important that the current guideline, which strongly encourages the desexing of cats and dogs not intended for breeding, be updated to a standard as this may reduce unwanted litters.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of this option but only a very small number of submissions commented in detail.

Submissions overwhelmingly supported making the updated standards in the Code of Practice the basis of approval requirements for a breeder licensing system.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see options 2a and 2b).

RECOMMENDATION 3

Relevant animal welfare codes of practice should be amended to require the sellers of cats and dogs to display an animal's microchip number (or the licence number of the breeder of an animal) in all advertisements, and at point of sale in the case of pet shops, markets and fairs

Responsible Minister

Minister for Primary Industries.

Relevant strategic objectives

- SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs
- SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased
- SO3. Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle
- SO4. Improve standards for the breeding and sale of cats and dogs
- SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

The *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding of Dogs and Cats*, the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Animals in Pet Shops* and the forthcoming *Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Pounds and Shelters* should be updated to require the owners of cats and dogs to display the microchip number of an animal in advertisements, and at point of sale in the case of pet shops, markets and fairs.

However, it is recognised that this requirement may be onerous where a litter of puppies and kittens are being sold. For this reason, it should be permitted that a breeder licence number (see recommendation 1) be used as alternative in advertisements for cats and dogs.

A special category should also be created for animal welfare and rescue organisations and council pounds who advertise cats and dogs. For example, such organisations could be issued with an 'Animal Welfare Organisation advertiser number'.

It is important that this requirement applies to all sales, including those occurring through newspapers, council pounds, animal welfare and rescue organisations, displayed in notice boards, shop windows and over the internet.

To be effective, it is essential that compliance with the advertising requirements be enforced by the RSPCA and AWL. It is considered appropriate that such enforcement activities be resourced from the proposed breeder licence fees (see recommendation 1).

However, it is acknowledged that the requirement may be difficult to enforce in the case of cats and dogs being sold on the internet from locations outside of NSW. Consideration should be given to the establishment of an email address/telephone register for members of the public to report non-compliance, so that action may be undertaken by enforcement agencies.

To further ensure that this requirement is effectively implemented it should be linked to approval conditions of a breeder licensing system (see recommendation 1). If a breeder is found not to have complied with this requirement, their licence may be revoked. The requirement should also be addressed in an information sheet on the advertising and sale of cats and dogs (see recommendation 5).

It is also noted that certain legislative procedural requirements would need to be met in updating the codes, including consultation with AWAC and relevant stakeholders.

Rationale

- The mandatory listing of a cat or dog's microchip number or breeder licence number in all advertisements would be an effective way of ensuring compliance with microchipping requirements by the sellers of cats and dogs, and would allow for the easier identification of unethical cat and dog breeders and sellers.
- This requirement may also give purchasers confidence that they are receiving the cat or dog they have paid for, as it would strengthen the ability of purchasers to take legal action against owners in cases of false advertising.
- Concerns about potential increased numbers of surrendered or abandoned litters of cats and dogs are recognised. However, introducing the ability within the cat and dog registration system to trace pets back to their source may also provide alternative means of identifying the owners of cats and dogs. It will also increase the capacity of the Government and enforcement agencies to target education programs and enforcement activities to where they are most needed.
- The risk of the use of fabricated numbers in advertisements by unethical vendors is also acknowledged. However, such cases may be dealt with by enforcement agencies, or by individual consumers under fair trading regulations.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of this option. Common suggestions have been incorporated in the proposals outlined above. A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 4).

RECOMMENDATION 4

The Companion Animals Regulation should be amended to remove the existing provision that allows recognised breeders to sell unmicrochipped cats and dogs to pet shops

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO3. Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle

SO4. Improve standards for the breeding and sale of cats and dogs

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

The existing exemption under clause 12(3) of the CA Regulation from the requirement to microchip cats and dogs sold by a recognised breeder to a pet shop if, at the time of the sale, it is less than 12 weeks old should be removed to ensure that all cats and dogs bred in NSW can be traced back to their breeder.

Rationale

- The current exemption under the CA Regulation represents a significant blockage to ensuring that all cats and dogs are microchipped by those who breed them, meaning that the breeder of a cat or dog may never be known.
- Without this requirement, it is impossible to ensure that the full ownership history of all cats and dogs bred in NSW can be achieved. This can limit the options available to enforcement officers to determine the existing owner of a cat or dog, as the breeder should hold records about who the animal was sold to.
- This approach would link effectively to the requirement for breeders to microchip cats and dogs under a breeder licensing system (see Recommendation 1) and the requirement to display the microchip number or breeder licence number when an cat or dog is sold (see Recommendation 3).
- It is noted that this approach is consistent with PIAA's *Dogs Lifetime Guarantee Policy on Dog Traceability & Re-homing* which commenced in October 2012, requiring PIAA members to source only microchipped dogs from breeders.

Discussion paper submission comments

This option was not canvassed in the discussion paper.

RECOMMENDATION 5

An information sheet should be issued in relation to the advertising and sale of cats and dogs

Responsible Minister

Minister for Primary Industries.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO3. Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle

SO4. Improve standards for the breeding and sale of cats and dogs

SO5. Improve public understanding of socially responsible pet ownership

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

An information sheet should be issued to support the enforceable standards of the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats* and the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Animals in Pet Shops*, which require information concerning the care of the animal to be provided at the time of purchase.

This document should identify the information that is required to be included in animal advertisements, including a cat or dog's microchip number or breeder licence number (as proposed in recommendation 3) and the information which must be given out at point of sale (see recommendation 6).

The information sheet should also provide best practice examples, including (but not limited to):

- encouraging the sale of cat and dogs sourced from licensed breeders (see recommendation 1), pounds and shelters, and rescue organisations.
- introducing an appropriate 'cooling off' period for the return of cats and dogs.
- ensuring that prospective owners are aware of the true cost of caring for a cat or dog over its lifetime.
- the importance of not giving cats and dogs away (eg: 'free to good home') as this may reduce the perceived value of the animal in the eyes of the new owner, and therefore lead to a reduce level of care for the animal.
- reinforcing mandatory point of sale information with post-purchase veterinary consultations, where practical.

This information sheet should be made available to all sellers of cats and dogs including breeders, pet shops, pounds and shelters, newspapers and internet classified advertisement hosts.

It is crucial that the release of this information sheet be supported by an appropriate level of promotion (eg: a far reaching print, radio and television advertising campaign).

This could also form part of a community-wide socially responsible pet education program (see recommendation 15).

Rationale

The availability of an information sheet on the advertising and sale of cats and dogs could:

- improve the knowledge of potential buyers about the cat or dog being offered, including the relevant traits of the animal breed or type, which may affect its suitability as a pet and the likely cost of keeping the animal over its lifetime.
- make it easier for cat and dog purchasers to understand what qualities make a good breeder and a suitable cat or dog.
- reduce the number of cats and dogs surrendered to pounds due to incompatibility with owners' situations and lifestyles.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of this option.

A large number of submissions suggested the introduction of alternative regulations on the sale of animals, including:

- a. banning the sale of pets from pet shops, markets, fairs and fetes, and
- b. introducing a pet owner licence system.

The Taskforce acknowledges these suggestions. However, suggestion 'a' is not supported as it is considered that the licensing of breeders (see recommendation 1), the mandatory display of a cat or dog's microchip number or breeder number when advertised (see recommendation 3), the proposed guidelines on the advertising and sale of cats and dogs, and the proposed mandatory distribution of standardised information at point of sale (see recommendation 6) will adequately address this issue.

Suggestion 'b' is not supported as it is considered to be onerous for cat and dog owners and difficult to enforce within existing resources. The introduction of annual registration (see recommendation 8) will also assist in more accurately capturing the details of cat and dog owners.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 5).

RECOMMENDATION 6

Mandatory standardised information on socially responsible pet ownership should be developed to be given out at point of sale

Responsible Ministers

Minister for Primary Industries (lead) with Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

- SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs
- SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased
- SO3. Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle
- SO4. Improve standards for the breeding and sale of cats and dogs
- SO5. Improve public understanding of socially responsible pet ownership
- SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

Standardised information on socially responsible pet ownership should be developed and distributed to all sellers of cats and dogs, including breeders, pet stores, pounds and shelters. The cost of developing this material should be met from the CA Fund.

Such information should include (but not be limited to):

- The true cost of caring for an animal over its lifetime.
- General welfare and husbandry.
- The importance of identification and registration.
- Appropriate confinement and housing.
- The importance of exercise.
- The importance of training and socialising cats and dogs.
- The importance of early age desexing and the availability of discounted desexing services.

The standard information documentation should include a declaration for cat and dog owners to sign, attesting that they have read and understood the information provided. While cat and dog sellers should be encouraged to ensure owners sign this declaration, it is acknowledged that for practical reasons this should be a voluntary process.

The distribution of this information should be mandated under the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats*, the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Animals in Pet Shops* and the forthcoming *Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Pounds and Shelters*. This would ensure that the provision of such information would also be a breeder licensing requirement (see recommendation 1). It is important that such information be provided to cat and dog sellers free of charge. It should also be made available in a range of community languages, and widely promoted.

Where practical, point of sale information should be reinforced by a post-purchase consultation with a veterinarian or vet nurse, covering issues such as the importance of desexing, socialisation and cat confinement. Information about where such services can be obtained should be included in the material.

Rationale

- Standardised information provided at point of sale may prevent the purchase of unsuitable cats and dogs, and ultimately reduce the number of unwanted cats and dogs surrendered at pounds and shelters.
- The enforceable standards of the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats* and the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Animals in Pet Shops* apply to pet shops and breeders who sell cats and dogs. The forthcoming *Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Pounds and Shelters* will include similar standards for pounds and shelters.
- These standards require that information concerning the care of animals is provided at the time of purchase. While suggested topic areas for content are contained in the codes, the actual information provided is up to the individual breeder or proprietor and there may be a variation of quality of content provided.
- The public may not be aware that they are entitled to receive this information prior to making a purchase.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of this option. A large number of submissions expressed the view that full disclosure of the expected costs of pet ownership should be included in such information. Other submissions suggested requiring pet owners to sign a declaration that they have read and understood the information they have been given. These suggestions have been addressed in this recommendation.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 13a).

RECOMMENDATION 7

Relevant animal welfare codes of practice should be updated to require that at least one staff member working in a pet shop, breeding establishment, pound or animal shelter must hold a *Certificate II - Animal Studies* qualification

Responsible Minister

Minister for Primary Industries.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO4. Improve standards for the breeding and sale of cats and dogs

Description

The *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats*, the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Animals in Pet Shops* and the forthcoming *Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Pounds and Shelters* should be updated to require at least one staff member on duty at any pet shop, breeding establishment, pound or animal shelter to hold a *Certificate II - Animal Studies*.

It is noted that certain legislative procedural requirements would need to be met in updating the codes, including consultation with AWAC and relevant stakeholders.

This should also be a compliance requirement of the proposed breeder licence system (see recommendation 1).

Rationale

- The enforceable standards of the *Animal Welfare Codes of Practice - Breeding Dogs and Cats* and the *Animal Welfare Codes of Practice – Animals in Pet Shops* require that staff are knowledgeable and competent to manage the animals in their care.
- The *Certificate II - Animal Studies* qualification adequately meets the education requirements set out in the codes.
- Updating the codes in this way may result in better welfare outcomes for cats and dogs in such establishments.
- This should also improve compliance with the codes and provide consistency in the qualifications of staff in pet shops, pounds and shelters.
- The *Certificate II - Animal Studies* may become a minimum standard for employment in the industry, thereby providing professional development opportunities.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of this option. A large number of submissions highlighted that such requirements are considered crucial for pet shops and recommended that at least one person on duty be required to have qualifications. These suggestions have been incorporated in the above proposal.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 14).

RECOMMENDATION 8

The Companion Animals Act should be amended to require cats and dogs to be registered on an annual basis

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO3. Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle

SO5. Improve public understanding of socially responsible pet ownership

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

The lifetime registration requirements of the CA Act should be replaced with a requirement for owners to register their cat or dog with their local council on an annual basis. In the case of dogs, registration should continue to be required by 6 months of age. However, for cats, registration should be required by 4 months of age (see recommendation 10).

A suitable commencement date should be set, providing a reasonable transition period. This would allow for the appropriate publicising of the new registration requirements and for administrative arrangements to be put in place, including relevant updates to the CA Register and approved forms.

The annual registration requirement should not be retrospective (ie: annual registration should only apply to cats and dogs that reach the required registration age after the commencement date of the legislation).

The introduction of annual registration would also provide a timely opportunity to review existing registration fees. However, it is considered essential that registration fees continue to be utilised to encourage desexing of cats and dogs (see recommendation 9).

Rationale

Annual registration of dogs was mandatory in NSW until 1998 under the *Dogs Act 1966*. Lifetime registration was introduced on the commencement of the CA Act as a means to encourage uptake of mandatory registration requirements. While the Taskforce acknowledges that registration numbers have increased steadily since 2001, the existing lifetime registration requirements are considered to be ineffective for the following reasons:

1. Lifetime registration leads to inaccurate CA Register data

- Annual registration would ensure greater accuracy of CA Register data about cats and dogs and their owners, by requiring owners to regularly update this data. This would:
 - allow better tracking of cat and dog owners through the animal's lifecycle, resulting in animals being more likely to be returned to their owner, which would lead to less animals being impounded and euthanased.
 - improve the ability of council officers to locate and trace dangerous dogs.
 - provide an increased opportunity for councils and the Government to contact cat and dog owners to deliver educational messages or information about animal health and welfare (eg: to notify of disease outbreaks in specific areas).
 - improve human health outcomes through better dissemination of information during outbreaks of diseases which can transfer from humans to animals (eg: rabies, Lyssavirus or Hendra virus).

- Annual registration would also mean that owners are more likely to notify when cats and dogs have died, to ensure that they do not pay an unnecessary registration fee. This would greatly improve the accuracy of deceased animal information on the CA Register, which would help to obtain a clearer picture of cat and dog populations.
- More accurate data would also support the recommended breeder licensing system (see recommendation 1) by allowing the better identification of cats and dogs bred by breeders that are subsequently surrendered to pounds and euthanased for behavioural/medical reasons.
- It is acknowledged that the CA Act requires owners to notify their local council of any changes to a cat or dog's relevant data (eg: change of address, change of owner, or if the animal has died). However, compliance is largely reliant on proactive enforcement by councils, which is not always possible in an environment of limited resources. As annual registration would provide a renewable revenue source for councils, this would encourage councils to pursue those owners who have not paid the registration fee.

2. Lifetime registration provides a limited incentive for owners to desex their cat or dog.

- The existing lifetime registration fee structure provides an incentive for owners to desex their cat or dog by way of a heavily discounted registration fee for desexed animals. However, the once-off nature of lifetime registration means that this incentive ceases to apply once the cat or dog is registered, as there is no financial advantage to be obtained by desexing an animal after it is registered.
- Annual registration would make it more attractive for owners to desex their cat or dog due to the cumulative cost of paying a significantly higher annual registration fee for an undesexed animal over its lifetime (also see recommendation 9).

3. The one-off payment of a lifetime registration fee does not reinforce that owning an animal is an ongoing commitment.

Requiring cat and dog owners to pay an annual registration fee reinforces the message that owning an animal is a life-long commitment. Highlighting this in mandatory point of sale information (see recommendation 6) may reduce impulse buying of pets by unsuitable owners, which may ultimately result in fewer animals being surrendered to pounds.

4. Lifetime registration limits the funding available to councils and the Government for cat and dog management purposes.

Annual registration would have the additional benefit of increasing income to councils for their cat and dog management activities. This would also increase the ability of the Government to fund cat and dog initiatives (including recommendations 13 to 20 of this report), which would be resourced largely from the CA Fund.

5. Lifetime registration is not required in other jurisdictions.

Introducing annual registration would bring NSW into line with all other Australian jurisdictions where the registration of cats and dogs is mandatory.

Discussion paper submission comments

The option of introducing annual registration was not canvassed in the discussion paper. However, it is acknowledged that submissions were overwhelmingly unsupportive of any suggestion to change existing registration fee levels. It is also recognised that the introduction of annual registration for cats and dogs would generally be unpopular. However, it is considered necessary that annual registration fees should be introduced for the reasons set out in the 'Rationale' section of this recommendation.

A number of submissions suggested alternative measures be introduced to increase cat and dog management related funding, including the introduction of: a surrender tax on breeders who leave cats and dogs at pounds; a State-wide levy on all revenue generating members of the pet industry; and a mandatory animal welfare related council rate.

While these suggestions are acknowledged, they are not supported as the Taskforce considers that the cat and dog registration system should continue to form the basis of the funding model for cat and dog management initiatives.

A summary of comments made in submissions relevant to this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 8a).

RECOMMENDATION 9

Cat and dog registration fees should be reviewed and set at such a level to provide an additional incentive for owners to desex their animals

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

The recommended introduction of mandatory annual registration for cats and dogs (see recommendation 8) would require registration fees to be reviewed across all categories (desexed, undesexed, breeder, pensioner). A key outcome of this review should be to ensure that the registration fee structure encourages greater desexing of cats and dogs.

This could be achieved by setting the undesexed cat and dog registration fee significantly higher than other categories. However, a pensioner concession fee for desexed animals should be maintained at a reasonable level.

The revised registration fee structure would work in tandem with the proposed discounted registration category to encourage the purchase of desexed animals from council pounds and shelters (see recommendation 12).

Rationale

- Desexing is widely regarded as a key mechanism available to control over-supply in cats and dogs as it prevents future unwanted litters.
- Since 2005, almost half of the new animals recorded on the CA Register have been desexed, which indicates that the scaled registration fees have been a successful mechanism to promote desexing.
- The existing undesexed animal lifetime registration fee of \$150 provides little incentive to animal owners to desex their animals, as the fee is usually substantially lower than veterinary fees for the desexing operation. However, the recommended introduction of mandatory annual registration, including a registration fee for undesexed animals set at significantly a higher rate than that for desexed animals, would make it more attractive for owners to desex their animal due to the cumulative cost impact over time.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly unresponsive of this option. This was in-line with general negative responses observed in relation to proposed changes to the registration fee structure. The high level of dissatisfaction expressed from animal owners on the raising of fees is acknowledged. However, it is considered necessary that the registration fee structure be strengthened to further promote desexing of cats and dogs.

The primary concern expressed in a large number of submissions was that any increase to registration fees may discourage compliance of certain owners with registration requirements, particularly those in low socio-economic areas. This concern is also acknowledged. However, under an annual registration system, owners would have an additional incentive to desex their animals, as they would be eligible for the lower 'desexed' registration fee every year after they have had their animal desexed.

The Taskforce also considers that the introduction of a grant funding scheme for councils and partner organisations to deliver targeted microchipping, registration and desexing programs (see recommendation 13) could significantly negate this risk, as such a scheme would prioritise the delivery of subsidised desexing in areas of need. It is also noted that councils are able to penalise the owners of unregistered animals under the CA Act.

A summary of comments made in submissions relevant to this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 8a).

RECOMMENDATION 10

The Companion Animals Regulation should be amended to require a cat to be registered from the time it is 4 months of age

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

Amending the CA Regulation to require cats to be registered from 4 months of age may significantly assist in reducing the number of unplanned litters of kittens and the development of unwanted behaviours in cats by increasing the number of cats desexed before they reach full sexual maturity.

Registration requirements for cats and dogs are prescribed under section 9 of the CA Act. However, section 9(2) allows the age from which a cat or dog is required to be registered to be changed by way of an update to the CA Regulation. This means that an Act amendment is not necessary to enable this recommendation.

It is acknowledged that, like the recommended introduction of mandatory annual registration for cats and dogs (see recommendation 8), this change would require that councils, registration agents, authorised identifiers and animal owners be educated about the differing registration requirements for cats and dogs. Targeted education for councils, registration agents and authorised identifiers would need to be prioritised by the Division. However, the education of owners could be incorporated into a whole of community socially responsible pet education program (see Recommendation 15).

Rationale

- The overwhelming majority (98%) of registered cats are desexed¹. While the registration fee schedule of the CA Regulation provides a financial incentive for owners to desex their cats, the 6 months of age registration requirement is often associated with a view that a cat or dog should not be desexed until it reaches 6 months of age. This means that many cats and dogs are not desexed until they reach that age.
- Unlike dogs, cats can become pregnant as young as 4 months of age and can even become pregnant with a second litter by 6 months of age. However, community awareness of this fact is low and, as a result, many well-meaning cat owners find themselves with unplanned litters of kittens².
- As the CA Act does not require cats to be confined, and because there are many semi-owned, undesexed cats in the community, female cats are at high risk of pregnancy.
- Unplanned litters of kittens feature highly in reasons for surrender or abandonment to pounds and shelters. As the majority of kittens are born between October and March/April there is often a sharp population peak at this time, leading to higher rates of euthanasia. However, it is not possible to quantify how many these kittens are abandoned or ‘given away’.
- By 6 months of age, undesexed male cats will usually have developed a number of behaviours associated with sexual maturity such as spraying, aggression and wandering. These behaviours may cause a cat to be surrendered to a pound or shelter.
- Early-age desexing in cats (from approximately 2 months of age) has been safely practised since the 1980s and is standard practice for animal welfare agencies. Studies have found that there are no significant health concerns associated with early-age desexing in kittens and that there are significant health and behavioural benefits³.
- Opportunities for unplanned pregnancies in dogs are limited as they are required to be confined to their property or under the control of a responsible person when outside of their property. Furthermore, there is less consensus in the companion animal industry about the potential health effects of desexing dogs before 6 months of age. Therefore it is proposed the 4 months of age registration requirement apply only to cats.

Discussion paper submission comments

The discussion paper did not propose a registration requirement for cats by 4 months of age. Instead, a registration rebate for owners who desex their animals within 3 months of registration was proposed (option 7), which was overwhelmingly supported in submissions.

However, the Taskforce accepts concerns expressed by a number of councils about the resource intensive nature of administering such a program. It is also considered that the cumulative cost impact of annual registration for undesexed cats and dogs (see recommendations 8 and 9) will provide an additional incentive for owners to desex their animals (see section 6 of this report ‘Discussion paper options not supported’, and Appendix 3 (option 7) for further information).

¹ Companion Animals Taskforce discussion paper (2012) – Appendix 1 – Companion Animals Register and Impounding Data -

<http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/documents/Information/Companion%20Animals%20Taskforce%20Discussion%20Paper%20May%202012.pdf>

² *Veterinarians role in private practice and shelter medicine* (2010) – UC-Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program <http://www.sheltermedicine.com/node/54>

³ *Report on the validity and usefulness of early age desexing in dogs and cats* – Rand and Hanlon (2008) <http://www.uq.edu.au/ccah/docs/15309finalreport.pdf>

RECOMMENDATION 11

The Companion Animals Regulation should be amended to allow cat and dog registration fees to be indexed to the Consumer Price Index

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

To ensure that registration fees continue to reflect fair value the CA Regulation should be amended to allow fees to be indexed to the Consumer Price Index.

Rationale

- A significant period has passed since registration fees were last raised (January 2006) and they are significantly lower than those in other jurisdictions.
- It is considered essential that registration fees continue to increase in-line with inflation, so as to ensure the ongoing viability of the CA Fund.
- It is also noted that this approach was recommended in the 2004 review of the CA Act⁴.

Discussion paper submission comments

While discussion paper submissions were largely unsupportive of this option, very few specific comments were made.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 8b).

RECOMMENDATION 12

A new discounted registration category ‘Desexed animal – purchased from a pound or shelter’ should be established to further encourage the purchase of desexed cats and dogs

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

To further encourage desexing, the CA Regulation should be amended to include a *Desexed animal - purchased from a pound or shelter* registration category. This should attract a discounted fee which is less than the standard desexed animal fee.

The discounted fee should be accessible for those owners who purchase a desexed cat or dog from a council pound, the AWL, RSPCA, CPS or from an animal rescue organisation which holds an exemption from registration under clause 16(d) of the CA Regulation.

The annual discounted fee should be applicable for the lifetime of such cats and dogs.

⁴ Companion Animals Act Review Report (2004), p31.

Rationale

- Desexing is widely regarded as a key mechanism available to control over-supply in cats and dogs as it prevents future unwanted litters.
- Registration fees reinforce the concept of socially responsible pet ownership and encourage desexing by way of a discounted fee for desexed cats and dogs.
- Clause 16(d) of the CA Regulation provides an incentive for animal rescue groups to rehome impounded cats and dogs as a means to reduce the number euthanased in pounds. However, there is a need to provide additional incentives for people to adopt impounded cats and dogs.
- It is important to encourage the desexing of impounded cats and dogs. However, mandatory desexing of impounded cats and dogs is not supported as some councils may find such a requirement difficult to resource.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of this option. A large number of submissions requested that desexed cats and dogs purchased from animal rescue groups also be eligible for the discounted registration fee. This is supported, in the case of such organisations that hold a clause 16(d) exemption, and has been incorporated into the above recommendation.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 9a).

RECOMMENDATION 13

A grant funding program should be established for councils and partner organisations to deliver targeted microchipping, registration and desexing programs

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO3. Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle

SO5. Improve public understanding of socially responsible pet ownership

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

A portion of the CA Fund should be used to provide grants to councils for the delivery of:

- targeted desexing programs in identified areas of need, in the general cat and dog population and in relation to in-pound desexing before release.
- targeted microchipping and registration programs (eg. free microchipping when paying to register a cat or dog, or in conjunction with subsidised desexing).

Councils should be required to comply with grant application guidelines developed by the Division, which should also manage the program. However, it is noted that additional resources will be required to manage this program, including following-up successful applicants to ensure that outcomes are being achieved. The guidelines should also set out specific reporting requirements to assist the Division in monitoring projects.

Partnership style arrangements should be encouraged, with preference being given to proposals focussing on:

- regional approaches.
- specific programs for remote and rural communities.
- partnerships with veterinarians, and animal welfare and rescue organisations.
- targeting socio-economically disadvantaged areas.

Animal welfare organisations should be advised of the proposed program and encouraged to contact local councils to develop and participate in joint projects. However, such organisations should not be eligible to apply directly for funding.

It is considered vital that the guidelines require that such programs also include a strong educative component to increase the likelihood that information about socially responsible pet ownership is reinforced to the owners of cats and dogs taking part in the programs.

Rationale

- Microchipping significantly increases the likelihood of a cat or dog being returned to its owner and registered animals are significantly more likely to be desexed than unregistered animals.
- Such programs allow councils and animal welfare and rescue organisation partners to identify and target high-need areas, and build important relationships with the local community and key stakeholders including veterinarians.
- The availability of adequate funding to support an effective ongoing program may be contingent on the introduction of annual registration and the indexing of registration fees to inflation (see recommendations 8 and 11).

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of this proposal. A large number of submissions suggested that similar programs run by the UK Dogs Trust be investigated as a model. The Taskforce suggests that this be noted, if the recommendation is supported.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 11).

RECOMMENDATION 14

Measures should be introduced to improve compliance with companion animal legislation data entry requirements

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO3. Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

The following initiatives should be considered to improve compliance with CA Register data entry requirements:

1. Updating the CA Register to:
 - a. streamline data entry processes, particularly through better use of the internet and emerging technologies (eg: smart-phones and tablets), and
 - b. introduce 'self-service' data entry options for cat and dog owners to update their contact details.
2. Encouraging breeder groups and animal welfare organisations listed in the CA Act to become 'registration agents', allowing them to process registration fees and change animal details. It is noted that AWL NSW is currently appointed as a registration agent for this purpose.
3. Establishing a fee for service model for such registration agents to encourage uptake of this role, whereby a small percentage of the registration fee for each cat and dog they process is remitted to them from the CA Fund. However, the majority of the registration fee should continue to be remitted from the CA Fund to the council where the animal resides.
4. Undertaking a campaign to increase compliance with the registration requirements of the CA Act, by targeting the owners of cats and dogs of registration age that are listed on the CA Register as 'microchipped only' (ie: not registered).

It is recognised that suggestion 1 may incur significant costs from the CA Fund and it is suggested that it should be prioritised accordingly. It may be appropriate for this to be undertaken as part of a broader review and update of the CA Register (see 'Matters for further consideration' in section 7 of this report).

Privacy issues would also need to be considered to ensure that access to the CA Register by external parties is limited and only for the purposes of the CA Act.

Rationale

- Data entry is resource intensive and opportunities exist to streamline arrangements.
- Increased compliance with data entry requirements would mean that cat and dog records on the CA Register are more likely to be up to date, increasing the chance that lost and stray animals are returned to their owners instead of transferred to a pound.
- More registered cats and dogs would increase funds to councils and the CA Fund and improve accuracy of data on the CA Register.
- Increased data entry by registration agents, veterinarians, authorised identifiers, breeders and cat and dog owners should reduce the administrative burden on councils.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of the proposal to encourage breeder groups and animal welfare organisations listed in the CA Act to become 'registration agents'. However, no clear support was expressed for the proposal to establish a fee for service model to encourage uptake by such registration agents.

The proposal to introduce owner self-service data entry for change of owner details was strongly supported in submissions. A number of submissions noted that such a system could operate in a similar way to the existing motor vehicle registration renewal system.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see options 10a, 10b and 10c).

RECOMMENDATION 15

A community-wide socially responsible pet ownership education campaign should be developed

Responsible Ministers

Minister for Local Government (lead) with Minister for Primary Industries.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO3. Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle

SO4. Improve standards for the breeding and sale of cats and dogs

SO5. Improve public understanding of socially responsible pet ownership

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

Existing research on community awareness programs and attitudes to cat and dog welfare should be reviewed with a view to devising a holistic, community-wide education program on socially responsible pet ownership.

The campaign should focus on issues including (but not limited to):

- the benefits of owning cats and dogs.
- choosing an appropriate cat or dog.
- general welfare and husbandry.
- the importance of identification and registration.
- appropriate confinement and housing (also see recommendations 17 and 21).
- the importance of exercise.
- training and socialising cats and dogs.
- the importance of early-age desexing and the availability of discounted desexing services.
- breeder education (also see recommendation 1).

The campaign should be named in such a way to improve recognition and be supported by advertising, including a comprehensive multi-media component. A register of veterinary practices where community languages are spoken should also be developed to support the campaign.

The campaign should run in tandem with the existing socially responsible pet ownership schools-based education program. This program provides important relevant messages to children aged 5 to 7 years but should also be expanded to cover preschool aged children (see recommendation 16).

Relevant agencies should be approached to assist in identifying strategies to refine the campaign for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This should include identifying community workers and ‘ambassadors’ in local communities and promotion through community language publications and radio.

It is recognised that such a campaign would be costly to implement. However, costs may be off-set by increased funds arising from the introduction of mandatory annual registration for cats and dogs (see recommendation 8). Consideration should also be given to seeking support from the private sector, including media organisations.

Rationale

- Comprehensive community education is considered essential to reducing the number of unwanted cats and dogs as it can improve understanding of the consequences of irresponsible pet ownership.
- Providing relevant messages to the community over the long-term may lead to:
 - a reduction in the number of people purchasing unsuitable cats and dogs, meaning they are less likely to be surrendered to council pounds.
 - increased microchipping, registration and desexing, thereby reducing the number of unwanted litters and increasing the number of pets returned to owners.
 - a deeper awareness of the importance of pets to people and increased respect for animals.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were almost unanimous in their support for this proposal. A large number of submissions indicated that the campaign should emphasise the importance of desexing and the full disclosure of expected costs of owning a cat or dog over its lifetime. This is supported.

A large number of submissions also suggested overhauling current education priorities in this area to change the emphasis from dangerous dogs to socially responsible pet ownership. However, the Taskforce notes that while a key focus of the existing school-based education program is on dog bite prevention, it also contains key messages relating to socially responsible pet ownership, including choosing an appropriate pet, the importance of identification and registration, confinement and housing, and exercise and training.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 12a).

RECOMMENDATION 16

The socially responsible pet ownership school-based education program should be expanded to include the preschool age group

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO5. Improve public understanding of socially responsible pet ownership

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

In conjunction with the community-wide socially responsible pet ownership campaign (see recommendation 15), school-based education programs should be expanded to cover preschool age children.

Rationale

- The existing socially responsible pet ownership schools-based education program contains important messages about dog bite prevention and responsible pet ownership. The program also provides material for children to take home to engage other members of the family in learning about these issues.
- Expanding such programs to preschool aged children would mean key socially responsible pet ownership messages are introduced to children and their families as early as possible and reinforced across their early school life.

Discussion paper comments

Discussion paper submissions were almost unanimous in their support for this proposal. A large number of submissions suggested that the program include statistics on the number of cats and dogs killed in pounds each year. While it is considered important to inform the public of the severity of cat and dog euthanasia, it is not considered appropriate to target this information at preschool and school aged children. However, consideration may be given to including such information in take home material provided to parents.

Other submissions suggested that the program target high school children. However, it is noted that the existing program is tailored for the understanding levels of younger children. Consideration may be given to providing incentives for companion animal industry groups to target relevant education programs to senior primary and high school students.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 12b).

RECOMMENDATION 17

Comprehensive education material about the importance of confining cats to their owner's property should be developed

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO5. Improve public understanding of socially responsible pet ownership

Description

Funding from the CA Fund should be allocated to the development of initiatives to encourage owners to confine cats to their property, such as:

- providing specific educational material to cat owners at point of purchase on the benefits of confining cats, particularly at night (also see recommendation 6). This issue could also be addressed in a whole of community socially responsible pet ownership education campaign (see recommendation 15).
- providing guidance for cat owners on the construction of cat shelters and runs.
- providing funding to councils to implement cat management programs as part of a grant funding program (see recommendation 13).

Rationale

- The confinement of cats, particularly at night, is considered to be central to responsible cat ownership as it can reduce the number of unwanted litters of kittens and the impact of cats on wildlife and social amenity.
- Mandatory confinement is considered to be an inappropriate regulatory response as it is difficult to enforce, particularly as councils already face competing demands for limited resources.
- There is a general lack of education material available to cat owners, to advise them on key cat management issues.
- Improved education material and resources for cat owners may:
 - reduce the number of unwanted cat litters, thereby reducing the number of impounded cats who are subsequently euthanased.
 - reduce the impact of cats on wildlife.
 - result in general improvements in feline health and social amenity.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of this proposal. Submission comments focussed on the need to address cat issues in the CA Act, including; semi-owned, un-owned and undesexed cats; strengthening wildlife protection zone provisions, and encouraging trap-neuter-return programs.

These suggestions are noted. The Taskforce has flagged the development of further cat management options as a matter for further consideration (see section 7 of this report).

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see options 19a and 19b).

RECOMMENDATION 18

Funding should be provided for research into key cat and dog issues

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO5. Improve public understanding of socially responsible pet ownership

Description

A portion of the CA Fund should be set aside annually for the purpose of funding a grant program for research on key cat and dog issues. Such funding should be open for applications, which would be assessed on merit against relevant guidelines.

Rationale

- Quality research around key cat and dog issues is often undertaken by interested people from within the community or by students and academics. However, there is potential for a wider scope of cat and dog issues to be identified and researched.
- Funding for research into cat and dog issues is limited and does not always address factors which may assist the development of good policy for industry, welfare agencies and Government.
- This would be a positive use of the CA Fund which would benefit the whole community and guide policy development.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of the proposal to set aside money for cat and dog related research. A large number of submissions emphasised that funded research should be focussed on practical solutions to the euthanasia of impounded cats and dogs, and pet over population issues. It is suggested that this be addressed in relevant criteria set out in the guidelines.

Other submissions suggested that a portion of such funding should instead be set aside to cover the veterinary bills of people who rescue injured wildlife. While this view is acknowledged, it is not supported in the face of other resourcing priorities.

Submissions were mixed on the question of whether research funding should be limited to key organisations or individuals.

Other submissions indicated that funding should not be made available to the RSPCA NSW, ACAC, PIAA, Dogs NSW or “other organisations with a vested interest in money making”. The Taskforce contests the veracity of this allegation in relation to the listed organisations. However, the suggestion of limiting funding to research which demonstrates a clear outcome on key cat and dog issues is supported and criteria should be articulated in relevant guidelines.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see options 15a and 15b).

RECOMMENDATION 19

Better practice guidelines should be issued to councils with a view to standardising impounding practices

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

Description

The Division should issue a better practice guideline to councils in an effort to standardise council impounding practices. Such guidelines should highlight key practices including (but not limited to):

- encouraging councils to enter into arrangements with animal welfare and rescue organisations for the purposes of re-homing impounded cats and dogs.
- focussing on regional approaches to impounding through partnerships with nearby councils and animal welfare organisations.
- implementing foster care programs, where appropriate.
- the humane euthanasia of cats and dogs.
- assessing the suitability of cats and dogs for re-homing.
- advertising cats and dogs available for rehoming (including online advertising).
- utilising appropriately qualified volunteers.
- the importance of regular training for staff and volunteers.
- ensuring that pounds are accessible to members of the public, especially through appropriate opening hours.

It will be important to ensure that such guidelines are consistent with the requirements of the forthcoming *Animal Welfare Code of Practices for Pounds and Shelters*.

Rationale

- Under the CA Act, councils are obliged to seek alternatives to euthanasia for impounded cats and dogs. However, as councils are independent statutory bodies, it is a matter for each council to determine its approach to impounding in consultation with local communities.
- It is also recognised that council cat and dog impounding and re-homing services are funded from a limited pool of resources and councils have varying abilities to fund their impounding facilities in light of other resourcing demands.
- The Division's Promoting Better Practice program may be able to identify good practice examples of council impounding services, which should be passed on to councils in a consolidated format.
- The production of such material would be consistent with similar guidance to councils issued by the Division on other issues (eg: council meeting practice).
- The introduction of standardised impounding practices may result in increased re-homing rates and better welfare outcomes for impounded cats and dogs, including a reduction in the number of cats and dogs euthanased in pounds.
- Practices such as entering into partnership arrangements with animal welfare organisations may free up council resources to be re-directed to services such as the collection of stray and injured cats and dogs, which can sometimes fall to veterinarians and animal welfare organisations.
- Encouraging regional approaches to impounding may also allow councils to take advantage of cost-efficiencies.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of the proposal to encourage greater collaboration between councils and animal welfare organisations on the delivery of impounding and re-homing services to reduce euthanasia rates. However, numerous submissions suggested that a number of conditions should be placed on councils with regard to the operating of their pounds, such as the mandatory adoption of 'Getting to Zero' or 'No-kill' policies by pounds.

The Taskforce acknowledges these suggestions but considers that better practice guidelines would be a more appropriate initiative. However, many of the suggestions made in submissions have been incorporated into the above recommendation.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 16).

RECOMMENDATION 20

The Companion Animals Register should be updated to provide a centralised impounded animal management tool for use by all relevant councils, State agencies and animal welfare organisations

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

Description

A centralised impounded animal management tool, available to all councils, relevant State agencies and animal welfare organisations should be developed. This would provide for consistent data collection across all agencies, meaning that all relevant data could be considered in the policy development process. Such a tool would also streamline work practices for some impounding facilities, particularly those reliant on paper-based record keeping systems.

Consideration should be given to expanding the CA Register's capability to include this tool and to integrate with third party data collection systems currently used by pounds (for example, for the processing of impounded cats and dogs and the collection of impounding data). However, it would be crucial that an integrated impounded animal management tool provides a generic interface for all front-end users to reduce duplication in work practices and to streamline training requirements.

Any such system would need to ensure that it avoids creating additional work for pound/shelter staff. It is also important that such a system be supported by relevant user education, including the development of a data dictionary to ensure users consistently apply the system.

Rationale

- The collection of detailed data on impounded cat and dogs by all councils and animal welfare organisations is essential to understanding the scope and reasons for unwanted cats and dogs, and for developing appropriate policy responses.
- A centralised impounding management tool would provide for consistency in data collection across all impounding agencies and allow for standardised data entry and analysis of impounding data. This could allow more targeted and effective policy responses to be developed to reduce impounding and euthanasia rates.
- The CA Register may be a suitable platform for this purpose as it has the structural capacity to incorporate additional modules (such as the existing dog attack reporting module). The CA Register may also be easier and less costly to adapt than the development of a new collection tool. However, if this option is pursued, it may be appropriate for such a tool to be developed as part of a broader review and update of the CA Register (see 'Matters for further consideration' in section 7 of this report).
- It is recognised that the existing provisions of the CA Act may restrict the development of the CA Register in this way, particularly with regard to access for non-council staff due to privacy legislation requirements. However, in recognition of the benefits of such a system, it is recommended that consideration be given to amending the legislation to allow use of the CA Register for this purpose.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of this proposal. Numerous submissions suggested that it be made compulsory for pounds to keep records of why they euthanase cats and dogs. However, it is noted that the Division's existing mandatory council pound data survey requires councils to identify the number of cats and dogs they euthanase each month, based on the following categories: restricted dogs; dangerous dogs; euthanased at owners request; euthanased (unsuitable for rehoming); euthanased (unable to rehome), and: euthanased due to illness/disease or injury.

This data is reported on a State-wide and regional basis as part of the Division's annual *Analysis of Council Data Collection System for Seizures of Cats and Dogs* report.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 17).

RECOMMENDATION 21

The Ministers should write to the Minister for Fair Trading to request that barriers to cat and dog ownership in relation to residential tenancy laws be reviewed

Responsible Ministers

Minister for Local Government and Minister for Primary Industries.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO5. Improve public understanding of socially responsible pet ownership

Description

The Ministers should write to the Minister for Fair Trading to request that the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010* and *Strata Schemes Management Act 1996* be reviewed to remove existing barriers to cat and dog ownership in rental and strata accommodation.

The review should include:

- prohibiting the ability of strata schemes to introduce by-laws to ban pets.
- introducing a pet bond system, similar to that operating in Western Australia, to provide a financial incentive to counter landlord concerns about pet-owning tenants.
- the Office for Fair Trading promoting any changes to existing requirements in a campaign which targets all relevant groups including landlords, tenants and real estate agents.
- engaging relevant industry bodies to develop and implement education, as part of a community-wide socially responsible pet ownership education campaign (see recommendation 15), which address issues such as:
 - assisting cat and dog owners living in units and rental accommodation to become better neighbours/tenants by ensuring they provide appropriate environmental enrichment and care for their cats and dogs.
 - the advantages of preparing a pet resume that shows their cat or dog will be a good tenant.
 - emphasising to landlords and real estate agents that by excluding cat and dog owners they are limiting the potential pool of good tenants.

Rationale

- Pet-unfriendly rental accommodation and strata-titled housing (whether owned or rented) contributes to the surrender of owned pets, and appears to be a significant factor inhibiting the adoption of cats and dogs from pounds and shelters.
- Removing cat and dog ownership barriers for renters could increase overall demand for animals and reduce the number of animals surrendered to pounds where they were previously unable to be kept by their owners.
- A pet bond scheme may allay some landlord concerns about cat and dog owning tenants.
- It is acknowledged that there may be ongoing resistance from strata/owner bodies to adopt such schemes. However, appropriate education may assist.
- Other factors will also need to be considered, including:
 - ensuring the cost of pet bonds does not act as a barrier for cat and dog owners.
 - the cost and/or administrative burden of pursuing damages from tenants where they are over and above the bond amount may be prohibitive, and thus some landlords may support the continuation of a ‘no pets’ policy.
 - the management of noise from pets being kept in units.
- The relevant legislation falls within portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Fair Trading.

Discussion paper submission comments

Discussion paper submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of these proposals. The Taskforce has attempted to address the specific concerns raised in a small number of submissions in the ‘Rationale’ section of this recommendation.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see options 18a, 18b and 18c).

RECOMMENDATION 22

An ongoing reference group on cat and dog management issues should be established

Responsible Minister

Minister for Local Government.

Relevant strategic objectives

SO1. Reduce the number of surrendered or abandoned cats and dogs

SO2. Reduce the number of cats and dogs that are unnecessarily euthanased

SO3. Improve the ability to trace ownership of cats and dogs throughout their lifecycle

SO5. Improve public understanding of socially responsible pet ownership

SO6. Increase compliance with microchipping and registration regulations

Description

An ongoing reference group on cat and dog management issues should be established to aid future policy and legislative development and review. However, it would be important to ensure that the group does not duplicate the work of AWAC, which advises the Minister for Primary Industries on animal welfare issues.

The terms of reference of the group could include providing advice and information on the implementation of relevant recommendations arising from the Taskforce process, the ongoing monitoring of cat and dog legislation, and advocacy on cat and dog management issues which fall under federal legislation (eg: transport of pets on aircraft).

As well as relevant government agencies, such a group should include representation from across all sectors of the companion animal industry. While it is recognised that the group's membership may need to be limited to ensure its effectiveness, it should be able to call on relevant experts as necessary.

Rationale

- The welfare of cats and dogs, their relationship to human wellbeing and social amenity relate to a number of Ministerial portfolios, including Planning and Infrastructure, Primary Industries, Local Government, Fair Trading, Housing, Health, Transport and Police.
- Such a group would provide the industry with the opportunity for an ongoing dialogue with Government about cat and dog management and welfare issues. It would also inform a whole-of-government approach to cat and dog issues.

Discussion paper submission comments

Submissions were overwhelmingly supportive of this proposal. However, a large number of submissions expressed the view that animal rescue group representatives should be included on such a group. Other submissions criticised the Companion Animals Taskforce as not representative of the range of views in the industries.

It is suggested that the Minister for Local Government take these comments into consideration in determining the make up of such a group, if this recommendation is supported.

A summary of comments made in submissions regarding this recommendation can be found in Appendix 3 (see option 20).

6. DISCUSSION PAPER OPTIONS NOT SUPPORTED

This section explains why certain options raised in the discussion paper were ultimately not supported by the Taskforce. A summary of comments made in submissions regarding individual options referred to below can be found in Appendix 3.

Option 3 – Issue guidance on planning legislation requirements relating to the approval of commercial breeder, boarding and shelter premises

Further consultation has been undertaken with the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DP&I) regarding concerns raised in section 2.1.2 of the Taskforce discussion paper about a NSW Land and Environment Court judgement which implied that, under certain circumstances, particular animal housing developments may not need council development approval.

DP&I advises that the State-wide 'Standard Instrument' used by councils in the drafting of new local environment plans (LEPs) includes the following definition of an **animal boarding or training establishment**:

a building or place used for the breeding, boarding, training, keeping or caring of animals for commercial purposes (other than for the agistment of horses), and includes any associated riding school or ancillary veterinary hospital.

DP&I also advises that animal shelters of a certain size and standard in certain zones are considered 'exempt development' under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008 (Division 1, Subdivision 3A), meaning that such premises are not required to obtain development approval from councils.

Many councils provide specific guidelines on the keeping of domestic animals through their Development Control Plans or other local policies. DP&I advises that councils with Standard Instrument LEPs in place have not raised any issues about the definition to date.

DP&I considers that this sufficiently clarifies the applicability of development control processes to breeding establishments. The Taskforce is satisfied that this adequately addresses the concerns raised in the discussion paper.

However, the Taskforce recognises that the ability of councils to regulate commercial breeding, boarding and shelter premises through the development approval process, in accordance with their powers under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* is a crucial component in the overall regulation of such businesses. Therefore, it is considered essential that proof of compliance with council development control requirements for a breeder's premises (unless the premise is 'exempt development') should be a breeder licence condition (see recommendation 1).

Option 6 - Remove existing two-step registration process to require microchipping and registration of cats and dogs by 3 months of age

The purpose of this option was to work in conjunction with option 7 (see below) to provide an additional incentive for owners to desex their cats and dogs, and by extension prevent unwanted litters through early-age desexing. The Taskforce did not support this option as the cumulative cost of annual registration for undesexed cats and dogs is considered to provide a more effective incentive for owners to desex their animals (see recommendations 8, 9 and 11).

Concerns raised in some submissions that this option may confuse members of the public who have recently begun to understand the two-step registration process are also acknowledged. However, any confusion arising from the recommended lowering of the mandatory registration age for cats to 4 months of age (see recommendation 10) could be effectively addressed by community education (see recommendation 15).

Option 7 – Provide a registration fee rebate for owners who desex their animals within 3 months of registration

While this option was overwhelmingly supported in submissions, the Taskforce did not support this option primarily for the reasons outlined under option 6 (above). However, concerns expressed by a number of councils about the potentially significant administrative burden such a system may impose on councils, especially with regard to financial receipting, are also acknowledged.

A large number of submissions suggested alternatives to this proposal; primarily that mandatory desexing should be introduced for all impounded cats and dogs. While the Taskforce acknowledges the intent of this suggestion, it is not considered practical as councils face varying resourcing demands and therefore may not be able to meet this requirement.

Calls made in submissions for the introduction of general mandatory desexing are also not supported. As noted in section 4.1.3 of the discussion paper, there is debate on the effectiveness of mandatory desexing as a regulatory tool. Targeted desexing programs and other recommendations raised in this report are considered to be a more effective way to increase desexing rates.

Other common suggestions included introducing high-volume, low-cost desexing programs similar to those run in the USA and NZ, and providing more funding for subsidised desexing. These issues are considered to be adequately addressed by the recommendation to establish a grant funding program councils to deliver targeted microchipping, registration and desexing programs (see recommendation 13).

Option 9b – Introduce a ‘Desexed animal – post-purchase consultation by owner’ discounted lifetime registration category to encourage desexing

Discussion paper submissions strongly supported this option. However, the Taskforce did not support this option as its delivery would be resource intensive and it may be difficult for councils to be satisfied that owners claiming they have attended such a consultation have genuinely done so.

It is also considered that the publication of an information sheet on the advertising and sale of cats and dogs (see recommendation 5) and the mandatory standardised information for distribution at point of sale (see recommendation 6) would adequately address this issue within available resources.

Option 13b – Introduce post-purchase consultations as a means to reinforce mandatory socially responsible pet ownership information provided at point of sale

While there was a large amount of support expressed for this option in submissions, a number of submissions also expressed concern that this may be difficult to enforce due to the high numbers of animals sold.

The Taskforce considers that it would be more effective for the recommended information sheet on animal advertising and sale (see recommendation 5) to suggest that pet shops encourage post-purchase consultation as a means to reinforce socially responsible pet ownership message, where practical. The recommended mandatory standardised information for distribution at point of sale (see recommendation 6) should also contain information about where such services can be obtained.

Option 19a – Amend the CA Act to provide councils with the option to impose local orders on cat owners to confine their cats, where this approach is considered appropriate and enforceable

It is recognised that such an initiative may provide councils with the option to implement cat management strategies where communities identify roaming cats as a problem. However, the Taskforce noted views expressed in a number of submissions and by numerous councils that such orders would be difficult to enforce.

The Taskforce was also concerned that implementing such an initiative would result in inconsistent laws for cats across council areas, potentially leading to community confusion on local requirements. However, the Taskforce has flagged the development of further cat management options as a matter for ongoing consideration in section 7 of this report.

7. MATTERS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

The Taskforce identified the following issues as requiring further consideration.

a. Allowing cats and dogs to be kept in retirement villages and nursing homes

Support for this issue was raised in numerous submissions. At present there are a variety of barriers to the keeping of cats and dogs in retirement villages and nursing homes, including the presence of local by-laws prohibiting pets. This may mean that people moving into such accommodation are required to relinquish ownership of their pets. As well as the obvious distress this may cause, it can also lead to increases in the number of cats and dogs that are impounded.

It is acknowledged that allowing cats and dogs in such establishments may have particular benefits for some residents, particularly with regard to general and mental health. However, concerns about equity of access to cats and dogs for residents, and relevant health and safety regulations would also need to be taken into consideration.

It is suggested that this issue be given further consideration by the recommended ongoing companion animal management reference group (see recommendation 22).

b. Release of the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Pounds and Shelters*

A number of submissions recommended that the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Pounds and Shelters* be finalised to assist in clarifying requirements for such establishments.

It is also noted that the introduction of annual registration for cats and dogs (see recommendation 8) may assist councils in meeting the standards of the new Code, as there is scope for councils to apply cat and dog registration revenue for this purpose.

It is suggested that the Minister for Primary Industries consider prioritising the release of the Code. However, as recommendations in this report impact on the Code (see recommendations 3, 6 and 7), it is suggested that the Minister also refers the draft Code to AWAC for urgent review prior to release.

c. Developing further options for the management of cats

A variety of opinions were expressed in discussion paper submissions with regard to cat management options. The Taskforce considers that lowering the mandatory registration age for cats to 4 months of age (see recommendation 10) will encourage early desexing of cats, and providing education material to cat owners on the importance of cat confinement (see recommendation 17) will assist in preventing unwanted litters of kittens.

It is acknowledged that there remains scope to address cat management issues, particularly with regard to limiting the impact of cats on wildlife. However, it is recognised that any substantial changes to existing cat management regulations would require a significant update of the CA Act and CA Regulation.

It is suggested that the recommended ongoing cat and dog management reference group (see recommendation 22) give further consideration to this issue, including undertaking consultation with relevant stakeholders including councils, wild-life protection groups and animal welfare and rescue groups.

d. Comprehensive review and update of the CA Register

Since its introduction in 1999, the CA Register has grown from being purely a database of microchipped and registered cats and dogs (in-line with the requirements of the CA Act), to a more comprehensive cat and dog management and enforcement tool for authorised users. Examples of recent modifications which have significantly enhanced the functionality of the CA Register include providing access to veterinarians and other approved persons to search the microchip details of lost cats and dogs, and the dog attack incident reporting and pound data reporting modules for councils.

This report makes a number of recommendations which include updates to the CA Register (see recommendations 1, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 20). However, the Taskforce also suggests that it may be appropriate for a more wide-ranging review and update of the functionality and structure of the CA Register to be undertaken to ensure it remains effective into the future.

The Taskforce highlights that the CA Register is built around an aging software platform. To ensure that it can integrate with current and emerging technology used by councils for cat and dog management and enforcement purposes, the CA Register may need to be updated. This technology includes devices such as smart phones, tablets and other mobile computing technology. It will also be important to ensure that the CA Register interface is current and supports authorised user needs, particularly as they grow increasingly accustomed to more dynamic software applications in their work and personal lives.

It is suggested that the Minister for Local Government consider prioritising a comprehensive review and update of the CA Register. This process should be led by the Division and be undertaken in consultation with the relevant stakeholders including councils, veterinarians, authorised identifiers and registration agents.

8. DANGEROUS DOG MANAGEMENT

The Taskforce has identified the issue of dangerous dog management as one requiring further consideration. However, due to the complexity of this issue, the Taskforce has determined that it will deal with this as a separate issue. The Taskforce has commenced deliberations on this issue and advice is expected to be provided to the Minister for Local Government by the end of 2012.

**NSW COMPANION ANIMALS TASKFORCE
DISCUSSION PAPER**

May 2012

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DEFINITIONS

<i>CA Act</i>	means the NSW <i>Companion Animals Act 1998</i>
<i>CA Fund</i>	means the Companion Animals Fund, comprising lifetime registration fees collected by councils and registration agents
<i>CA Register</i>	means the NSW Companion Animals Register
<i>CA Regulation</i>	means the NSW Companion Animals Regulation 2008
<i>Chief Executive</i>	means the Chief Executive of the Division of Local Government, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
<i>Desex</i>	means to render an animal permanently incapable of reproduction, usually by way of removing reproductive organs (often also referred to as “spay” or “neuter”)
<i>Division</i>	means the Division of Local Government, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
<i>DPI</i>	means NSW Department of Primary Industries
<i>LG Act</i>	means the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
<i>POCTAA</i>	means the <i>Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979</i>

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this discussion paper is to seek an indication of the level of support from companion animal managers, animal professionals, animal welfare groups, the pet industry and the wider community for a range of proposed measures which aim to:

- reduce the current rate of euthanasia for cats and dogs,
- refine the current regulatory framework around the breeding, sale and management of cats and dogs to improve welfare outcomes, and
- promote socially responsible pet ownership through community education.

COMPANION ANIMALS TASKFORCE

The Companion Animals Taskforce was established by the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Primary Industries to provide advice on key companion animal issues and in particular strategies to reduce the current rate of companion animal euthanasia.

Specifically, the Ministers asked the Taskforce to inquire into:

- Euthanasia rates and re-homing options for surrendered or abandoned companion animals.
- The breeding of companion animals including the practices of “puppy farms”.
- The sale of companion animals.
- The microchipping and desexing of companion animals.
- Current education programs on “responsible pet ownership”.
- Any other high priority companion animal issues that become apparent to the Taskforce.

The Taskforce is chaired by the Member for Charlestown, Mr Andrew Cornwell MP, and consists of representatives of the following organisations, invited by the Ministers to participate:

- Animal Welfare League NSW (AWL NSW),
- Australian Companion Animal Council (ACAC),
- Australian Institute of Local Government Rangers (AILGR),
- Australian Veterinary Association (AVA),
- Cat Protection Society of NSW (CPS),
- Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW (LGSA),
- Dogs NSW,
- Pet Industry Association Australia (PIAA), and
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals NSW (RSPCA).

Representatives of the Division and DPI also participate on the Taskforce.

DISCUSSION PAPER AND REPORT TO GOVERNMENT

The Taskforce has prepared this discussion paper to provide interested stakeholders, including industry and members of the wider community with an opportunity to have input into the development of strategies to address the issues it has considered.

This discussion paper canvasses a range of priority issues identified by the Taskforce, presents key findings, and sets out a series of options to address them. Finally, the paper poses questions about each issue designed to promote discussion and feedback.

After taking into account feedback on this discussion paper, the Taskforce will prepare a report providing recommendations for the consideration of the Ministers.

PROCESS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Notices advising of the release of this discussion paper and the opportunity to comment will be published in the NSW Government Gazette, in metropolitan newspapers and on the DPI and DLG websites.

Copies of the discussion paper are available for download from the DLG website at: www.dlg.nsw.gov.au.

Submissions on the discussion paper will be accepted for a period of 8 weeks. The closing date for submissions is 1 July 2012.

Submissions can be made on the [online feedback form](#).

Alternatively, a copy of the completed feedback form [attached](#) to this discussion paper may be emailed to:

cataskforce@dlg.nsw.gov.au

or mailed to:

Companion Animals Taskforce Discussion Paper
Division of Local Government,
Department of Premier and Cabinet
Locked Bag 3015
NOWRA NSW 2541

All submissions may be made publicly available. If you do not want your personal details or any part of the submission released, please indicate this clearly in your submission together with reasons. However, you should be aware that even if you state that you do not wish certain information to be published, there may be circumstances in which the Government is required by law to release that information (for example, in accordance with the requirements of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*).

The Taskforce will review the submissions and the Chair will advise the Ministers of issues raised in submissions and how these have informed the Taskforce's final report.

1. CONTEXT

Australia has one of the highest rates of pet ownership in the western world, with 36% and 23% of households owning a dog or cat respectively (ACAC 2010, p13). NSW has the largest number of pets of all Australian States, with estimates indicating over 1.12 million pet dogs and over 765,000 pet cats (ACAC 2010, p14).

The community expects that animals will be treated humanely and that Government will take action to ensure that animals are managed appropriately and that suitable standards of care and behaviour are prescribed and enforced.

The ongoing work of the staff and volunteers of pounds, shelters, and rescue groups across NSW is also acknowledged as crucial to improving outcomes for cats and dogs.

1.1 LEGISLATION AFFECTING CATS AND DOGS IN NSW

Companion Animals Act 1998

The CA Act provides the framework for the identification and registration of cats and dogs and for the responsibilities of their owners and regulatory duties of councils.

The CA Act also attempts to achieve a balance between the welfare of companion animals and the safety and welfare of the community. However, animal welfare issues are more broadly addressed by the POCTAA (see below).

The CA Act sets out a two step registration process for cats and dogs:

1. permanent identification (or microchipping) from 12 weeks of age, at point of sale or change of ownership (whichever occurs first), and
2. lifetime registration from 6 months of age.

Cat and dog owners are responsible for ensuring that their pets are microchipped and lifetime registered, and councils can issue penalty notices to owners who fail to meet these obligations. This provides an additional incentive for animal owners to comply with the legislation.

More information about the CA Act is available from the Division's website: www.dlg.nsw.gov.au.

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals legislation was first introduced in NSW in 1901. The current Act is supported by regulations and has within it the capacity to recognise enforceable Codes of Practice, which apply to trades and businesses which keep or use animals. The legislation is enforced by RSPCA NSW, AWL NSW and all NSW Police officers.

Currently, Codes of Practice apply to animal trades such as pet shops, dog and cat breeders, and council pounds.

The Codes applying to pet shops and dog and cat breeders were recently updated (in 2008 and 2009). The Code applying to council pounds (and therefore animal shelters) is currently over 13 years old and has been identified as requiring review to ensure that it remains current to the expectations of our communities around animal welfare.

More information about POCTAA is available on the DPI website www.dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Legislation in other jurisdictions

In recent times, the management and welfare of cats and dogs has attracted the attention of the community throughout Australia. Most jurisdictions have recently updated their cat and dog management and welfare legislation or are in the process of doing so.

Tables providing a comparison of relevant current cat and dog related legislation in all Australian jurisdictions are included in Appendix 2 of this paper.

1.2 ESTABLISHING THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

The Taskforce has examined data concerning cat and dog populations in NSW from the Division, the RSPCA, AWL NSW and CPS (see Appendix 1 for further information about the data analysed by the Taskforce).

This data shows that the number of cats and dogs entering impounding facilities in NSW is very high. On average, over 48,600 cats and 68,800 dogs have been impounded annually in NSW since 2008/09.

Council impounding data highlights some particular areas of concern, including a substantial increase in the number of cats abandoned (by almost 25%) between 2008/09 and 2010/11. In 2010/11, 12,375 cats were abandoned at NSW council pounds, which accounted for 47% of all cats arriving at council pounds in that year.

By contrast, the number of dogs abandoned at council pounds increased by 6% between 2008/09 and 2010/11. In 2010/11, 12,385 dogs were abandoned at council pounds, which accounted for 26% of all dogs arriving at council pounds in that year.

Data relating to outcomes for animals impounded in council pounds and facilities offered by key animal welfare organisations (ie: RSPCA, AWL and CPS) are of similar concern. The data shows that in 2010/11, approximately 64% of all cats and 33% of all dogs in pounds and animal welfare facilities were euthanased. This amounted to over 30,300 cats and 21,600 dogs.

Negative outcomes are clearly much more pronounced for cats than for dogs. Only 2% of cats entering pounds and animal welfare facilities in 2010/11 were returned to their owners, while 33% were either sold or transferred to an animal welfare or rescue organisation for rehoming. By contrast, 41% of dogs entering pounds and animal welfare facilities in 2010/11 were returned to their owners, while 33% were either sold or transferred for rehoming.

The major contributing factor to this situation is that many more cats than dogs are considered “unowned”. Also contributing are semi-owned cats, being those that are fed by people and survive, but are not owned by a responsible pet owner.

However, this does not necessarily mean that all impounded cats are semi-owned or feral. The failure of some owners to microchip their cat also contributes as it means that some owned cats are unable to be returned to their owners if they become lost (Verrinder, 2005).

Another factor contributing to “the cat problem” is their very large reproductive capacity which accounts for the large numbers of unwanted healthy kittens admitted to shelters, many of which are euthanased as surplus to demand (Webb, 2008).

Similar issues appear to be prevalent in other Australian jurisdictions. For example, the findings of the NSW data correlate with those contained in an extensive report on companion animal management undertaken for the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Queensland (Marston, Bennett, Rohlf and Mornement, 2008).

2. REGULATION OF BREEDERS

2.1 BACKGROUND

It is recognised that many responsible breeders operate within NSW. However, there are concerns that some unethical breeders contribute to the stock of unwanted companion animals in a variety of ways, including: over breeding; failure to comply with registration requirements, resulting in more 'lost' animals; and failure to desex animals not intended for breeding.

Collecting data about where animals are sourced from would assist in the identification of problem areas and the targeting of strategies such as education.

2.1.1 "Puppy farms"

"Puppy farms", "puppy mills" and "puppy factories" are all terms used to describe the situation where a number of dogs are kept in sub-standard conditions and bred repeatedly to their detriment with inappropriate or inadequate provision of food, water, shelter and veterinary treatment. RSPCA Australia has published a definition of a puppy farm as "an intensive dog breeding facility that is operated under inadequate conditions that fail to meet the dogs' behavioural, social and/or physiological needs" (RSPCA 2010, p1).

The extent of "puppy farming" in NSW is difficult to determine and enforcement action relies on complaints from the community. Regulatory mechanisms are in place and enforcement agencies (see section 2.1.4) have successfully prosecuted a number of breeders for animal welfare offences. These agencies also report that the number of cases which come to their attention is limited.

It is also acknowledged that some animal welfare agencies and industry bodies support the introduction of breeder licensing as a means to further strengthen the regulation of companion animal breeding practices.

2.1.2 Legislation

The primary legislative mechanism regulating breeders in NSW is the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice - Breeding Dogs and Cats*, which is recognised under POCTAA. The standards and guidelines contained within the document are enforceable and are intended to ensure that the welfare of animals in the care of people breeding for profit or reward is maintained at an appropriate level.

The CA Act and CA Regulation use the term 'recognised breeder' to identify people who attract a discounted registration fee only. At present, the CA Regulation defines a recognised breeder as a person who is a member of Dogs NSW, NSW Cat Fanciers Association, Waratah State Cat Alliance, or any other body approved by the Chief Executive of the Division.

Breeders selling animals must comply with the relevant provisions of the *Fair Trading Act 1987* and Fair Trading Regulation 2007, which relate to general consumer guarantees.

Breeding, boarding or shelter constructions across the State must also comply with the zoning and development conditions set out in the relevant Local Environment Plans (LEPs) made by local councils in accordance with their powers under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. However, a recent NSW Land and Environment Court judgement determined that a development application for an animal shelter fell outside the definitions in the LEP and the development consent approved by council was void. Therefore, under certain circumstances, development for particular animal housing developments may not need council approval.

Councils also have powers under the LG Act which may be applied to breeders. For example, under section 124 of the LG Act a council may issue an order to the occupier of a property restricting the number of animals that can be kept there. This aims to prevent animal hoarding, which is recognised as a contributor to unwanted cats and dogs, arising from many undesexed animals living together in close proximity.

2.1.3 Enforcement agencies

The primary enforcement agencies of POCTAA and the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice - Breeding Dogs and Cats* are the RSPCA NSW and the AWL NSW. These agencies respond to complaints received concerning breeders and puppy farms and apply the Breeding Code of Practice, where necessary, to ensure that all dog and cat breeders in NSW are compliant with the minimum standards of care and welfare which the NSW Government has set out. This system has been responsible for a number of successful prosecutions of breeders found in breach of the requirements.

Both organisations conduct public awareness campaigns about the appropriate way to source pets, and what to look for when trying to find a good breeder. They also participate in industry and government discussions aimed at determining if there is anything else which may be done to reduce the amount of animals kept in production systems which may meet their 'puppy farm' definition.

2.1.4 Education

Industry groups

The AVA leads a discussion group, the Companion Animal Working Group (CAWG) which is attempting to reach consensus among industry bodies on gaps in knowledge and appropriate steps for both industry and the Government to alleviate public concern regarding puppy farms.

CAWG is gathering information about issues such as the appropriateness of desexing animals of a young age, regulating internet and classified sales, and the work of other jurisdictions in this area. Indications are that the industry is currently supportive of the regulations provided in the Breeding Code of Practice and would like to see the standards applied across Australia.

CAWG has also made some preliminary suggestions for improvements to the CA Register to improve data collection and 'traceability' of breeders.

Government

The mandatory microchipping and lifetime registration of cats and dogs is established by the CA Act, which encourages the desexing of animals by way of a discounted lifetime registration fee for animals which are desexed.

In 2011, the Division released Recognised Breeder Body Guidelines. Members of a recognised breeder body are entitled to pay a discounted lifetime registration fee for an animal that is not desexed and is kept for breeding purposes. These guidelines introduce a higher level of accountability for breeders than has previously existed. They are also expected to reduce the misuse of the discounted desexed animal lifetime registration fee by excluding breeders who do not meet required standards.

The Division also continues to liaise with relevant Government agencies and industry stakeholders, including DPI, the RSPCA and the AWL NSW to progress initiatives to address unwanted cats and dogs, and to identify trends in the number and types of animals entering and leaving council pounds.

2.1.5 Other jurisdictions

Queensland

Recently, a trial of breeder licensing was conducted by Gold Coast City Council. Following this, the Queensland Government sought public input to help develop legislation to bring an end to the negative breeding and animal welfare practices associated with puppy farms through a draft Regulatory Assessment Statement on Regulation of Dog Breeders. The focus of this legislation was to regulate large scale breeding establishments and improve the welfare of breeding animals in Queensland.

It is expected that this regulatory agenda will be resolved later in 2012.

Victoria

In Victoria, breeding enterprises (with the exception of members of recognised breeding organisations) are required to register under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* as a domestic animal business with local government councils. They must also abide by the management standards of the mandatory Code of Practice for Breeding and Rearing Establishments (the Code).

The welfare of dogs in such enterprises is protected by the provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (Victoria). Such enterprises must microchip their dogs before selling or giving them away and the legislation requires the details to be recorded on a Victorian licensed animal (microchip) registry to allow tracing. RSPCA Victoria inspectors have powers to stamp out illegal or poorly managed puppy farms by enforcing the Code.

Legislation was introduced in Victoria in January 2012, which includes: increased penalties for operating illegal puppy farms, empowerment of council inspectors to deal with breeders, a requirement to include microchip or business registration numbers in advertisements, breeder registrations, seizure of profits and assets, and the capacity to implement pet ownership bans on certain offenders.

The Victorian Department of Primary Industries is also reviewing the *Breeding (Cats and Dogs) Code of Practice*. It is anticipated that a revised Code of Practice will be implemented in late 2012, following a public consultation period.

2.2 KEY FINDINGS AND OPTIONS

Option 1 Introduce a breeder licensing system

Key findings

- *There are effective regulatory mechanisms in NSW to prosecute unethical breeders, including “puppy farmers”. However, enforcement relies on complaints from the community.*
- *Some animal welfare agencies and industry bodies have indicated their support for the introduction of breeder licensing as a means to further strengthen the regulation of companion animal breeding practices and there is a move towards such licensing in other jurisdictions.*

A breeder licensing system could be developed to improve consistency in the regulation of cat and dog breeders by providing a “welfare tick of approval” with the aim of ensuring that breeders are ethical sellers. Licence requirements could be based on the enforceable standards of the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats*. However, this system could be complemented by updating the existing guidelines contained within the Code of Practice to enforceable standards (see Option 2).

Such a system would need to be appropriately resourced to ensure consistent application and enforcement across the State. Costs associated with managing such a system (eg: application/renewal processing and premises inspection costs) could be funded by applying annual breeder licence fees. Fees could be applied on a sliding scale, depending on the size of a breeder’s operation and paid to a centralised fund for distribution to enforcement authorities.

A breeder licensing system could also include a strong emphasis on breeder education, which could link to a community-wide socially responsible pet education program (see option 12).

Benefits

- Strict conditions of approval will discourage less reputable/sustainable breeders and would help to distinguish breeders who are able to provide the required level of care for their breeding animals.
- Compulsory microchipping requirements will allow the ownership of animals to be tracked on the CA Register throughout their lifecycle.
- Would bring NSW into line with Queensland and Victoria and assist in achieving standardised breeder regulations across Australia.

Potential issues

- Would require legislation.
- Cost of regulation – may be resource intensive.
- Opposition of breeders to permit and renewal fees.
- Inability of some breeders to meet conditions of approval may result in claims of decreased competition.
- An appropriate body would need to be identified to manage and regulate the system.
- Consideration could be given to an exemption for recognised breeding organisations, as contained in Victorian legislation.

Option 2 Revise the Breeding Code of Practice to make existing guidelines enforceable standards

Key findings

- *Enforceable standards of the Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats apply to all people who breed cats and dogs for profit.*
- *The standards apply equally to people who may be breeding one animal, or people who are breeding hundreds of animals.*
- *The Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats indicates a number of industry ‘best practices’ as guidelines within the document.*

The *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats* could be revised so that the guidelines contained within the document apply to breeders as enforceable standards. These standards could also be enforceable as part of a breeder licensing system (see Option 1) and would be critical in determining the scope of such a licensing system.

Benefits

- A higher standard of care would exist for breeders and the animals in their care.
- Compliance could be regulated under a breeder licensing system (see Option 1).
- Updating the current guideline that strongly encourages desexing animals not intended for breeding to a standard could reduce unwanted litters.

Potential issues

- A number of the guidelines (existing) are not enforceable, or may not be able to be worded in such a way that they become measurable standards.
- Higher costs associated with regulation of the Code.

Option 3 Clarify planning legislation requirements relating to the approval of commercial breeder, boarding and shelter premises

Key finding

No consistent planning guidelines apply to breeding, boarding or shelter constructions across the State, meaning that there is varying application of the planning development processes and compliance with standards.

Guidance could be issued to councils clarifying the development approval requirements for commercial breeding, boarding and shelter premises.

Benefits

- Greater consistency between the Animal Welfare Codes of Practice and planning legislation will ensue.
- Councils will have greater capacity to participate in the development process for breeding, boarding and shelter premises within their area of responsibility.

Potential issues

- Potential increase to the costs associated with setting up or re-developing an established breeding premises.
- Potential inability of some breeders to meet conditions of approval.

3. ADVERTISING AND SALE OF CATS AND DOGS

3.1 BACKGROUND

Industry sources estimate that almost 450,000 dogs and 165,000 cats are sold in Australia each year (ACAC, 2010, p48). It is argued that ensuring cats and dogs are microchipped before sale will create an effective way of understanding the life cycle and pathway of cats and dogs which arrive in pounds and shelters. It is also argued that fewer animals may be euthanased if all cats and dogs arriving in a pound or shelter were microchipped.

3.1.1 Sale of pets in pet shops

Campaigners against pet retail stores argue that pet shops: profit from the impulse purchase of pets; are outlets for puppy farms and; contribute to the problem of unwanted pets and euthanasia of pets in shelters. A number of campaigns, including parliamentary bills, have been conducted seeking bans on the sale of cats and dogs from pet shops.

It is estimated that pet shops account for less than 15 per cent of total sales (PIAA Policy research paper 2011, p2). It would therefore appear that the majority of pet sale transactions in NSW each year occur outside of pet shops, with 85% of all sales occurring through word of mouth, newspapers, council pounds, animal welfare and rescue organisations and, increasingly, over the internet.

3.1.2 Legislation

Companion Animals legislation

The CA Act provides that “a companion animal must not be sold unless it has been identified as required by legislation (even if it is less than 12 weeks old when it is sold)”. This provision includes animals given as gifts.

There is currently an exemption to this requirement for animals kept at a pet shop, market or fair for the purposes of sale. However, such animals must be microchipped (and registered, if over 6 months of age) when they are transferred to a new owner.

The CA Act also places prohibitions around the advertisement, sale, acquisition and breeding of dogs on the restricted dog list. Restricted dogs are Pitbull Terriers, American Pitbull Terriers, Japanese tosas, Argentinean fighting dogs (dogo Argentino) and Brazilian fighting dogs (fila Brasileiro).

Fair Trading legislation

Breeders selling animals must comply with the relevant provisions of the Fair Trading legislation which relate to general consumer guarantees. These requirements may include provisions relating to conditions of advertising and sale.

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals legislation

POCTAA requires that businesses which keep animals comply with the relevant ‘Animal Welfare Code of Practice’. These codes of practice are intended to apply safeguards for the welfare of cats and dogs while in the business and when with their new owners.

Updated Animal Welfare Codes of Practice

Provisions within the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Animals in Pet Shops*, and the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats* impose requirements for selling animals from pet shops, markets and breeders. These requirements are designed to reduce the amount of perceived 'impulse' buying of pets, to ensure that potential new owners of pets are aware of the commitment that they are making, and to ensure that a safety net is provided if the pet becomes sick or is no longer wanted.

Enforcement agencies have used these codes to secure penalties which include fines, costs, and bonds prohibiting the owner from owning pets. It is anticipated that the release of a revised *Code of Practice for Council Pounds and Animal Shelters* will further improve the situation for animals sold from these types of establishments.

3.1.3 PIAA Dogs Lifetime Guarantee Policy

In order to assist with the re-homing of surrendered or abandoned pets sourced from PIAA accredited pet shops, PIAA has developed the *Dogs Lifetime Guarantee Policy on Dog Traceability & Re-homing*, which will be effective from 1 October 2012. The policy guarantees that dogs purchased from PIAA member retail stores are sourced from accredited breeders, whose operations are subject to independent audit each year. It also ensures that any dog purchased from a PIAA member that becomes unwanted or abandoned at any age can be returned and will be re-homed, where suitable.

However, it should be noted that this policy does not apply to pets which are sold by non-PIAA members.

3.1.4 Other jurisdictions

Queensland

The Queensland Government requires cats and dogs to be microchipped prior to sale. Cats must also be registered, and there are laws which apply to dangerous, menacing or restricted dogs.

The Queensland Government is also exploring options to address animal welfare for dogs in puppy farms. Options under consideration include the introduction of a breeder identification system, requirements around displaying breeder identification in advertisements, new animal welfare standards for breeders, and public education campaigns.

Specific local government areas within Queensland may apply their own requirements. For example, the City of Brisbane requires an annual permit to operate a pet shop.

Victoria

Victoria introduced a requirement in January 2012 for microchip or business registration numbers to be included in cat and dog advertisements. The Victorian Department of Primary Industries is also reviewing the Breeding (Cats and dogs) Code of Practice, with a public consultation period due later in 2012.

3.2 KEY FINDINGS AND OPTIONS

Option 4 Mandatory listing of an animal's microchip number or breeder number in all cat and dog advertisements

Key findings

- *Some breeders do not comply with the standards of the Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats.*
- *Introducing the ability within the cat and dog registration system to trace pets back to their source may increase the capacity of the Government and enforcement agencies to target education programs and enforcement activities to where they are most needed.*
- *NSW Companion Animals legislation requires that animals be microchipped prior to sale and evidence suggests that the simplest method of tracing animal sales is by microchip number.*

The mandatory listing of an animal's microchip number in all advertisements could be an effective way of ensuring compliance with microchipping requirements and would allow for the identification of unethical breeders. However, this system may be onerous where a litter of puppies and kittens are being sold. For this reason, it may be appropriate to provide the alternative of including a recognised breeder registration number in advertisements for animals.

Compliance with advertising requirements could also be linked to approval conditions of a breeder licensing system (see option 1) and could be included in guidelines on advertising and sale of cats and dogs (see option 5).

Benefits

- May assist the Government and the enforcement agencies to target education aimed at producing sound cat and dog purchases.
- May improve traceability of cats and dogs throughout their life cycle.
- May give purchasers confidence that they are receiving the animal they have paid for as it would introduce the option of purchasers taking legal action against owners in cases of false advertising.

Potential issues

- Would require increased resourcing for adequate enforcement.
- May result in increasing numbers of surrendered or abandoned litters of animals.
- Unethical vendors may include fabricated numbers in advertisements.
- Consideration may need to be given to the creation of a special category for animal welfare organisations and council pounds.

Option 5 Issue guidelines on the advertising and sale of cats and dogs

Key findings

- *The enforceable standards of the Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats and the Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Animals in Pet Shops apply to pet shops and breeders who sell pets.*
- *These standards require that information concerning the care of the animal is provided at the time of purchase, but do not extend to offering guidance about what sort of information to include in advertisements and do not offer information about buying a pet to the prospective new owner.*

The availability of guidelines on the advertising and sale of cats and dogs could improve the knowledge that potential buyers of animals have about what is being offered. These guidelines could be promoted so that both buyers and sellers of cats and dogs are aware of them.

Such guidelines could form part of a community-wide socially responsible pet education program (see option 12).

Benefits

- Could make it easier for cat and dog purchasers to understand what qualities make a good breeder and a suitable cat or dog.
- Anticipated reduction in animals surrendered due to incompatibility with owners' situations and lifestyles.

Potential issues

- Would require increased resourcing for adequate enforcement and development of material.
- A relevant enforcement and management body would need to be identified.

4. MICROCHIPPING, REGISTRATION AND DESEXING

4.1 BACKGROUND

4.1.1 Microchipping

The CA Act requires all cats and dogs to be permanently identified (ie: microchipped) from 12 weeks of age, at point of sale or change of ownership (whichever occurs first).

Since its introduction in 1999, compulsory microchipping has been widely accepted by councils, breeder associations, animal welfare groups and pet owners as providing the most effective mechanism of reuniting lost animals with their owners.

While this is the primary purpose of compulsory microchipping, it also allows local councils to provide for the effective and responsible care and management of cats and dogs in other ways. For example, compulsory microchipping allows councils to use microchip information to identify and manage dangerous and restricted dogs in their areas.

An analysis of microchipping in NSW (Appendix 1) shows that:

- there has been a very significant increase in the number of cats and dogs listed on the CA Register since 2001, by 762% and 516% respectively.
- Increased microchipping has resulted in significant decreases in the number of animals impounded by councils and increases in the number of animals returned to their owners from council pounds.
- Microchipping appears to have resulted in better outcomes for impounded dogs than for cats.

4.1.2 Lifetime registration

The second stage of the NSW cat and dog registration process is the payment of a compulsory lifetime registration fee for all cats and dogs from 6 months of age. A number of exemptions exist, including for certain working dogs, registered racing greyhounds, police dogs, cats and dogs in the care of approved animal re-homing organisations and cats and dogs kept at pet shops, markets and fairs for the purpose of sale.

Registration fees reinforce the concept that ownership of animals is associated with responsibility and the fee reflects that this responsibility is to be taken seriously. The ongoing costs associated with keeping a pet are not always considered by people when purchasing animals and this can ultimately contribute to an increase in the number of animals being abandoned or surrendered at pounds.

The scaled lifetime registration fees in NSW are not set high to encourage registration and socially responsible pet ownership. This is supported by the fact that the fees are paid once, lasting for the lifetime of the animal.

As set out in the table on the following page, despite the one-off charge, NSW lifetime registration fees are cheaper than the annual fees charged in some other Australian jurisdictions. NSW lifetime registration fees were last raised in 2006.

Table 1: Comparison of cat and dog registration fees

Jurisdiction	Registration type	Registration fees (as at 31 March 2012)	Discounted registration fees
NSW	Lifetime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$150 for an undesexed cat or dog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$40 for a desexed cat or dog • \$40 for a cat or dog owned by a recognised breeder • \$15 for a cat or dog owned by a pensioner (animal must be desexed)
City of Brisbane (QLD)	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$95 undesexed dog • \$43.40 undesexed cat • \$454 dangerous dog, non-desexed or desexed menacing dog (first year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$47.40 undesexed dog¹ • \$40.20 desexed dog • \$40.20 dog (breeder/show) • \$15.20 desexed dog¹ • \$21.80 cat (breeder/show) • \$21.80 desexed cat • \$21.80 undesexed cat¹ • \$10.80 desexed cat¹ • \$151 dangerous dog or undesexed menacing dog (subsequent years) • \$95 desexed menacing dog (subsequent years).
City of Melbourne (VIC)	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$141 undesexed dog • \$90 undesexed cat • \$230 Restricted, dangerous or menacing dog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$68 undesexed dog¹ • \$47 dog² • \$23 dog^{1,2} • \$44 undesexed cat¹ • \$30 cat² • \$15 cat^{1,2}
Greater Shepparton (VIC)	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$116 undesexed cat or dog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$58 cat or dog¹ • \$39 cat or dog² • \$19.50 cat or dog^{1,2}

¹ Pensioner concession

² In Victoria, a reduced registration fee may be applied by councils to animals that are: microchipped, desexed, over 10 years old, for breeding by a proprietor of a Domestic Animal Business, registered with an approved organisation, have completed obedience training which complies with the regulations or are kept for working stock.

How are lifetime registration fees used?

The lifetime registration fees collected by councils are submitted to the Division and held in the CA Fund. Approximately 80% of the fees are returned to councils each quarter. The remainder is used by the Division to fund its Companion Animal Program.

Under the CA Act any money paid to a council from the CA Fund must be applied only for purposes that relate to the management and control of companion animals in the council area. This means that the registration system provides a constant stream of income to councils for their cat and dog management activities and also acts as an incentive for them to enforce microchipping and registration requirements.

Many councils use these funds to educate the community about socially responsible pet ownership practices such as desexing, microchipping, identification and lifetime registration. This work is often done in conjunction with animal welfare organisations. Such strategies can help reduce the number of stray and unwanted cats and dogs passing through council pounds.

Registration fees also fund the State Government's companion animal activities, including community education initiatives and the CA Register. Both are integral to the ability of councils to manage lost, stray, injured, unwanted and unowned cats and dogs and to reduce the number euthanased in their impounding facilities.

Evaluating the success of lifetime registration requirements

An analysis of lifetime registration (Appendix 1) shows that registration rates have increased significantly since 2001, with 62% of microchipped dogs and 44% of microchipped cats lifetime registered in 2011. However, this means that there are still large numbers of cats and dogs in the community that are microchipped but not lifetime registered. This means that there is also a large, untapped pool of funding available to councils and the Government for cat and dog management programs.

It is also recognised that enforcing the two step registration process can be resource intensive for councils as they are required to follow-up owners who have microchipped but not registered their cats and dogs. Despite extensive public education, concerns also remain about the level of understanding of the two-step process, as many people may remain unaware of their responsibility to lifetime register their animal, or unwilling to do so.

4.1.3 Desexing

Desexing is the primary mechanism available to control over-supply of cats and dogs as it prevents future unwanted litters of puppies and kittens being born. The desexing operation is performed by a veterinary surgeon, which involves castration for male animals or the removal of the uterus and ovaries for females. The cost of desexing may vary between practitioners.

Desexing is considered particularly important in the case of cats, which generally breed much more prolifically than dogs.

Mandatory desexing

A review of current literature indicates that mandatory desexing is not widely supported. There is currently no consistent Australian research demonstrating the effectiveness of compulsory desexing in reducing unwanted cats and dogs, and international research has identified limited success due to enforcement problems.

A 2008 report commissioned by the Queensland Government concluded that mandatory desexing is not the most effective response to the management of unwanted cats and dogs. The report instead argued that compulsory microchipping and registration is the most important and cost-effective strategy for managing unwanted cats and dogs (Marston et al 2008, p174).

In recent years, the NSW policy position has been to provide desexing incentives for owners through a discounted lifetime registration fee for desexed animals. CA Register data suggests that the incentive is working. As at 31 December 2011, 72% of all lifetime registered dogs and 98% of all lifetime registered cats were desexed.

Early age desexing

Early-age desexing (prior to 3 months of age) is considered by many to be an effective way of preventing unwanted litters in young cats and dogs.

There is currently no legislation in NSW prescribing the age after which a cat or dog may be desexed. However, in order to obtain the discounted lifetime registration fee a cat or dog must be desexed from the age of 6 months.

Promoting desexing in unidentified animal populations

A major contributor to unwanted cats and dogs continues to be those unidentified animals that are undesexed, particularly cats. The exact number of these animals is difficult to determine and there is divergent opinion on how best to manage them.

The most common mechanism used to desex unowned animals, particularly cats, is that of trap-neuter-return. This involves trapping, desexing and releasing animals back into the habitat from which they were captured. Trap-neuter-return schemes have not been contemplated in detail in this paper primarily due to concerns about the effectiveness of such schemes and their potential impact on local wildlife. However, it is noted that councils may choose to fund such schemes where appropriate and where resources permit.

Semi-owned cats are another factor contributing to unwanted cat populations, as the vast majority are undesexed. Targeted community education aimed at changing people's behaviours is considered central to managing these cats. The Victorian Government's "Who's for cats?" and the "Good Cat South Australia" campaigns are examples of such programs.

Evidence suggests that unowned and feral cats contribute significantly to negative impacts on wildlife and the environment (Dickman 1996, p37) and are much more likely than owned cats to engage in inappropriate behaviour, such as making noise, fighting and entering properties.

Targeted desexing programs

Targeted desexing programs refer primarily to one-off, short-term campaigns focussed on areas of identified need. They commonly involve subsidised or free desexing, depending on available resources.

Targeted desexing programs can also be effective in addressing desexing in unidentified animal populations as they often involve simultaneous subsidised or free microchipping.

However, studies have cautioned that approximately 75% of desexing subsidies are wasted as the animals they reach would have been desexed by their owners anyway, and so there is a need to target those areas where people would not normally desex their animals (Lawrie et al, 2006, p90). It is suggested that such programs may be most effective in country towns and lower socio-economic areas such as social housing areas and within indigenous communities (Lawrie et al, 2006, p91).

It is argued that targeted desexing is most effective when accompanied by education about socially responsible pet ownership (Lawrie et al, 2006, p90). This aims to instil a culture of acceptance of desexing in the communities where the programs are run, rather than providing a free or cheap one-off service which is used and forgotten.

In 2003, the then Department of Local Government partly funded the Kelso project, which provided free microchipping and desexing for over 120 animals in one day. Coordinated by the then Bathurst City Council in partnership with RSPCA NSW, in a largely low income, high unemployment area with a high level of social housing, the project, resulted in an 80% reduction in animals impounded from Kelso (Lawrie et al, 2006, p90).

The Kelso project was an early example of what has subsequently become the RSPCA's Community Animal Welfare Scheme (CAWS) program. A CAWS program has been run in Kelso on an ongoing basis since 2003.

A cost-benefit case study commissioned by the RSPCA showed that the Kelso CAWS program has delivered a net benefit of \$2 for every \$1 spent. The study also showed that the program delivered:

- additional financial benefits including “savings due to improved staff utilisation, improved animal tracking due to microchipping, and strengthened veterinary capacity”, and
- non-financial benefits including an approximately 36% reduction in the number of dogs impounded and a 51% reduction in number of dogs euthanased in the council area. (Deloitte 2011, p13).

4.1.4 Other jurisdictions

Most other Australian jurisdictions have adopted compulsory microchipping over the past decade. In Queensland and Victoria, microchipping and registration is required from the time a cat or dog reaches 3 months of age. Many Australian jurisdictions have also adopted registration (or licensing) systems to fund cat and dog management programs. However, unlike NSW, these systems generally require owners to register their cat or dog annually.

The Australian Capital Territory and Western Australia (WA) are the only jurisdictions to have introduced mandatory desexing. However, in the case of WA the requirement only applies to cats and is currently in the process of being phased in.

With regard to international examples of cat and dog management models, the City of Calgary in Canada operates a highly regarded system which requires the City's pet owners to (amongst other things) microchip and annually licence all cats and dogs over 3 months of age, and desex their pets (unless the owner is a breeder).

Reports suggest that more than 90 per cent of dogs and 54 per cent of cats residing in Calgary are licensed, which is comparable to NSW lifetime registration rates in the case of cats but is a significantly stronger outcome for dogs. The return to owner rate for dogs impounded in Calgary's impounding facility is reported to be around 85%, with a 6% euthanasia rate. For cats, there is a reported return to owner rate of 56% and an 18% euthanasia rate (Red Star Café, 2010).

While these are more positive outcomes than those reported in NSW, it is important to note that the City of Calgary does not accept surrendered animals. Owners of such animals are generally referred to animal welfare organisations.

4.2 KEY FINDINGS AND OPTIONS

Option 6 Remove existing “two step” microchipping and registration process to require microchipping and registration of cats and dogs by 3 months of age

Key findings

- *Despite significant increases in registration rates since 2001, approximately one-third of microchipped dogs and over half of microchipped cats are not registered.*
- *This denies councils and the Government funds for cat and dog management programs and increasing the likelihood of animal details being out of date, meaning they are less likely to be returned to their owners, if lost or stray.*
- *Enforcing the “two step” microchipping and registration process is resource intensive for councils.*

Requiring all cats and dogs (except for those exempt under the CA Regulation 2008) to be microchipped and registered by 3 months of age may increase compliance with the registration requirements of the CA Act by specifically addressing cat and dog owners who fail to register their animals after having them microchipped. Such a requirement would also be consistent with the requirements of other jurisdictions including Queensland and Victoria.

Concerns regarding early age desexing could be addressed by the introduction of a registration fee rebate for owners who desex their animals within 3 months of registration (see option 7).

Benefits:

- May increase the number of cats and dogs converted from “microchipped” to “microchipped and registered” on the CA Register.
- Additional registration fees would increase the funding available to councils and the Government to administer cat and dog management programs.

Potential issues:

- Administrative processes for councils, authorised identifiers and registration agents would need to be reviewed
- Would require an amendment to the CA Act and Regulation.
- A significant community re-education program would be required to support the change.
- Existing registration exemptions for pets kept at pet shops, markets or fairs for the purposes of sale may need to be reviewed to ensure effectiveness.

Option 7 Provide a registration fee rebate for owners who desex their animals within 3 months of registration

Key findings

- *As a discounted registration fee is only available for animals that are desexed at the time of registration, there is no financial incentive for owners to desex their animals once they have registered their animal.*
- *For a variety of reasons some people are unable or unwilling to desex their animal by the time it is required to be registered at 6 months of age.*
- *Some council pounds are unable to provide a desexing service due to resourcing constraints, meaning that the registered animals that leave such pounds may not be desexed.*

To encourage uptake of desexing by the owners of such animals, a registration fee rebate system could be established for owners who desex their animal within a reasonable period (eg: 3 months) of it being registered.

Under such a system a person would be required to pay the full undesexed registration fee at the time of registration but would be eligible to have the difference between that and the desexed registration fee refunded to them if they provided proof of the animal's desexing within 3 months of the original payment date. For example, under the current registration charges, such owners would be eligible for a \$110 rebate (ie: the undesexed fee of \$150 minus the desexed fee of \$40).

Councils are currently prevented from issuing such rebates under the CA Act. However, it is understood that some councils have established informal desexing rebate systems as a means to encourage desexing, particularly in the case of animals sourced from council pounds that are unable to provide a desexing service due to resourcing constraints.

Benefits

- May result in a more flexible registration system that provides a desexing incentive whilst also increasing the number of animals registered.
- May encourage greater uptake of desexing by animal owners, particularly for animals sourced from council pounds that are unable to provide desexing services.
- May encourage owners with concerns about early age desexing to have their animal desexed at what they consider to be a more appropriate age.

Potential issues

- May need to be supported by lower cost desexing by veterinarians to be fully effective.
- Would require an update to the Companion Animals legislation and CA Register
- May result in internal financial auditing issues for councils and the Division.

Option 8 Raise cat and dog registration fees to fund additional council and State Government cat and dog management programs

Key findings

- *Registration fees provide a constant stream of income to councils for their companion animal activities and fund the Government's companion animals program, including community education initiatives and the CA Register.*
- *Current revenue returned to councils from registration fees does not cover the full cost of their companion animal management activities.*
- *A significant period has passed since the fees were last raised (January 2006) and, due to the registration fees being for the lifetime of the animal, the current fees are significantly lower than those in other jurisdictions (see table on page 16).*

Existing cat and dog lifetime registration fees could be increased to provide additional funding to councils for the management of cats and dogs and to the CA Fund for programs that promote socially responsible pet ownership.

In order to maintain consistency, registration fees could be increased across all categories (desexed, undesexed, breeder, pensioner). However, any increase in fees should aim to encourage greater desexing of animals by owners. This could be achieved by increasing the undesexed animal registration fee significantly (by at least 25%), while other registration categories could be increased in line with inflation since the 2006 increase.

Consideration could also be given to indexing lifetime registration fees to inflation by way of an amendment to the CA Regulation 2008. This would ensure that lifetime registration fees may be updated on an annual basis.

Benefits:

- Increased income to councils and the Government for cat and dog management and programs to promote socially responsible pet ownership.
- Desexing may be encouraged if the difference between desexed and non-desexed registration fees is increased (ie: closer to the cost of desexing).

Potential issues:

- Public dissatisfaction resulting from increases to fees.
- Risk that increasing fees may result in increased non-compliance by animal owners, especially in the case of undesexed animals.

Option 9 Establish new registration categories to encourage desexing

Key findings

- *Desexing is widely regarded as a key mechanism available to control over-supply in cats and dogs as it prevents future unwanted litters.*
- *Registration fees reinforce the concept of socially responsible pet ownership and encourage desexing by way of a discounted fee for desexed animals.*
- *There is a need to provide incentives for people to adopt impounded animals, and it is important to encourage the desexing of such animals.*

To further encourage desexing, two new registration categories could be established:

1. Desexed animal purchased from council pound and
2. Desexed animal – post-purchase consultation by owner.

The new categories would attract a discounted fee (ie: less than the standard desexed category fee) as an additional incentive to purchase animals from pounds and for owners to attend post-purchase socially responsible pet ownership consultation (see option 13).

Benefits:

- Lower registration fee categories for desexed animals will encourage people to purchase surplus animals from pounds.
- May result in more cat and dog owners becoming aware of socially responsible pet ownership messages through post-purchase consultation.

Potential issues:

- Guidance would need to be provided to councils on the application of new registration categories.
- Would require an update to the Companion Animals legislation and CA Register.

Option 10 Introduce measures to improve compliance with companion animal legislation data entry requirements

Key findings

- *Out of date CA Register data significantly reduces the ability of councils and authorised officers to return lost and stray cats and dogs to their owners.*
- *Data entry is resource intensive and opportunities may exist to streamline existing arrangements.*

Options to improve compliance with CA Register data entry could include:

- Encouraging all breeder groups and animal welfare organisations listed in the CA Act to become “registration agents”, allowing them to process registration fees and change animal details (it is noted that AWL NSW is currently appointed as a registration agent for this purpose).
- Establishing a fee for service model for such registration agents whereby a small percentage of the registration fee for each animal they process is returned to them. However, the majority of the registration fee would continue to be remitted to the council where the animal resides.
- Encouraging veterinarians and Authorised Identifiers to enter the identification data of the animals they implant, by streamlining data entry processes, particularly through better use of the internet and emerging technologies.
- Investigating “self service” data entry options for animal owners to update contact details.

The Division could also undertake a campaign to increase compliance with the registration requirements of the CA Act, by targeting the owners of animals older than 6 months of age that are listed on the CA Register as “identified only”.

Benefits

- Increased compliance with data entry requirements would mean that the records of animals on the CA Register are more likely to be up to date, increasing the likelihood that lost and stray animals are returned to their owners instead of being transferred to a council pound.
- Increased data entry by registration agents, veterinarians, Authorised Identifiers, breeders and owners could reduce the administrative burden on councils.
- More registered animals would increase funds to councils and the CA Fund and improve accuracy of data on the CA Register.

Potential issues

- Privacy issues would need to be considered to ensure that access to the CA Register is only for the purposes of the CA Act.
- Would result in a small reduction in the percentage of registration monies returned to councils and the CA Fund.
- Costs associated with the development of an online data entry system for animal owners.

Option 11 Establish a grant funding initiative for councils/partner organisations to deliver targeted microchipping, registration and desexing programs

Key findings

- *Microchipping significantly increases the likelihood of an animal being returned to its owner and registered animals are significantly more likely to be desexed than non-registered animals.*
- *There is debate on the effectiveness of mandatory desexing as a regulatory tool and targeted desexing programs are considered to be a more successful way to increase desexing rates.*

The CA Fund could be used to provide grants to councils for the delivery of:

- Targeted desexing programs in identified areas of high need, of the general animal population and in-pound desexing before release.
- Targeted microchipping and registration programs (e.g. free microchipping when paying to register a cat or dog, or in conjunction with subsidised desexing).

Councils could be required to comply with grant application guidelines developed by the Division, which could also manage the program. Partnership style arrangements would be encouraged, with preference being given to proposals focussing on:

- Regional approaches.
- Specific programs for remote and rural communities.
- Partnerships with veterinarians, and animal welfare and rescue organisations.
- Targeting socio-economically disadvantaged areas.

Animal welfare organisations could be advised of the proposed program and encouraged to contact local councils to identify and participate in joint projects in areas of specific need. However, such organisations would not be eligible to apply directly for funding.

It is considered vital that programs also include a strong educative component to increase the likelihood that information about socially responsible pet ownership is reinforced to the owners of animals taking part in the programs.

Benefits

- May allow councils and animal welfare and rescue organisation partners to identify and target high-need areas.

Potential issues

- Additional resources will be required to manage grants programs; including following-up successful applicants to ensure outcomes are being achieved.
- The availability of an adequate amount of funds to support an effective ongoing program is contingent on the increase in registration fees set out in option 6.

5. THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

5.1 BACKGROUND

People who purchase cats and dogs are responsible for the long term welfare and care of the animal. Unfortunately, a number of owners later decide that they are unable to care for their animal and surrender or abandon it at a council pound or elsewhere. Pet owners who are unaware of the need to microchip and register their animals also greatly reduce the chance of being reunited with their pet.

The need for community education is widely recognised. It has been noted that pet owners are a disparate group and that their “behaviour is affected by societal norms that change over time. These norms change with new legislation, community education of pet owners, new information and peer group pressure” (Harlock Jackson 2006, p7).

Other research has identified a “need for public awareness raising and ... challenging of existing assumptions (eg: ‘I just know how to care for my pets’) to counter complacency will be required should there be particular animal welfare issues ... that require greater engagement and behaviour change.” (TNS Social Research 2006, p13).

However, studies have also suggested that over time, “while attitudes to preparing for pet ownership by desexing and vaccinating were largely unchanged, owner behaviour had substantially improved” (Headey 2006, p11)

This research supports the argument that attitudes and practices towards animal welfare are influenced by information and social norms; and that targeted public awareness campaigns are necessary to change behaviour.

5.1.1 Developing and delivering educational material

Community education has been a central component of the NSW companion animal legislation since its introduction. The Division funds various educational initiatives from the CA Fund, including:

- Information brochures on cat and dog ownership,
- Posters and stickers on microchipping and registration requirements, and
- Website content including various guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions.

It is recognised that a wealth of existing material and information is also provided by others in the industry including animal welfare organisations, pet shops, veterinarians and councils. These bodies also play an important delivery role in the distribution of education material about socially responsible pet ownership. It is recognised that this material is often developed and delivered with limited resources.

NSW Responsible Pet Education Program

Since 2011, the Responsible Pet Ownership Schools Education Program for 5-7 year olds has been delivered in NSW schools by a team of Pet Educators and their suitability tested dogs. The Program was commissioned in recognition of the need to communicate socially responsible pet ownership messages to children at an early age and, by extension, to their families.

The NSW Government has committed \$2.1 million to the Program over a three year period, with an open tender process used to select the program provider: the Victorian Bureau of Animal Welfare, Department of Primary Industries (VIC DPI). VIC DPI has run an identical program in Victorian schools for the past decade and has adapted its program content to meet NSW requirements.

The Program uses multimedia, role play, song and story to provide primary school children with key messages about socially responsible pet ownership and dog safety, and has two key components: a school visit and a curriculum/resource package.

The Program is distinct from previous programs in that trained and paid Pet Educators are accompanied by their suitability-tested dog during school education sessions, allowing children to experience dog safety messages first hand, in a controlled environment.

The Program replaced the Safe Pets Out There (SPOT) program, which successfully focussed on promoting socially responsible pet ownership and was developed in response to the significant community concern about the safety of children around dogs and ran from February 2007 to September 2009 (Ramsay, 2009).

It is also noted that the RSPCA and AVA provide responsible pet education programs to a variety of age groups.

5.1.2 Content of educational material

In order to have a positive impact on the number of animals that are surrendered to pounds, several key issues need to be reinforced to pet owners, including:

- Choosing an appropriate pet,
- General welfare and husbandry,
- The importance of identification and registration,
- Confinement and housing,
- Socialisation, exercise and training.

The enforceable standards of the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats* and *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Animals in Pet Shops* apply to pet shops and breeders who sell pets. These standards require that information concerning the care of the animal is provided at the time of purchase.

While suggested topic areas for content are contained in the codes, the actual information provided is a decision for the individual breeder or proprietor. As such, there may be a variation of quality of content provided. The public may also not be aware that they are entitled to receive this information prior to making a purchase.

5.1.3 Communicating information to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

There appears to be very little information on socially responsible pet ownership available in languages other than English. Most companion animal welfare messages are delivered by vets or animal charities with limited resources and do not offer interpreter services or translated materials.

It is noted that expectations about the welfare of cats and dogs in Australia are very different from those in many other parts of the world and information about these expectations needs to be communicated with sensitivity and clarity.

Research has supported the development of a communications strategy on animal welfare issues for non-English speaking background audiences that runs in parallel with a strategy for the wider community. However, such a strategy should also take into account views and perceptions of these audiences and use care in translation of terms associated with animal welfare (TNS Social Research 2006, p28).

The importance of utilising local ethnic/cultural community groups as information distribution hubs is also recognised.

5.1.4 Research on companion animal issues

Quality research around key companion animal issues is often done by interested people from within the community or by students. It is noted that funding for research into key companion animal issues is limited, and does not always address factors which may assist the development of good policy for industry, welfare agencies and Government.

5.1.5 Training for pound, shelter and pet shop staff

It is recognised that many people working in pounds, shelters and pet shops are appropriately qualified and experienced. However, there is an argument for minimum level qualifications and standardised training for such people given the level of responsibility they have to animals in their care and the key role such people play in informing other people's choices about the pets they purchase and the way they care for them.

The animal welfare codes of practice for animals in pet shops and breeding cats and dogs include guidelines which recommend that staff employed in such roles be trained, experienced and competent in a variety of areas. However, these are not currently enforceable as standards.

5.2 KEY FINDINGS AND OPTIONS

Option 12 Develop a community-wide socially responsible pet ownership education campaign

Key finding

Comprehensive community education is considered essential to reducing the number of unwanted cats and dogs as it can improve understanding of the consequences of irresponsible pet ownership.

Existing research on community awareness programs and attitudes to cat and dog welfare could be reviewed with a view to devising a holistic, community-wide education program on socially responsible pet ownership.

The campaign could focus on issues such as the benefits of owning cats and dogs, choosing an appropriate cat or dog, general welfare and husbandry, the importance of identification and registration, appropriate confinement and housing, the importance of exercise, training and socialising cats and dogs, the importance of early age desexing and the availability of discounted desexing services.

The campaign could be named in such a way to improve recognition, and be supported by advertising, including a comprehensive multi-media component.

Relevant agencies could be approached to assist in identifying strategies to refine the campaign for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This could include identifying community workers and 'ambassadors' in local communities and promotion through community language publications and radio. A register of veterinary practices where community languages are spoken could also be developed to support the campaign.

In conjunction with the campaign, the Division's existing Responsible Pet Ownership Schools Education Program could be expanded to reach pre-school children. Other companion animal industry groups could also be encouraged to target existing education programs to senior primary and high school students. This will mean that key socially responsible pet ownership messages are introduced to children and their families as early as possible and reinforced across their school life.

Benefits

- Providing relevant messages to the community over the long-term may lead to:
 - a reduction in the number of people purchasing unsuitable cats and dogs, meaning they are less likely to be surrendered to council pounds,
 - increased microchipping, registration and desexing, thereby reducing the number of unwanted litters and increasing the number of pets returned to their owners, and
 - a deeper awareness of the importance of pets to people and increased respect for animals.

Potential issues

- Cost of education programs and media campaigns.
- The availability of an adequate amount of funds to support an effective campaign is contingent on the increase in registration fees set out in option 6.

Option 13 Develop mandatory standardised information on socially responsible pet ownership to be given out at point of sale and introduce initiatives to reinforce such information

Key findings

- *The enforceable standards of the Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats and Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Animals in Pet Shops apply to pet shops and breeders who sell pets.*
- *These standards require that information concerning the care of animals is provided at the time of purchase.*
- *While suggested topic areas for content are contained in the codes, the actual information provided is up to the individual breeder or proprietor and there may be a variation of quality of content provided.*
- *The public may not be aware that they are entitled to receive this information prior to making a purchase.*

Standardised information on socially responsible pet ownership could be developed and distributed to all pet stores. The information could also be provided to breeders and its distribution could become a breeder licensing requirement (see option 1).

This could be supported by making the information available through targeted and broader education programs; and could include mechanisms for follow-up contact with owners to increase the likelihood of the information being understood.

Incentives could be provided for people to complete a post-purchase consultation with a veterinarian or vet nurse. The consultation could cover issues such as the importance of desexing, socialisation and cat confinement. Incentives could include a discounted lifetime registration fee (see option 9).

Benefits

- Standardised information provided at point of sale may prevent the purchase of unsuitable cats and dogs and ultimately reduce the number of unwanted cats and dogs surrendered at pounds and shelters.
- Post-purchase consultations would reinforce socially responsible pet ownership messages, promoting a stronger bond between humans and their pets.

Potential issues

- Cost of production and distribution of education material.
- Cost of post-purchase consultation may need to be included in purchase price.
- Cat and dog owners may be reluctant to attend follow-up consultations.

Option 14 Establish minimum qualification requirements for pet shop, breeding establishment and pound/shelter staff

Key finding

The enforceable standards of the Animal Welfare Codes of Practice for Breeding Dogs and Cats and Animal Welfare Codes of Practice for Pet Shops require that staff are knowledgeable and competent to manage the animals in their care.

Updating the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats* and *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Animals in Pet Shops* to require at least one staff member working in a pet shop, breeding establishment, pound or animal shelter to be trained to a minimum recognised level may result in better welfare outcomes for cats and dogs in such establishments.

A Certificate II level qualification may adequately meet the education requirements set out in the codes. Such a qualification could also be an approval requirement in a breeder licensing system (see option 1).

Benefits

- May increase compliance with the codes of practice and provide consistency in the qualifications of staff in pet shops, pounds and shelters.
- May become a minimum standard for employment in the industry, thereby providing professional development opportunities for relevant staff.

Potential issues

- May be difficult to enforce without additional resources.
- Would require updates to codes of practice.

Option 15 Provide more funding for research on key cat and dog issues

Key findings

- *Quality research around key cat and dog issues is often done by interested people from within the community or by students.*
- *Funding for research into cat and dog issues is limited, and does not always address factors which may assist the development of good policy for industry, welfare agencies and Government.*

A portion of the CA Fund could be set aside annually for the purpose of funding a grant program for research on key cat and dog issues. It is anticipated that such funding would be open for applications, which would be assessed on merit.

Benefits

- Potential for a wider scope of cat and dog issues to be identified and researched.
- Positive use of CA Fund which would benefit the whole community and guide policy development.

Potential issues

- The scope of applicable projects would need to be determined.
- Resources required to develop guidelines, an application process and other governance requirements of grant administration.

6. IMPOUNDED CATS AND DOGS

6.1 BACKGROUND

The re-homing of animals from pounds is a critical strategy employed by councils to reduce the number of animals euthanased in their facilities. However, pound managers face substantial obstacles in doing so, particularly as pounds compete with pet shops and breeders as sources of animals and often do not have the resources to advertise animals in their care widely to the public.

There may also be resistance from the public to buy animals from pounds that are undesexed, as this provides an additional cost to socially responsible pet owners who do not wish to use their animal for breeding purposes.

6.1.1 Role of councils in re-homing impounded cats and dogs

Under the CA Act, councils are obliged to consider and undertake alternative action to destroying animals surrendered to the council by their owners, where practicable. While re-homing such animals with new owners is the most desirable outcome, it must be acknowledged that councils have limited resources and not all cats and dogs are suitable for re-homing. Such animals include feral animals, dangerous dogs and those with significant health or behavioural issues.

The re-homing of desexed animals from pounds is generally considered the most desirable outcome by councils and the companion animal industry, as desexing helps to limit unwanted litters of puppies and kittens, which may in turn contribute to the cycle of pound arrivals in the future.

Some councils have adopted policies requiring animals to be desexed before being re-homed from a council pound. Such councils may subsidise the cost of desexing the animals where resources permit or factor the costs into the sale price of animals.

As a way of overcoming the constraints faced in selling surplus animals, many councils transfer animals to animal welfare organisations for re-homing. This is often a more efficient and successful way of ensuring that animals find appropriate homes. However, many animal welfare and rescue organisations also face resourcing challenges. It also acknowledged that some pounds and animal welfare organisations have rehoming initiatives in place with pet shops.

Clause 16(d) of the CA Regulation aims to address this issue by providing an exemption to approved animal rescue organisations from the requirement to lifetime register animals which are in their temporary care for the purposes of re-housing for a period of 12 months. The intention of this exemption is to provide financial relief to approved organisations and an incentive for them to continue their work. There are approximately 45 organisations to which this exemption currently applies.

Organisations may apply to the Division for approval based on criteria outlined in Guidelines issued by the Division. The Guidelines also ensure that approved organisations comply with their legislative obligations. For example, all animals entering the care of approved organisations must be microchipped. An organisation's exemption may be revoked and penalties may apply if an approved organisation breaches the companion animal legislation.

The Division monitors the number of animals being reported as transferred to organisations for re-homing in the annual council pound data collection returns. Approved organisations must also keep records of the animals that come into their care and submit an annual report to the Division on this data.

6.1.2 Measures to encourage “pet friendly accommodation”

It is argued that increasing numbers of people who are unable to keep pets in rental or strata accommodation may be contributing to increasing surrender and abandonment rates for cats and dogs. This issue appears to be more pronounced in urban areas, particularly in metropolitan Sydney where there is a trend towards higher density living.

Under the existing NSW strata titles legislation, owners’ corporations of strata accommodation can currently amend their by-laws to ban pets. While it is accepted that some people – with or without pets – can be bad neighbours, a blanket ban on pets is a blunt and discriminatory instrument that in any case does not prevent anti-social behaviour. Changes and challenges to by-laws can be also costly and time consuming, and in any event, many people are unaware of their rights.

Other jurisdictions have pursued innovative approaches to this issue. Under the Australian Capital Territory’s *Unit Titles Act 2001*, pets are allowed in strata properties by default, with the onus on the owners’ corporation to not unreasonably withhold permission for people to keep pets.

Western Australia permits the charging of pet bonds by landlords, which are not allowed to be charged in NSW. This approach reflects the view that, while it would be unfair to charge a premium in rent because of pet ownership, it may not be unreasonable to charge an additional bond to cover any perceived additional risk that comes from pets being on the property.

6.1.3 Roaming cats

Unconfined animals that are subsequently seized by councils or picked up by members of the public make up a significant number of those animals entering pounds. While cats are banned from certain areas, there is no definition of a stray cat under the CA Act and there are no requirements for cats to be kept inside.

It is recognised that there are benefits to keeping cats contained indoors, particularly at night. Fighting and noise can be more disturbing at night, as unwanted noise is likely to be intrusive and to keep neighbours awake. Many kinds of native wildlife are more active or more vulnerable to hunting at night and there is evidence that cats hunt more during the night than during the day. Therefore, confining cats can help reduce the number of native animals that are killed.

Cat confinement can also assist in reducing unwanted litters, as roaming cats may breed prolifically. However, it is recognised that desexing is the most appropriate way for responsible pet owners to address this issue.

Mandatory cat confinement is considered to be an inappropriate regulatory response as it is difficult to enforce, particularly as councils already face competing demands for limited resources for cat and dog management services. However, cat control orders have been used in other jurisdictions for a number of years to manage roaming cats.

6.2 KEY FINDINGS AND OPTIONS

Option 16 Encourage greater collaboration between councils and animal welfare organisations on impounding and re-homing services to reduce euthanasia rates

Key findings

- *Council cat and dog impounding and re-homing services are funded from a limited pool of resources.*
- *A number of councils work in partnership with animal welfare organisations (AWOs) to improve outcomes for impounded animals.*
- *AWOs generally employ specialised staff and have established promotional, distribution and fundraising networks to support their efforts in re-homing animals.*
- *The community expects that all necessary steps will be taken to reduce euthanasia rates but not all impounded animals are suitable for re-homing.*

Councils and AWOs could be encouraged to enter into arrangements where the ownership of impounded animals is transferred from the council to the AWO at the end of the statutory holding period (which ranges from 7 to 14 days in NSW, depending on whether or not the animal is microchipped).

This approach forms the basis of a long-standing arrangement between Gold Coast City Council and the Animal Welfare League Queensland (AWLQ), and is reported to have significantly improved welfare outcomes for animals in that area. For example, AWLQ figures show that in 2009/10, 91% of all dogs and 76% of all cats impounded under such an arrangement were released to their owners or re-homed which is much higher than reported in NSW (Getting to Zero website, AWLQ).

This approach may potentially reduce costs for councils associated with re-homing animals. However, under such arrangements the council would typically pay some sort of management fee to the AWO.

Centralising the processing of animals and veterinary services can also be beneficial to animal welfare outcomes, particularly in cases where the AWO also operates the impounding facility in one location as this eliminates transportation of animals.

An increased focus on regional approaches to impounding could also be encouraged. Cost savings could be enhanced by multiple councils entering into regional impounding/re-homing arrangements with a contracted AWO, for example in eliminating duplication in infrastructure costs.

Benefits

- May result in increased re-homing rates.
- May free up council resources to be re-directed to services such as the collection of stray and injured animals, which may currently fall to veterinarians and AWOs.

Potential issues

- The cost of re-homing and associated fundraising must be met by AWOs.
- In some rural areas, geographical isolation may prove problematic in establishing regional impounding facilities due to increased transportation costs and the associated welfare impacts of transporting animals over long distances.

Option 17 Investigate the development of an integrated impounded animal management tool

Key finding

The collection of detailed data on impounded animals by all councils and animal welfare organisations is essential to understanding the scope and reasons for unwanted companion animals, and for developing appropriate policy responses.

A centralised impounded animal management tool, available to all relevant councils, State agencies and animal welfare organisations would provide for consistent data collection across all agencies, meaning that all relevant data could be considered in the policy development process. Such a tool could also streamline work practices for some impounding facilities, particularly those reliant on paper-based record keeping systems.

The CA Register may be a suitable platform for this purpose as it has the structural capacity to incorporate additional modules (such as the existing dog attack reporting module). It could be expanded to provide greatly increased functionality for impounding officers.

Consideration could also be given to how the CA Register may be adapted to integrate with third party data collection systems (for example, for the processing of impounded animals and the collection of impounding data). However, it would be crucial that an integrated impounded animal management tool provides a generic interface for all front-end users, to reduce duplication in work practices and to streamline training requirements.

It is recognised that the existing provisions of the CA Act may restrict the development of the CA Register in this way, particularly with regard to access issues for non-council staff due to privacy legislation requirements. However, in recognition of the benefits of such a system, the legislation could be amended to allow use of the CA Register for this purpose.

Benefits

- Would provide for consistency in data collection across all impounding agencies and allow for standardised data entry and analysis of impounding data. This could allow more targeted and effective policy responses to reduce euthanasia rates.
- The CA Register may be easier and less costly to adapt than the development of a new collection tool.
- Could link to existing pet search tools (eg: AWL's "Found Pets" phone app¹).

Potential issues

- Would require amendments to the CA Act to ensure greater access to the CA Register for non-council officers.
- Privacy requirements of the CA Act would need to be considered.
- Any such system would need to ensure that it avoids creating additional work for pound/shelter staff.
- Would require the development of a data dictionary and be supported by relevant user education.

¹ See www.awlnsw.com.au

Option 18 Review barriers to cat and dog ownership in relation to residential tenancy laws

Key finding

Pet-unfriendly rental accommodation and strata-titled housing (whether owned or rented) contribute to the surrender of owned pets, and appear to be a significant factor inhibiting the adoption of companion animals from pounds and shelters.

The *Residential Tenancies Act 2010* and *Strata Schemes Management Act 1996* could be reviewed to identify existing barriers to cat and dog ownership in rental and strata accommodation, including the existence of by-laws which currently allow pet bans.

Particular consideration could be given to the introduction of a pet bond system, similar to that operating in Western Australia, to provide a financial incentive to counter landlord concerns about pet-owning tenants.

Relevant industry bodies could also be engaged to develop and implement education, as part of a whole of community socially responsible pet ownership education campaign (see option 12), which address issues such as:

- assisting cat and dog owners living in units and rental accommodation to become better neighbours/tenants by ensuring they provide appropriate environmental enrichment and care for their cats and dogs,
- the advantages of preparing a pet resume that shows their cat or dog will be a good tenant, and
- emphasising to landlords and real estate agents that by excluding cat and dog owners they are limiting the potential pool of good tenants.

Benefits

- Removing cat and dog ownership barriers for renters could increase overall demand for animals and reduce the number of animals surrendered to pounds where they were previously unable to be kept by their owners.
- A pet bond scheme may allay some landlord concerns about cat and dog owning tenants.

Potential issues

- Ongoing resistance from strata/owner bodies.
- The cost of pet bonds may be a barrier for some cat and dog owners.
- The cost and/or administrative burden of pursuing damages from tenants where they are over and above the bond amount may be prohibitive, and thus some landlords may support the continuation of a 'no pets' policy.

Option 19 Introduce measures to encourage the confinement of cats to their owner's property

Key findings

- *The confinement of cats, particularly at night, is considered to be central to responsible cat ownership as it can reduce the number of unwanted litters of kittens and the impact of cats on wildlife and social amenity.*
- *However, mandatory confinement is considered to be an inappropriate regulatory response as it is difficult to enforce, particularly as councils already face competing demands for limited resources.*

Consideration could be given to amending the CA Act to provide councils with the option to impose local orders on cat owners to confine their cats, where this approach is considered appropriate and enforceable.

However, funding could also be allocated to the development of initiatives to encourage owners to confine cats to their property, such as:

- Providing educational material to cat owners at point of purchase on the benefits of confining cats, particularly at night. This could be addressed in a whole of community socially responsible pet ownership education campaign (see option 12).
- Providing additional guidance for cat owners on the construction of cat shelters and runs.
- Providing funding to councils to implement cat management programs as part of a grant funding program (see option 11).

Benefits

- May reduce the number of unwanted cat litters, thereby reducing the number of impounded cats who are subsequently euthanased.
- May reduce the impact of cats on wildlife.
- May provide councils with the option to implement cat management strategies where communities identify roaming cats as a problem.
- May result in general improvements in feline health and social amenity.

Potential issues

- Would require a change to the CA Act.
- Local council orders on cat confinement may continue to be difficult to enforce.
- Would result in inconsistent laws for cats across council areas, potentially leading to community confusion on local requirements.

Option 20 Establish an ongoing reference group on cat and dog management and welfare issues

Key finding

The welfare of companion animals, their relationship to human wellbeing and social amenity relate to a number of Ministerial portfolios, including Planning and Infrastructure, Primary Industries, Local Government, Fair Trading, Housing, Health, Transport and Police.

An ongoing reference group on cat and dog management and welfare issues could aid future policy and legislative development and review by ensuring that animal welfare and importantly, the nexus between pets and human wellbeing, is considered in a holistic approach to the development and review of public policy.

The terms of reference for such a group could include providing advice and information on the implementation of recommendations arising from the Taskforce process, the ongoing monitoring of cat and dog legislation and relevant animal welfare codes of practice, and advocacy on cat and dog management issues which fall under federal legislation (eg: transport of pets on aircraft).

As well as relevant government agencies, such a group could include representation from across all sectors of the companion animal industry, including councils, animal welfare and rescue groups, breeders, educators, and pet stores.

Benefits

- Could provide the industry with the opportunity for an ongoing dialogue with Government about cat and dog management and welfare issues.
- Will inform a whole-of-government approach to cat and dog issues.

Potential issues

- It would be necessary to ensure that such a group did not duplicate the work of existing committees providing advice on these matters (eg Animal Welfare Advisory Council).
- Membership may need to be limited to ensure the effectiveness of the group.

7. REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 1 – COMPANION ANIMALS REGISTER AND IMPOUNDING DATA

A. MICROCHIPPING

Microchipping is the first stage of a mandatory two stage process of identification and registration for companion animals in NSW.

Figure 1: Total microchipped cats and dogs

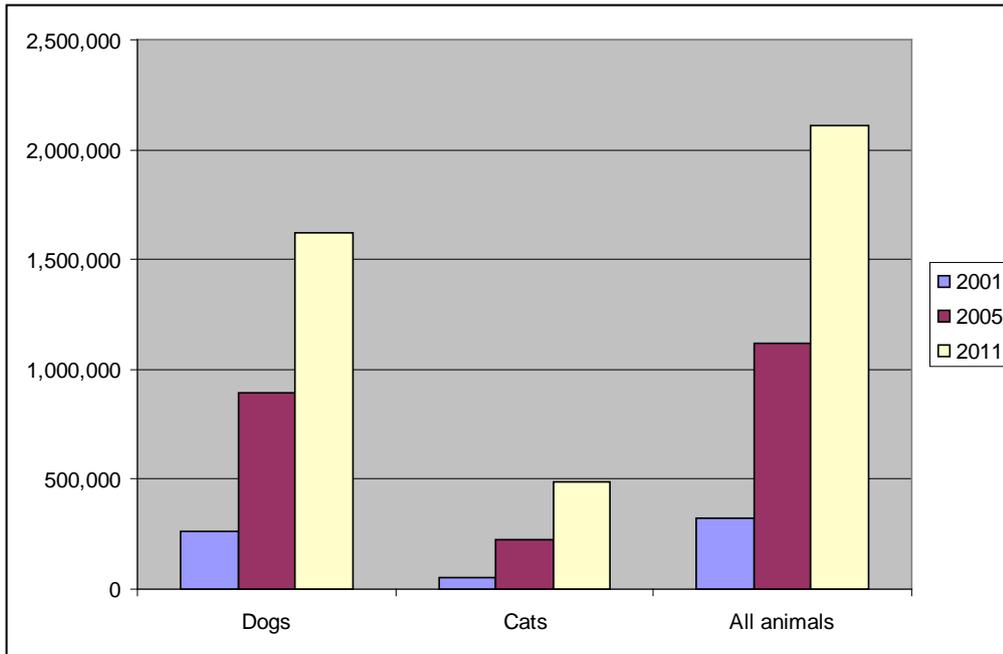


Table 1: Total microchipped cats and dogs

	2001	2005	2011	% change 2001 -2011
Dogs	263,365	891,772	1,623,304	516%
Cats	56,220	224,155	484,860	762%
All animals	319,585	1,115,927	2,108,164	560%

Source: NSW CA Register - figures are for animals alive at 31 December each year.

Figure 1 and Table 1 show that there has been a very significant increase in the number of cats and dogs listed on the Register since 2001, with 762% and 516% increases recorded respectively. This large uptake may be attributed to greater awareness in the community of the benefits of microchipping, which has been achieved through council and government public education and through positive media coverage. The increase also reflects active enforcement of the requirements of the Act by councils.

However, due to the unwillingness of some members of the community to comply with the legislation and the limited resources available to councils, a large number of companion animals remain unmicrochipped. The exact numbers are difficult to determine due to the absence of baseline data collected prior to the implementation of compulsory microchipping and concerns about the accuracy of data relating to the number of animals that have died since compulsory microchipping commenced in 1999.

B. LIFETIME REGISTRATION

The second stage of the NSW companion animal registration process is the payment of a compulsory lifetime registration fee for all cats and dogs (with some exceptions) from 6 months of age.

Figure 2: Lifetime registered animals

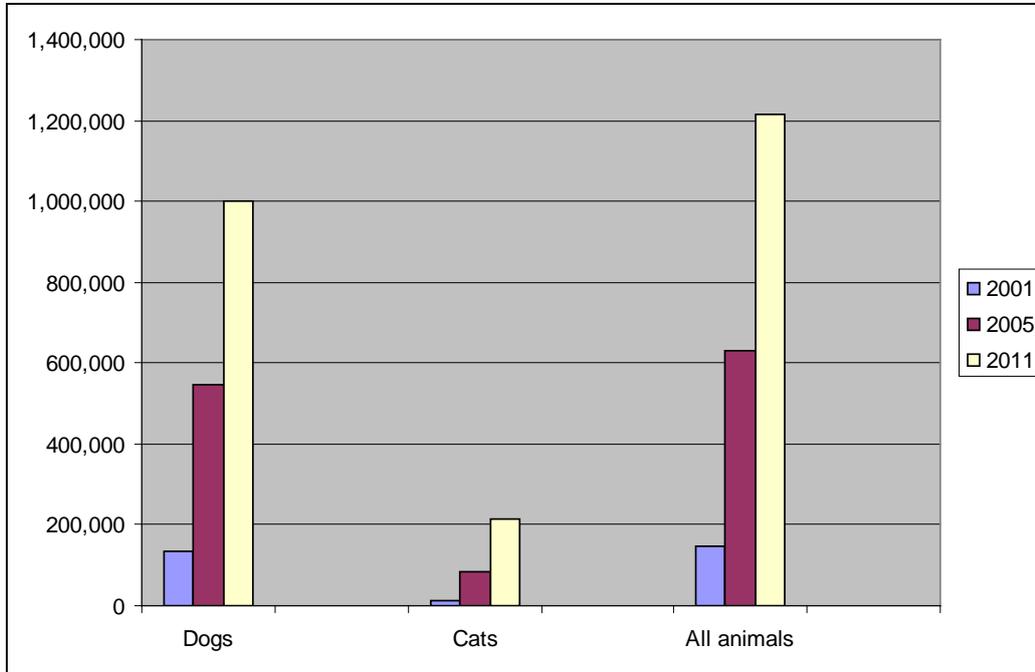


Table 2: Lifetime registered animals

	2001	2005	2011	% change 2001 - 2011
Dogs	135,241 (51%)	546,098 (61%)	998,614 (62%)	638%
Cats	13,206 (23%)	85,714 (38%)	215,673 (44%)	1533%
All animals	148,447 (46%)	631,812 (56%)	1,214,287 (58%)	718%

NB: Percentages in yearly columns reflect the percentage of total microchipped animals (see table 1).
Source: CA Register - reported figures are for animals alive at 31 December each year

Figure 2 and Table 2 show that there has been a very significant increase in the number of lifetime registered cats and dogs on the CA Register since 2001, with 1533% and 638% increases recorded respectively. The proportion of cats on and dogs on the CA Register that are lifetime registered (as opposed to microchipped only) has also steadily increased since 2001, by 21 percentage points and 11 percentage points respectively.

While lifetime registration is on the rise, there are still a significant number of animals in the community that are microchipped but not lifetime registered. This means that there is also a large, untapped pool of funding available to councils and the Government for companion animals management programs.

C. DESEXING

Figure 3a: Desexed cats and dogs (total)

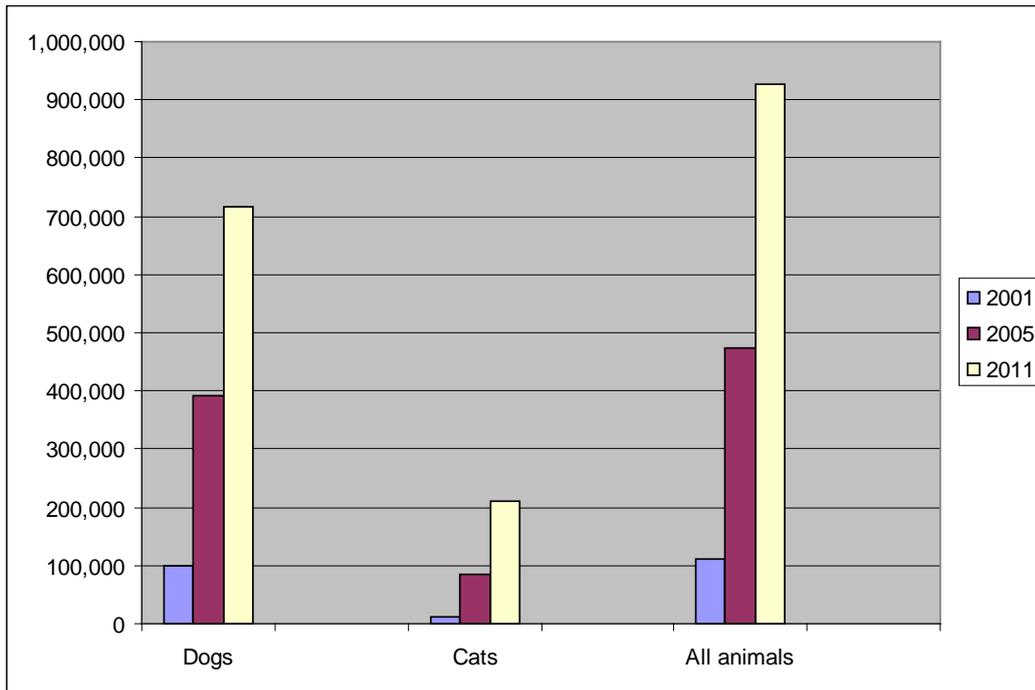


Table 3a: Desexed cats and dogs (total)

	2001	2005	2011	% change 2001 – 2011
Dogs	99,534 (38%)	390,719 (44%)	717,507 (44%)	621%
Cats	12,936 (23%)	83,795 (37%)	210,803 (43%)	1530%
All animals	112,470 (35%)	474,514 (43%)	928,310 (44%)	725%

Source: CA Register - reported figures are for animals alive at 31 December each year.

Note: Figure 3a and Table 3a refer to all desexed cats and dogs on the CA Register. The percentages in the yearly columns refer to those animals as a proportion of all cats/dogs/animals microchipped on the CA Register.

The data in Figure 3a and Table 3a show that there has been a very significant increase in the number of desexed animals on the CA Register since 2001, with 1530% and 621% increases recorded respectively. The proportion of cats on and dogs on the CA Register that are desexed has also steadily increased. While the increase has been larger for cats (a 20 percentage point increase) than dogs (a 6 percentage point increase), the proportion of cats and dogs which are desexed is now roughly equal (at 43% and 44% respectively).

Since 2005, almost half of the new animals recorded on the CA Register have been desexed, which is a significant improvement on 2001 figures and indicates that the scaled lifetime registration fees are meeting their objective. In contrast to the trends observed with regard to microchipping and lifetime registration, the increase in the percentage of desexed cats on the CA Register is over three times that recorded for desexed dogs. However, it should be noted that the number of cats and dogs on the CA Register whose desexed status was listed as “unknown” is very high. For example, in 2011 the desexed status of 625,230 (or 39%) dogs and 268,882 (or 55%) cats was unknown.

Figure 3b: Percentage of lifetime registered cats and dogs that are desexed

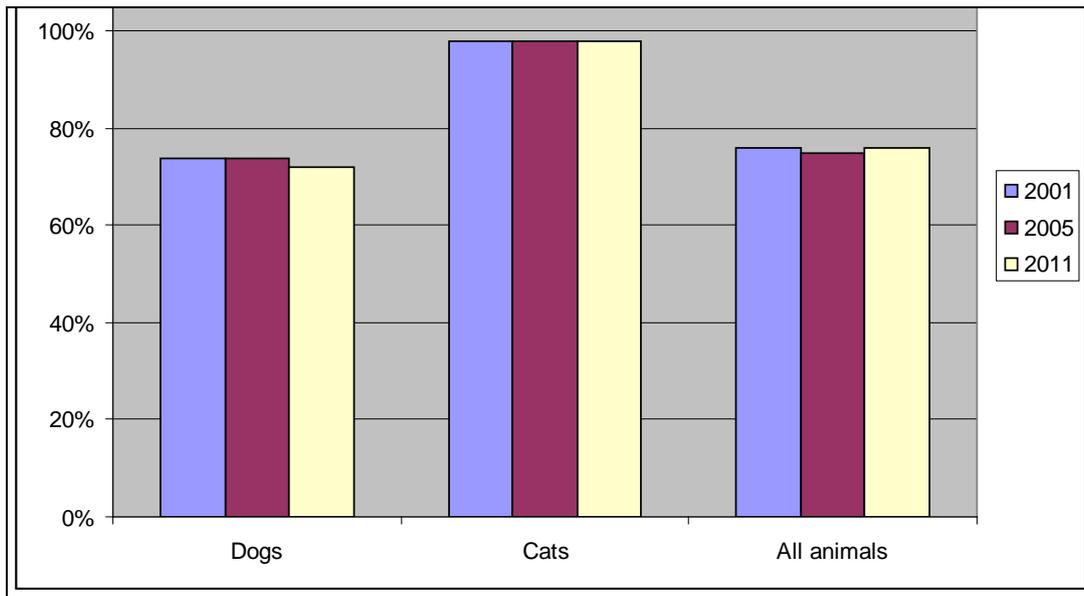


Table 3b: Percentage of lifetime registered cats and dogs that are desexed

	2001	2005	2011	Change in percentage points 2001 – 2011
Dogs	74%	74%	72%	- 2%
Cats	98%	98%	98%	0%
All animals	76%	75%	76%	0%

Source: CA Register - reported figures are for animals alive at 31 December each year.

Note: Figure 3b and Table 3b refer only to lifetime registered cats and dogs (as distinct from all cats and dogs microchipped on the CA Register, as shown in Figure 3a and Table 3a)

The data in Figure 3b and Table 3b show that, since 2001 almost three quarters of dogs listed on the CA Register as lifetime registered and almost all cats listed on the CA Register as lifetime registered have been desexed. These figures have remained steady over the period.

This suggests a key linkage between desexing and lifetime registration, as the majority of lifetime registered animals are desexed.

D. TOTAL NUMBERS OF IMPOUNDED ANIMALS

Figures 4 and 5 and Tables 4 and 5, on the following pages, compare incoming impounded animal data captured by RSPCA, AWL, CPS and councils for the 2008/09 - 2010/11 period. All efforts have been made to avoid duplication of data capture between organisations. However, it is noted that as RSPCA provides impounding services for a number of councils and that some duplication of data collection may arise.

Figure 4: Impounded cats (by organisation) 2008/09 - 2010/11

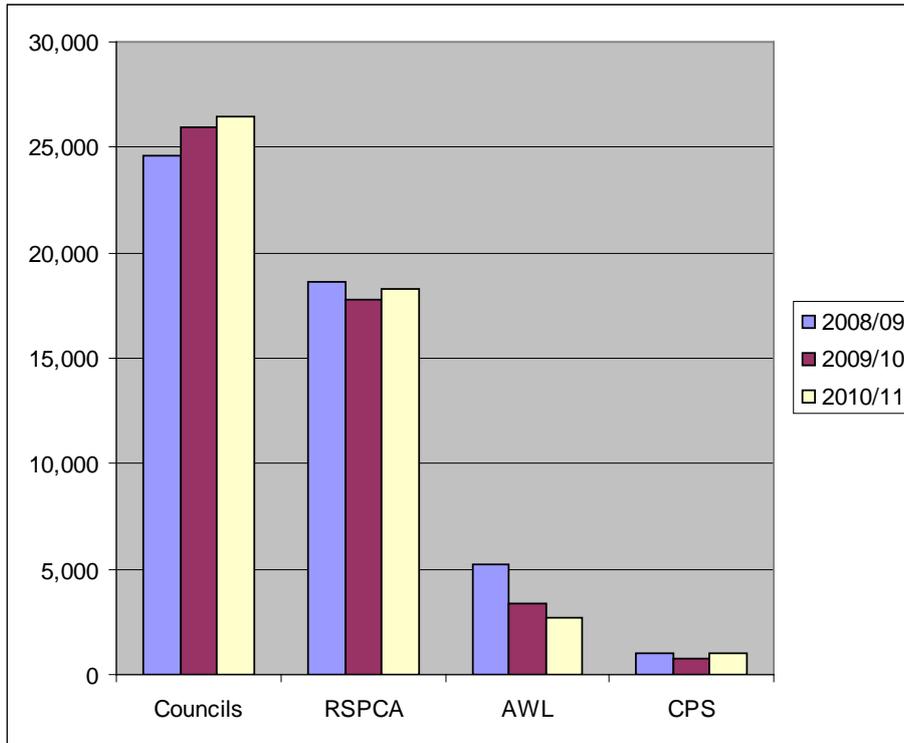


Table 4: Impounded cats (by organisation) 2008/09 - 2010/11

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Councils	24,586	25,982	26,476
RSPCA¹	18,632	17,769	18,291
AWL	5,239	3,341	2,720
CPS	1,000	800	996
Total	49,457	47,892	48,483

¹ RSPCA totals have been revised to reflect known duplicated data reported by councils whose impounding facilities are operated by RSPCA.

Figure 4 and table 4 show that, on average 48,611 cats have been impounded annually in NSW since 2008/09.

Councils and the RSPCA together impound the overwhelming majority of cats. However, it should be noted that councils and the RSPCA operate open intake facilities, accepting all cats and dogs delivered to them, regardless of how they arrive. By contrast, both AWL and CPS operate "limited intake" facilities, based on available capacity.

Figure 5: Impounded dogs (by organisation) 2008/09 - 2010/11

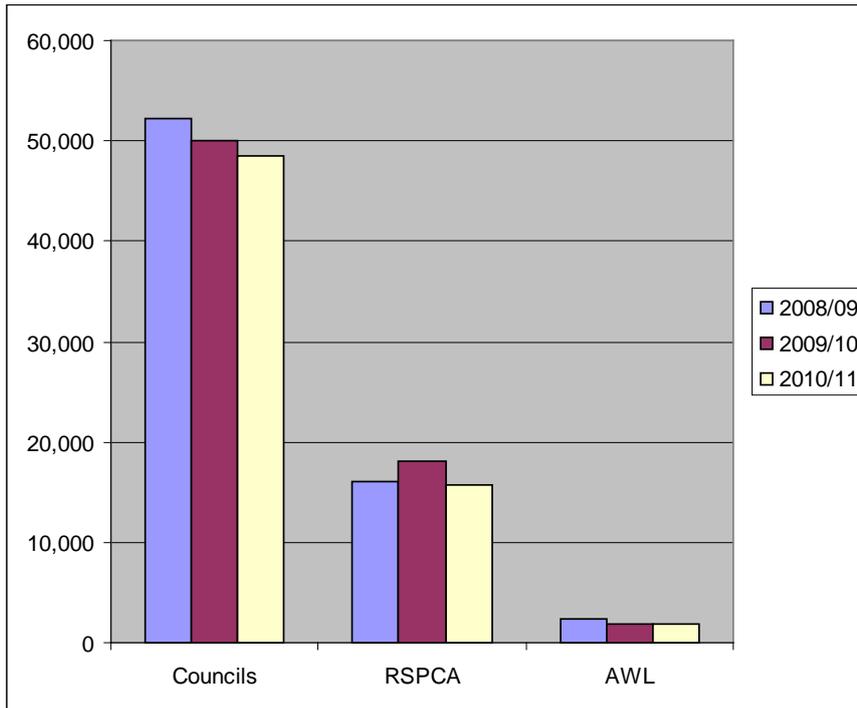


Table 5: Impounded dogs (by organisation) 2010/11

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Councils	52,186	49,958	48,523
RSPCA¹	16,050	18,134	15,705
AWL	2,302	1,882	1,816
Total	70,538	69,974	66,044

¹ RSPCA totals have been revised to reflect known duplicated data reported by councils whose impounding facilities are operated by RSPCA.

Figure and table 5 show that on average 68,852 dogs have been impounded annually in NSW since 2008/09. Councils and the RSPCA together impound the overwhelming majority of dogs. However, it is again noted that both councils and the RSPCA operate open intake facilities, based on available capacity.

F. RATES OF ABANDONMENT AND SURRENDER OF COMPANION ANIMALS

The Companion Animals legislation differentiates between “seized animals” (ie: animals arriving at pounds because they have been seized by councils or members of the public for breaches of the Act), and “surrendered animals” (ie: those animals who have been surrendered voluntarily to pounds by their owners or other members of the public).

The Division’s pound data collection survey makes a further distinction between those animals “surrendered” to council pounds by their owners (legally surrendering all claim to ownership) and those “abandoned” at council pounds by persons other than their owners or persons unknown. Common factors associated with surrender and abandonment include unwanted litters due to lack of desexing and impulse buying.

Figure 6: Breakdown of impounded cats by arrival type 2008/09 – 2010/11 (councils only)

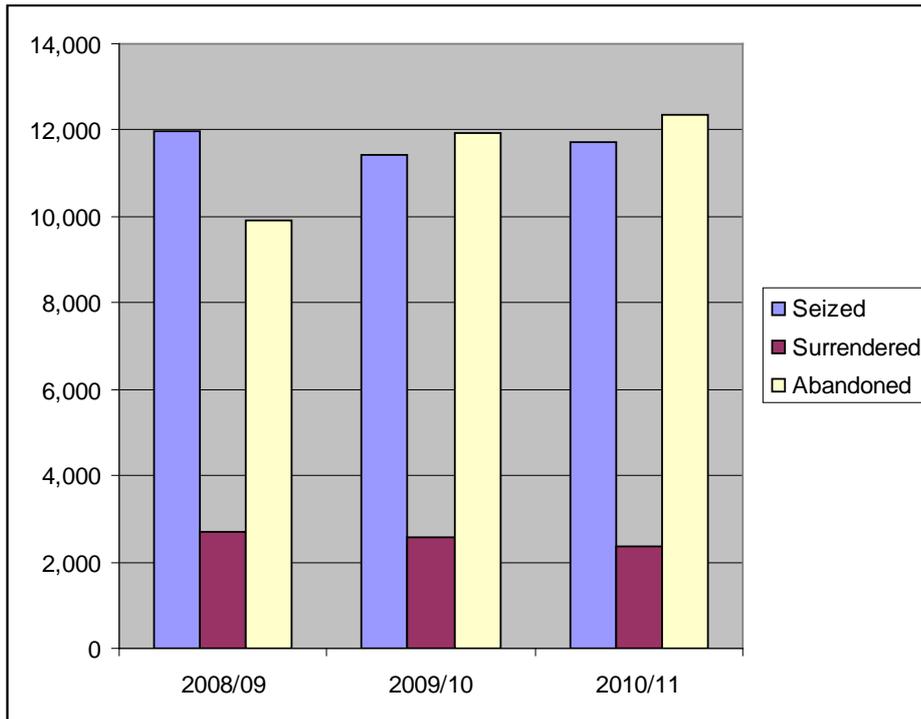


Table 6: Breakdown of impounded cats by arrival type 2008/09 – 2010/11 (councils only)

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Seized	11,989	11,441	11,737
Surrendered	2,689	2,593	2,365
Abandoned	9,908	11,948	12,375

Table 6 and Figure 6 show that the number of cats abandoned at council pounds increased by almost 25% in the period 2008/09 to 2010/11. By contrast, the numbers of impounded cats that were seized by councils and surrendered by their owners has remained relatively constant over the same period. In 2009/10, abandonment overtook seizure by council as the most common reason why cats arrived in council pounds.

Figure 7: Breakdown of impounded dogs by arrival type 2008/09 – 2010/11 (councils only)

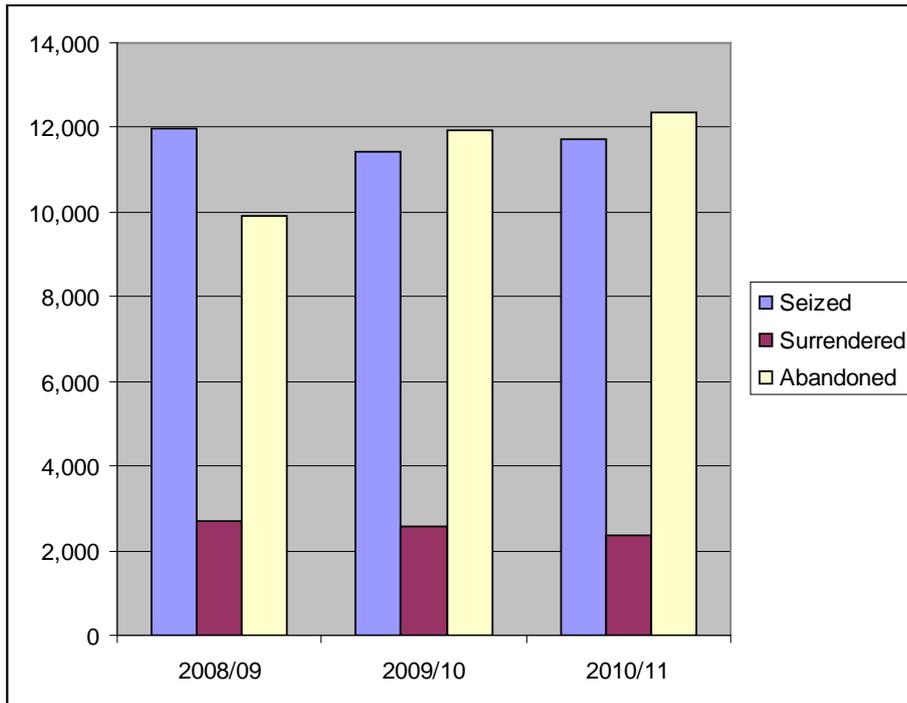


Table 7: Breakdown of impounded dogs by arrival type 2008/09 – 2010/11 (councils only)

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Seized	33,886	31,164	30,519
Surrendered	6,649	6,401	5,543
Abandoned	11,651	12,393	12,365

Table 7 and Figure 7 show that the number of dogs abandoned at council pounds increased by 6% in the period 2008/09 to 2010/11. By contrast, over the same period the numbers of impounded dogs that were seized by councils and surrendered by their owners decreased by 10% and 17% respectively. Seizure by council was consistently the most common reason dogs arrived in council pounds over the period, by a rate of greater than 2.4 to 1 in each year.

Overall, tables and figures 6 and 7 indicate that the increase in the number of abandoned cats over the period 2008/09 to 2010/11 was almost four times that of abandoned dogs.

G. OUTCOMES FOR IMPOUNDED ANIMALS

For the purposes of this analysis, impounded animals may be: returned to their owner, sold to a new owner, transferred to another organisation to be re-homed, or euthanased.

It should be noted that AWL includes in its “transferred to other organisation” data those animals that have been transferred to council pounds for this purpose. However, due to the relatively low numbers of animals in question this is not expected to impact significantly on total incoming animals at council pounds.

Figure 8 Outcomes for impounded cats (by organisation) 2010/11

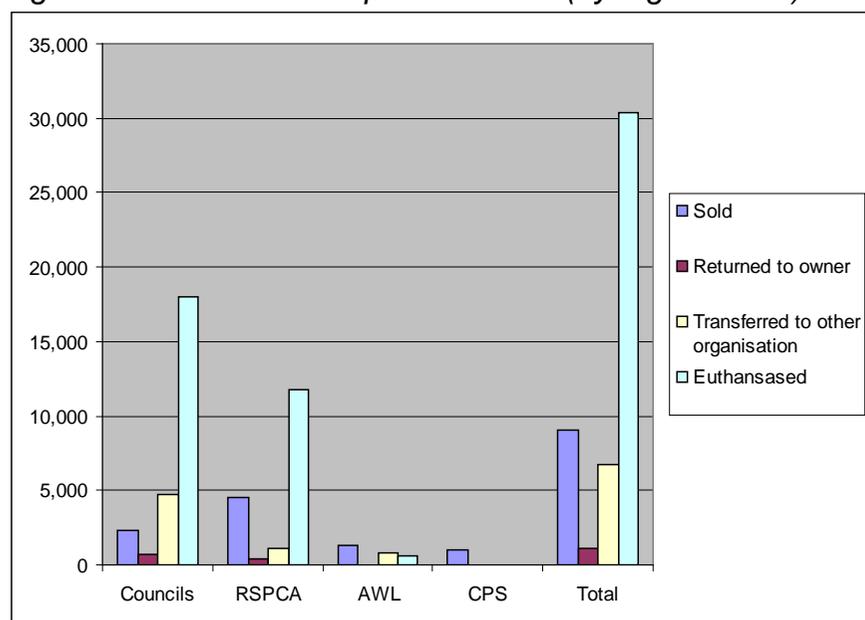


Table 8: Outcomes for impounded cats (by organisation) 2010/11

Cats	Councils	%	RSPCA ¹	%	AWL	%	CPS	%	Total	%
Sold	2,324	9%	4,554	26%	1,263	46%	960	96%	9,101	19%
Returned to owner	724	3%	360	2%	N/A	0%	14	1%	1,098	2%
Transferred to other organisation	4,775	18%	1,118	6%	813	30%	N/A	0%	6,706	14%
Euthansased	17,986	68%	11,721	66%	644	24%	22	2%	30,373	64%

¹ RSPCA totals have been revised to reflect known duplicated data reported by councils whose impounding facilities are operated by RSPCA.

Figure 9: Outcomes for impounded dogs (by organisation) 2010/11

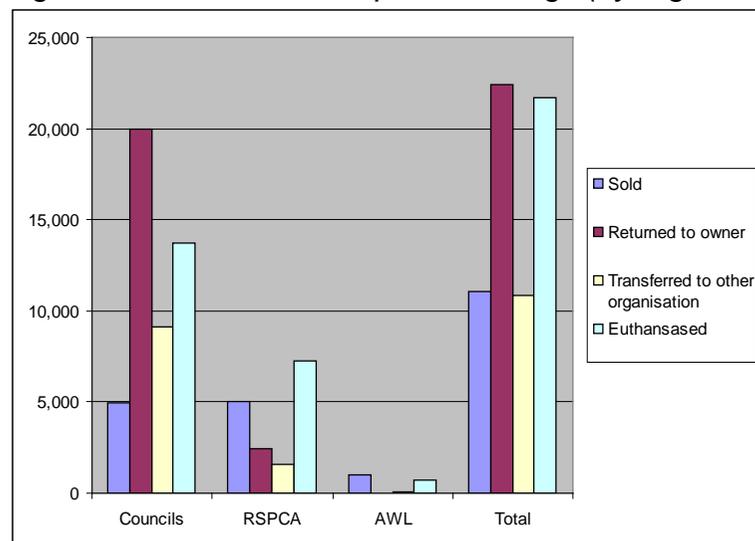


Table 9: Outcomes for impounded dogs (by organisation) 2010/11

Dogs	Councils	%	RSPCA ¹	%	AWL	%	Total	%
Sold	4,967	10%	5,052	31%	1,014	56%	11,033	17%
Returned to owner	19,983	41%	2,437	15%	N/A	0%	22,420	34%
Transferred to other organisation	9,151	19%	1,612	10%	85	5%	10,848	16%
Euthansased	13,707	28%	7,246	44%	717	39%	21,670	33%

¹ RSPCA totals have been revised to reflect known duplicated data reported by councils whose impounding facilities are operated by RSPCA.

Figures and Tables 8 and 9 show that outcomes for impounded dogs are more positive than those for cats, with 67% of all dogs impounded in 2010/11 being returned to their owners, sold or transferred to another organisation for re-homing, compared with only 35% of cats. While the euthanasia rate for impounded dogs was still relatively high at 33% it is much lower than the 64% reported for cats.

A major contributing factor to this situation may be many more cats than dogs are considered “unowned” including cats which are ‘semi-owned’. The failure of some owners to microchip their cat may also contribute, as may the capacity of cats to reproduce, which may account for large numbers of unwanted healthy kittens admitted to shelters.

APPENDIX 2 - COMPARISON OF AUSTRALIAN COMPANION ANIMAL LEGISLATION

The following information is sourced from RSPCA Australia's *Legislating to End Puppy Farming – The Way Forward* (2012).

Table 1: Relevant state and territory legislation with respect to traceability of companion animals (as at January 2012)

Legislation required	ACT	New South Wales	NT	Queensland	South Australia	Tas	Victoria	WA
Registration of breeders	Yes. Section 74 of the <i>Domestic Animals Act 2000</i> requires a person who owns a cat over 3 months or dog over 6 months that is not desexed to have a permit. This applies regardless of whether the person intends for the animal to breed.	No.	No.	Not currently. Division 10 of the <i>Subordinate Local Law No. 12 (Keeping and Control of Animals) 2007</i> (Gold Coast City Council) requires all persons keeping one (or more) entire cat or dog which the person "allows or encourages" to breed to have a breeder permit. (This is part of the Gold Coast pilot study.) Minister for Local Government has announced plans to implement the same requirements throughout the state by requiring breeder registration through the <i>Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008</i> . New arrangements were intended to be in effect by the end of 2011.	No.	No.	Yes. Section 45 of the <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i> requires breeders to be registered, but only if the breeder is a 'domestic animal business' which is relevantly defined as "an enterprise which carries out the breeding of cats and dogs to sell" and consists of 3 or more fertile dogs or cats, unless the breeder is part of a recognised breeding organisation, in which case the breeder must have over 10 fertile female dogs or cats to be subject to registration requirements.	Only for cats. Division 4 of Part 3 of the <i>Cat Act 2011</i> requires a person who breeds cats to apply to the local government to become an "approved cat breeder".

Table 1: Relevant state and territory legislation with respect to traceability of companion animals (as at January 2012) (continued)

Legislation required	ACT	New South Wales	NT	Queensland	South Australia	Tas	Victoria	WA
Compulsory microchipping	<p>Yes. Section 84 of the <i>Domestic Animals Act 2000</i> and Regulation 7 of the <i>Domestic Animals Regulation 2001</i> requires microchipping of cats and dogs prior to sale/transfer and by 12 weeks of age.</p> <p>Regulations 7 and 9 of the <i>Domestic Animals Regulation 2001</i> outline what information must be recorded in the microchip database. There is no requirement to record breeder information, or identification of mother.</p>	<p>Yes. Section 8 of the <i>Companion Animals Act 1998</i> requires microchipping of cats and dogs prior to sale/transfer and by 12 weeks of age.</p> <p>Regulation 8 of the <i>Companion Animals Regulation 2008</i> outlines what information must be recorded in the microchip database. There is no requirement to record breeder information, or identification of mother.</p>	No.	<p>Yes. Sections 13 and 14 of the <i>Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008</i> requires microchipping of cats and dogs prior to sale/transfer and prior to reaching 12 weeks of age.</p> <p>Schedule 2 of the <i>Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008</i> and Schedule 4 of the <i>Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Regulation 2009</i> outline what information must be recorded in the microchip database. There is currently no requirement to record breeder information, or identification of mother. However, the Minister for Local Government has announced plans to require the recording of the mother's microchip number.</p>	No.	<p>Yes but only for dogs. Section 15A of the <i>Dog Control Act 2000</i> requires microchipping of dogs at 6 months of age. There is no requirement to record breeder information, or identification of mother.</p>	<p>Yes. Section 10C of the <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i> requires cats and dogs to be microchipped as a condition of registration (which is compulsory once the animal is 3 months of age). However the requirement to microchip prior to sale/transfer under section 12A only applies to domestic animal businesses.</p> <p>Regulation 12 of the <i>Domestic Animals Regulations 2005</i> outlines what information must be recorded in the microchip database. There is no requirement to record breeder information, or identification of mother.</p>	<p>Only for cats. Sections 14 and 23 of the <i>Cat Act 2011</i> requires microchipping of cats prior to transfer/sale and by 6 months of age. There is no requirement to record breeder information, or identification of mother.</p>

Table 1: Relevant state and territory legislation with respect to traceability of companion animals (as at January 2012) (continued)

Legislation required	ACT	New South Wales	NT	Queensland	South Australia	Tas	Victoria	WA
Disclosure of breeder ID or microchip numbers	No.	No.	No.	<p>Not currently.</p> <p>Standard 37 of the <i>Code of Practice for the Keeping and Breeding of Entire Cats and Dogs</i> (Gold Coast City Council), requires breeder permit numbers to be displayed in advertisements but not at the point of sale.</p> <p>Minister for Local Government has announced plans to require disclosure of breeder permit numbers in advertisements and points of sale through amendments to <i>Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008</i>.</p>	No.	No.	Yes. Section 12A (2) of the <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i> requires an animal's microchip number to be displayed in any advertisement for the animal, but not at the point of sale. If the seller is a 'domestic animal business' the breeder may instead display the breeder registration number.	No.
Compulsory registration	Only for dogs. <i>Domestic Animals Act 2000</i> .	Yes. <i>Companion Animals Act 1998</i> .	No.	Yes. <i>Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008</i> .	Only for dogs. <i>Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i> .	Only for dogs. <i>Dog Control Act 2000</i> .	Yes. <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i> .	Yes. <i>Dog Act 1976</i> and <i>Cat Act 2011</i> .

Table 2: Relevant state and territory legislation with respect to breeder standards (as at January 2012)

Legislation required	ACT	New South Wales	NT	Queensland	South Australia	Tas	Victoria	WA
Compulsory breeder standards	No. The <i>Animal Welfare Act 1992</i> adopts the <i>Animal Welfare (Welfare of Cats in the ACT) Code of Practice 2007</i> and the <i>Animal Welfare (Welfare of Dogs in the ACT) Code of Practice 2010</i> which both contain provisions regarding breeding but they are not mandatory Codes.	Yes. The standards prescribed in the Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding of Cats and Dogs are mandatory, and apply to ‘animal trades’. Animal trades are any ‘trade, business or profession’ in the course of which animals are bred for fee or reward. <i>Section 4, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979.</i> <i>Clause 20 and Schedule. 2, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (General) Regulation 2006</i>	No.	Not currently. Gold Coast City Council has developed a <i>Code of Practice for the Keeping and Breeding of Entire Cats and Dogs</i> . Compliance with the Standards prescribed in the Code is a condition of the breeder permit: s.52, <i>Subordinate Local Law No. 12 (Keeping and Control of Animals) 2007</i> (Gold Coast City Council). Biosecurity Queensland has recently released the first draft of the <i>Queensland Standards and Guidelines for the Welfare of Animals: Breeding Dogs</i> for public comment. The Minister for Local Government has announced that when these Standards have been finalised they will be adopted under the <i>Animal Care and Protection Act 2001</i> .	No.	No.	Yes. Breeders who run an ‘enterprise for profit’ are required to comply with the provisions of the <i>Code of Practice for the Operation of Breeding and Rearing Establishments: s.63A, Domestic Animals Act 1994</i> .	No.

Appendix 2 - List of submitters to Companion Animals Taskforce discussion paper

Note: This list only includes those who indicated that they are happy for their submission to be made public. Where no response has been given to this question it has been assumed that consent to release is not given.

Name	Organisation	Organisation type
A C Partridge (Dr)		Interested individual
Aaron Klase		Interested individual
Adam Lindley		Interested individual
Adele Jago		Interested individual
Adele Lindley	PADS - Personal Assistance Dogs Solutions	Industry organisation
Adele Lloyd (Dr)	Sentient - The Veterinary Institute for Animal Ethics	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Adrian Keast	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Adriane D Millner	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Aileen Jenkins	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Airlie White	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Alan & Judith Poulton	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Alan Hunt		Other
Alan Priestley	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Alarna Jenkins		Interested individual
Alex Maynard		Interested individual
Ali Burton		Interested individual
Alisa Paterson		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Alisha Forbes	Hunter Animal Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Alison Lester		Interested individual
Alison McLeod		Interested individual
Alison Smith	Hunter Animal Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Alissa		Interested individual
Allen & Kylie Hill	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Allen Lee	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Alyshia Hansen		Interested individual
Amanda		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Amanda Atkinson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Amanda Goodall	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Amanda Hoy	Hunter Animal Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Amanda Krause		Interested individual
Amanda Smith	Member - Dogs NSW	State agency
Amber	Elbouch	Interested individual
Amber Cameron	Individual	Interested individual
Amy Greenshields		Other
Amy Gunson		Interested individual
Ana		Interested individual
Andrea Cronshaw		Interested individual
Andrew Chippendale		Interested individual
Andrew Ference		Interested individual
Andrew Gordon	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Andrew McMaster		Community group
Andrew O'Shea	Camden Valley Animal Hospitals	Other
Andrew Richards	Australian American Pitbull Terrier Association (NSW)	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Andrew Wardle	Pet owner	Interested individual
Angela Anderson		Other
Angela Connell		Interested individual
Angela Haddow	Hunter Animal Rescue	Other
Angela Pollard	Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre	Community group
Angela Zhang	Usyd Animal Welfare Society	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Anita Chan		Interested individual
Anita Langford		Interested individual
Anita Strong	DogTech Hills District NSW	Industry organisation
Anli Carlsson		Other
Ann Darcy		Interested individual
Ann Morrison		Interested individual
Ann Moy		Interested individual
Ann Parks		Interested individual
Anna Hartree		Community group
Anna Jurs	Essential Energy	Interested individual
Anna Karas	Arctic Breed Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Anna Nolan	Cat Rescue NSW	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Anna-Lee Forsberg		Interested individual
Anne Fawcett (Dr)		Interested individual
Anne Greenaway		Interested individual
Anne Heilman-Inglis		Interested individual
Anne Hutchins		State agency
Anne I Howard	Doberman Club of NSW Inc	Interested individual
Anne I Howard	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Anne McIntyre		Interested individual
Anne Newnham		Interested individual
Anne Parry	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Anne Raftl		Interested individual
Anne Rauch		Interested individual
Anne Rees		Community group
Anne-Marie Godyn	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Annika Tofferi	Monika's Doggie Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation

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Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Annita Grabham		Community group
Anonymous		Interested individual
Anonymous		Interested individual
Anthea Karras		Interested individual
Anthony Macarthur		Interested individual
Anthony Taylor	The City of Newcastle Council	Council
Antje Taylor		Interested individual
April Lee Fletcher		Interested individual
Aria Lee		Interested individual
Arthur Cunningham	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Arthur Frauefelder (Dr)	Hume, Allpets and Melrose animal hospitals	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Ashlea Reason	Member- Dogs NSW	Community group
Ashley		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Ashley Evenden		Interested individual
B & V Holland	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Baden Davis	Interested Breeder and shower	Interested individual
Barb Santos		Interested individual
Barbara Broughton	Dogs NSW JARKK Labradors	Interested individual
Barbara Elise Trytko	AMRAA Inc. Alaskan Malamute rehoming Aid Aust.	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Barbara Helland	Member NSW Canine Council - Dogs NSW	Community group
Barbara Jackson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Barbara McAndrew		Interested individual
Barbara Munday		Other
Barbara Rendall		Interested individual
Barbara Robinson		Other
Barbara Steffensen	Animal Rights & Rescue group	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Barry Denson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Barry Ryan	Member - Dogs NSW	Industry organisation
Beate Mies		Interested individual
Beatrice S		Interested individual
Belinda		Other
Belinda Hales		Interested individual
Belinda Hales	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Belinda Mitchell		Other
Belinda Parker		Interested individual
Belinda Price		Interested individual
Belinda Wright	Dogs NSW	Community group
Ben Rosen	Wyong Shire Council	Council
Benn Banasik	Deputy Mayor - Wollondilly Shire Council	Council
Bernadette Kennedy	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Bernadette McMullin		Interested individual
Beryl Rand	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Bettina Knott	Retail employee	Interested individual
Betty Webb		Interested individual
Bev Maunsell		Other
Beverley Balkind		Interested individual
Beverley Barter		Interested individual
BJ Biggs	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Bob Croucher	Pet Industry News	Other
Boh Yeng		Interested individual
Brad Wenman		Interested individual
Brenda Mackay	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Brian	Wildlife Protection Group	Community group
Brian & Maureen Hanley	Dogs NSW	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Brian Bell	Lake Macquarie City Council	Council
Brian Cambourne	Australasian Bosdog Society Incorporated	Community group
Brian Cox		Interested individual
Brian Powyer		Interested individual
Briana Lehrer		Interested individual
Bridget Berry		Interested individual
Brioney Kirby		Interested individual
Britt Putland		Interested individual
Bronwen Bowskill		Interested individual
Bronwen Harrison		Interested individual
Bronwyn Conyers		Interested individual
Bronwyn Gaywood	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Bronwyn Kable		Interested individual
Bronwynne Goyen		Community group
Brooke Walker		Interested individual
Bruce Bowden		Interested individual
Byron Morris		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Camilla Cowley		Other
Cara Glover		Interested individual
Carla Smith		Interested individual
Carla Stitt	Hunter Animal Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Carlie		Interested individual
Carmel Dowley		Interested individual
Carol Abrahams		Interested individual
Carol Ann Roach	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Carol Archer	Member - Dogs NSW	State agency
Carol Griffiths		Interested individual

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Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Carole Bryant		Other
Carole Pryce-Jones		Interested individual
Carolee Elso		Interested individual
Carolina Rodriguez		Interested individual
Caroline Compton		Interested individual
Caroline Elder	Member - Dogs NSW	Industry organisation
Caroline Hager	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Caroline Hamilton	Monika's Doggie Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Caroline Perrin		Interested individual
Caroline Walters	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Caroline Zambrano	Pet Journalist	Other
Carolyn Bridge		Interested individual
Carolyn Burch		Interested individual
Carolyn P Butler	Kazia Kennels	Interested individual
Carolyn Vicary	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Casey Morrison	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Casey Regan		Interested individual
Cassie		Interested individual
Cath Phillips	mindDog	Other
Catherine Beer		Interested individual
Catherine Biasutti		Interested individual
Catherine Garland	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Catherine Martin		Interested individual
Catherine Robinson		Other
Cathy Amos		Other
Cathy Conlon		Interested individual
Cathy Crow	Dogs' Homes of Tasmania	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Cathy Davies	Dogs NSW	Community group
Charissa McCluskey-Garcia		Interested individual
Charles Giles		Interested individual
Charles Meader	The Hills Shire Council	Council
Charles Turton	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Charlie Clarke	Greater Hume Shire Council	Council
Charlotte J Shields	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Charmaine Kennedy	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Cheryl Frencham		Interested individual
Cheryl Rogers		Interested individual
Cheryl Turner		Interested individual
Cheryl Venables		Interested individual
Chloe Mason		Interested individual
Chris		Interested individual
Chris Adamson	Solicitor and barrister	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Chris Gleisner	Freelance Photographer & Animal Foster Carer	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Chris Meakin		Interested individual
Chris Neaves	Lithgow City Council	Council
Christine Darwen	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Christine Fitzgerald	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Christine Job		Interested individual
Christine Kemp		Interested individual
Christine Mann	Dogs NSW	Community group
Christine Nash	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Christine Smith	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Christine Yurovich	Cat alliance of australia inc	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Christopher Rees		Community group
Claire Bowry	Veterinary Nurse	Interested individual
Claire Grose		Interested individual
Claire Laverick		Interested individual
Claire Ryan		Interested individual
Claire Wade	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Coleen Stirton	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Colin & Shirley Ford	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Colin Anderson	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Colleen Finch	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Colleen Ritchard	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Connie Kerr	Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Corinne Kelly		Interested individual
Coty Cortese		Interested individual
Courtney Collins	Tarmac Bengals	Other
Craig Vroblfski	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Cynthia McDonall		Interested individual
D & J M Bartley	Members Dogs NSW	Interested individual
D Lyons	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
D Sayer		Interested individual
D Starr		Interested individual
D Royal	Cat Fanciers Assoc NSW	Interested individual
Damien Turner	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Dana Eirosius		Interested individual
Danica Remin		Other
Danielle		Interested individual
Danielle Joyner		Interested individual
Danielle Manton		Interested individual
Danika Smith		Interested individual

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Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Danko Roso	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Darelle Krueger	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Darren McFarlane	Albury City Council	Council
Darren Spiteri		Interested individual
David A Knox	Member- Dogs NSW	Community group
David Atwell	Society of Companion Animal Rescuers	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
David Brooks	Coffs Harbour City Council	Council
David Carter	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
David Cooke		Interested individual
David Hamilton		Community group
David Lassam	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
David Robertson		Interested individual
Debbie		Interested individual
Debbie Henderson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Debbie Meagher		Interested individual
Debbie O'Donnell	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Debbie Roots		Interested individual
Deborah Clift	Southern Animal Referral Centre	Interested individual
Deborah Cuneen		Interested individual
Deborah Ferry		Interested individual
Deborah Kelton		Interested individual
Deborah King	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Deborah Neumann	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Debra Darling		Interested individual
Debra Jacques	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Debra McDougall		Interested individual
Debra Stubbings		Interested individual
Dee	Kurrer	Interested individual
Dee Zen		Interested individual
Deirdre Bolwell	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Deirdre Crofts		Industry organisation
Deirdre Mason		Interested individual
Denise Haddow		Interested individual
Denise Sheekey		Interested individual
Denise Smith		Interested individual
Dennis Tracey	Kiama Municipal Council	Council
Derek Knox		Interested individual
Di Gooding	Member - Dogs NSW and PIAA	Community group
Diana Felton	Interested individual	Interested individual
Diana Fenton		Other
Diana Perkins		Interested individual
Diane Gatenby	Ellerman Park Bushcare	Community group
Diane McMaster	Dogs NSW	Community group
Dianne Aliverti	Community Group	Community group
Dianne Brennan		Interested individual
Dianne M Milthorpe		Interested individual
Dianne Pro		Interested individual
Dianne Roberts	Dogs NSW	Community group
Dionne Ong		Interested individual
Dominique		Interested individual
Dominique Wilson		Interested individual
Donna Hardy	Hunter Animal Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Donna Madders		Interested individual
Donna Meredith	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Donna Morris	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Donna Schmelitschek	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
E E J Sykes	Member - Dogs NSW	State agency
Edward Caruana		Other
Edward Hardwicke		Interested individual
Edward Wyatt	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Edyta Zurawski	NSW Young Lawyers Animal Law Committee	Other
Eira Battaglia	Sydney Metropolitan Wildlife Services	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Elaine Belleville		Interested individual
Eleanor Whatmuff	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Elena		Interested individual
Eleonora Horton		Interested individual
Elizabeth Crothers		Other
Elizabeth Davidson	Member - DogsNSW	Community group
Elizabeth Ellis		Interested individual
Elizabeth Hunn	Usyd vet sci	Interested individual
Elizabeth Livanos		Interested individual
Elizabeth Milne	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Elizabeth Richmond		Interested individual
Elizabeth-Anthony Lee		Interested individual
Elke Moser	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Elyse Weatherby		Interested individual
Emma Bigwood		Interested individual
Emma Clarke	Hunter Animal Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Emma Craig	Animal Welfare League NSW	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Emma Falzon		Interested individual
Emma Fowler	Wagga Animal Rescue Inc.	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Emma Hodgson		Interested individual

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Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Emmanuel Gatt	community group	Community group
Erica Meehan	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Ernie Sparham	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Errol Bador		Other
Eva Krynda	NSWCFA Registered Cat breeder	Interested individual
Eva Moodie	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
F Dowling	MD Real Estate	Other
Fay Stokes	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Fiona Floyd		Interested individual
Fiona Fox		Interested individual
Fiona McKinnon		Interested individual
Frances Mason	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Frances Scarano		Interested individual
G and A Brown	Dogs NSW - registered breeder & Members	Community group
G M Grahame	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Gabrielle Flavin		Interested individual
Gabrielle Ryan		Interested individual
Gail Arkell	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Gail Charlton	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Gail Ingersoll	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Gail Mitchell		Interested individual
Gameford Maltese	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Gareth Beal		Interested individual
Garry Douglas	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Garry Meusburger	Wollongong City Council	Council
Garry Moeller		Other
Garry Stephens		Interested individual
Gaye Lees	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Gayl Deveney		Interested individual
Gayle Bloomfield		Interested individual
Geari Rose		Interested individual
Geoff Davidson		Interested individual
Geoffrey Grant		Interested individual
Georgah		Interested individual
Geraldine Foti	Dogs NSW	Community group
Gerrard Cobcroft	Blacktown City Council	Council
Gerry Burnage	Byron Shire Council	Council
Gervaise Gaunt	RSPCA	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Gilbert Grace		Interested individual
Gill Morphet	Labrador Rescue Inc	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Gina House		Interested individual
Gino Mammoliti		Interested individual
Giuliano Roncone		Interested individual
Glen McAtear	Cootamundra Shire Council	Council
Glenda Baldock	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Gloria Haynes	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Gordon Huskinson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Graeme McCaffery		Interested individual
Graeme Purvis	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Graham Evans	Graham Evans	Interested individual
Graham Pickford	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Grahame Curtis		Interested individual
Greg Dale	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Greg Hunt	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Gregory Radford	Hunter Animal Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Gregory Rogers	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Greta Martin		Other
Gretchen Gamble		Other
Guy Hartcher (Dr)	Member AWL NSW and Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Hannah Steeds		Other
Hazel Marshall-Davis	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Heather Robertson	RSPCA	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Heather Vaughan		Interested individual
Heidemarie Wegner		Interested individual
Helen Cox		Interested individual
Helen Lancaster	Australasian Bosdog Society Incorporated	Community group
Helen Schaecken	Member - Dogs NSW	Industry organisation
Helen Wilkins (Dr)	Warringah Council	Interested individual
Henk Plancke	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Henry Aliverti	Community Group	Community group
Hildegard Schliefert	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Holly Manwaring		Interested individual
Hope Kramer		Interested individual
Hugh Gent	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Ian and Lesley Connor	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Ian Olsen		Interested individual
Inez		Interested individual
Irene Doutney	City of Sydney	Council
Irene Miller	Interested Individual	Interested individual
Isabel MacPhillamy	USyd	Other
Isabel Thai		Interested individual
Isobel Holcombe	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group

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Name	Organisation	Organisation type
J A Spears	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
J Humphrey	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
J L Deem		Interested individual
J Len		Interested individual
Jacinda Tunks		Interested individual
Jacinta Dalton		Interested individual
Jacqueline Walker	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Jacquelyn Valladares		Interested individual
Jacqui Merriel		Interested individual
Jade		Interested individual
Jaime Jackson	Vet student and registered breeder	Interested individual
Jaimee-Lei Richens		Interested individual
James Mackender	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
James McDonald		Interested individual
James Menzies		Interested individual
Jamie Wilson		Interested individual
Jan and Jack Wallace	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Jan Kowarzik	Albury RSPCA	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Jan Lawler	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Jan Rasmussen		Interested individual
Jane Clements		Interested individual
Jane Davis	Member- Dogs NSW	Community group
Jane Logan		Interested individual
Jane Lubrano		Interested individual
Jane Menzies		Interested individual
Jane Quinn	Dogs NSW Member and registered breeder	Other
Jane Robinson		Interested individual
Jane Thomas	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Janelle Cooper		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Janet		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Janet Biemond		Interested individual
Janet Halliday	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Janet Wickens	Penrith Animal Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Janette Korenz		Interested individual
Janice Bartlett	Narga	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Janice Boyce	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Janine Purser		Interested individual
Janis Johnston		Interested individual
Jann Lee	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Jarrold Ling		Interested individual
Jason Christie		Other
Jason Kniepp	Kogarah City Council	Council
Jason Mountney		Interested individual
Jayne		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Jean Spiteri		Interested individual
Jeana Kernot	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Jeanette Akkanen		Interested individual
Jeanette Grayston	Dog club	Interested individual
Jeanie Muspratt		Interested individual
Jeff Knight	Willoughby City Council	Council
Jeffrey Griffiths		Interested individual
Jenine Glenn	Dogs NSW - Tarraray Pet Retreat - Happy Paws Haven - AWL - RSPCA	Industry organisation
Jenneffer Raftl		Interested individual
Jenni		Interested individual
Jenni Neary		Interested individual
Jennie Bellamy		Interested individual
Jennifer Arthur	Laughing Willows	Other
Jennifer Buckmaster	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Jennifer Fuller		Interested individual
Jennifer Hunt	Pet Medical Crisis Fund	Other
Jennifer Perry	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Jennifer Skinner		Other
Jennifer Taylor		Interested individual
Jennifer Whitehead		Interested individual
Jenny Buddle		Interested individual
Jenny Parker		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Jenny Riley	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Jenny Storaker	CatRescue NSW	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Jeremy Cole	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Jess Hayes		Interested individual
Jessica		Interested individual
Jessica Kinsley		Interested individual
Jessica Meares		Interested individual
Jessica Pincham		Interested individual
Jill Brown	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Jillian Barton		Interested individual
Jo McIntyre		Interested individual
Joan Beal		Interested individual
Joan O'Loughlin		Interested individual
Joan Robyn Buckland	Member of DogsNSW	Community group
Joanne Eddy	ANCATS	Other

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Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Joanne Hagan		Interested individual
Joanne Lyons		Other
Joanne Stead	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Joanne Waugh		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Joanne Zerzvadse	Veterinary Nurse & Dog Trainer	Interested individual
Jocelyn Thompson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Jodi Carter		Interested individual
Jodi Palmer		Interested individual
Joe Kielniacz	North Sydney Council	Council
Joe Monks		Interested individual
Joey Teo		Interested individual
John Asquith	Community Environment Network Inc	Community group
John Bryson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
John Carr		Interested individual
John Casimiro	Wyong Council	Council
John Celesti		Interested individual
John Farrell	Member - Dogs NSW	Industry organisation
John Forbes	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
John Goldsbrough	Hills Shire Council Seville Reserve Bushcare Group	Council
John Gordon	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
John Holland		Interested individual
John Jamieson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
John Longton	Bushcare Volunteer	Interested individual
Johnny White	Warren Shire Council	Council
Jon Sword		Interested individual
Jonathon Nash	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Jonene Rusden		Interested individual
Jordan Clarke		Interested individual
Joseph Law	Member of Dogs NSW	Community group
Joseph Mangeruga		Interested individual
Josephine Romeo	Cat breeder	Other
Josh Honeyman		Interested individual
Josh Vernon-Rogers		Interested individual
Josie Gray		Interested individual
Joy Verrinder	Animal Welfare League QLD	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Jude Tankard	Member- Dogs NSW	Community group
Judi Chesney-Coward		Community group
Judith Ovens	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Judy and Darryl Turley	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Judy de Jong	AWL, Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Judy Findlay	DCH Animal Adoptions	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Judy Thomas	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Judy Vial		Interested individual
Julia Barnett	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Julia Staebe		Interested individual
Julia Tamplenizza		Interested individual
Julian Dresser		Interested individual
Julian Guthrie		Interested individual
Juliana		Interested individual
Julie		Interested individual
Julie Dickinson Franks	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Julie Gotch	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Julie Greathead	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Julie Herring		Interested individual
Julie Hoskison		Interested individual
Julie Huber	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Julie Nelson	Master Dog Breeders and Associates	Industry organisation
Julioa Robins		Interested individual
K Anderson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
K Spiteri	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Kadie Joyce-Bates	Cat Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Kaisa Korkala		Interested individual
Karen Berger		Other
Karen Caldwell		Interested individual
Karen Galbraith	ANKC registered breeder	Industry organisation
Karen Hedberg	North Richmond Veterinary Hospital	Interested individual
karen Morgan		Interested individual
Karen Neil		Interested individual
Karen Neyle	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Karen Schlieper		Interested individual
Karen Shepherd		Interested individual
Karen Stiles		Interested individual
Karen Vickery	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Karen Williams		Interested individual
Karen Wynn		Interested individual
Karenne Boorman	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Karin		Interested individual
Karin Viles		Interested individual
Karina Leung		Interested individual
Kasey Cousins		Other
Katannya		Interested individual

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Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Kate		Interested individual
Kate Holland		Interested individual
Kate Lasker		Interested individual
Katharine L Schoeffel	Australian Association of Pet Dog Breeders	Industry organisation
Katherine Ingwersen		Interested individual
Katherine White		Other
Kathryn Clowry	Irishclan Kennels	Other
Kathryn Smith	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Kathryn Woolfe		Interested individual
Kathy Cosentino	Rhodesian Ridgeback Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Kathy Gill	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Kathy Gore		Interested individual
Kathy Reidy		Interested individual
Katrina Koutsellis		Interested individual
Katrina Morton	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Katrina Swifte	Dog Rescue Newcastle	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Katrina Schyndel		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Kay Eldred	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Kay Filce	Blacktown AHF Volunteer	Council
Keiran Smith		Community group
Keith Ellis	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Keith Meredith	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Kellie Bourke		Interested individual
Kelly Bartley		Interested individual
Kelsie White		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Ken Ball		Community group
Kendall Richards		Interested individual
Kenneth Connor	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Keren	RSPCA	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Kerry Adams		Interested individual
Kerry Bailey		Interested individual
Kerry Cannon	Kangala Kennels	Interested individual
Kerry Darcovich		Interested individual
Kerry De Stefano	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Kerry Kasper		Interested individual
Kerry Wyburd	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Kevin Bleakley	Member - Dogs NSW	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Kevin Wilkinson		Community group
Kim Burey	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Kim Rogers	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Kimbah Pengelly	Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre	Community group
Kimm Bourke	Holistic Practitioner	Interested individual
Kirily Thornton-Parkes		State agency
Kirsten McKenna		Interested individual
Kirsty McLaughlin	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
KM McNamara	Dogs NSW - Registered Breeder	Community group
Kristen Brown		Interested individual
Kristen McCarter		Interested individual
Kristina Vesk	Cat Protection Society of NSW	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Krystal Ruch		Interested individual
Kursty Durrant		Other
Kylie		Interested individual
Kylie Grinham	Kylie Grinham Photography	Interested individual
Kylie Paintain	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Kylie Radford		Interested individual
Kym Fletcher		Other
L Gibbon		Interested individual
L White (Mr & Mrs)	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Lacharna Thompson		Interested individual
Lani Smith		Interested individual
Lara Symkowiak	Camden Council	Council
Laura Allen		Interested individual
Laura FitzPatrick	Member - Dog NSW	Community group
Lauren Hendry Parsons		Interested individual
Lauren Somers	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Laurie Wheeler		Community group
Lawrence David Phillips		Interested individual
Lea Rushforth		Other
Leah Ryan	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Leanne Boote	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Leanne Cork		Interested individual
Leanne Harrison	American Staffordshire Club	Other
Leanne Inkster		Interested individual
Lee Fletcher	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Lee Knight	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Lee Wilmott		Interested individual
Leesa Musgrove	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Leilani Smith		Interested individual
Leonie & Steve Neill	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Leonie Bok	Aldaacs Kennels	Interested individual
Leonie Haywood	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Lesley Inkson	Purrfect Match Cat Adoptions	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation

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Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Lesley Simpson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Lesley Thorpe		Interested individual
Lesley Withers	Renbury Farm Animal Shelter	Industry organisation
Leslie A Weston	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Liana Bettison		Community group
Lily		Interested individual
Linda Bagnall		Community group
Linda Barter		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Linda Burgoyne		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Linda Duffell	Cat Rescue Sydney	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Linda Millington	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Linda Quinto	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Linda Ryan		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Linda Velosky	Oscars Law	Community group
Lindsey		Interested individual
Lindy Bartter	Oscars Law	Interested individual
Lisa		Interested individual
Lisa Bicknell		Interested individual
Lisa Gleeson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Lisa Harris		Interested individual
Lisa Maroulis		Interested individual
Lisa Scarborough	Cat Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Lisa White		Interested individual
Lisa White	Friends of the Hound Inc.	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Lisa Willock		Interested individual
Liverpool Council		Council
Liz Field	Wild Life Protection Group, Blue Mountains	Community group
Lizzi Lovegrove		Interested individual
Lonni Allan		Interested individual
Loren Henny		Interested individual
Lorine Marsh		Interested individual
Lorna Miller		Interested individual
Lorraine Barnes	Renbury Farm	Industry organisation
Lorraine Emerton		Interested individual
Lorraine Shaw	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Lou Fury		Interested individual
Louise		Interested individual
Louise Bennett		Interested individual
Louise Cocks		Interested individual
Louise Greenaway	Bateau Bay Shelly Beach Progress Association	Community group
Louise Maddalena	Camden Council	Council
Louise Maddalena		Interested individual
Louise O'Rourke		Interested individual
Louise Patterson	Member - Dogs NSW Registered Breeder	Community group
Lucy Gray		Interested individual
Lucy Mark		Interested individual
Lucy Williams	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Luigi Ricco		Other
Luke Hessell		Interested individual
Luke Russell		Interested individual
Lyn Crandon		Interested individual
Lynda Brandt	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Lynda Lanser		Interested individual
Lynda Marie Jamieson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Lyndel Taylor		Interested individual
Lynette Murphy	Merijigs Kerry Blue Terriers	Other
Lynette Shanley	Wild Cats Plus	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Lynn Atkin		Other
Lynn G Butler	Kazia Kennels	Interested individual
Lynn Hunter		Interested individual
M & J Layton	Monikas doggy rescue	Interested individual
M Baker	Cavalrite	Interested individual
M C Bolton	Foxdale Maremma's	Community group
M D Shield	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
M Dunscombe	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
M G & Y J Beasleigh	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
M Maguire	Member - Dogs NSW	Industry organisation
M McDowell		Other
M Thomas		Interested individual
Maddison McMaster	Member- Dogs NSW	Community group
Madelene Sewell		Interested individual
Madison		Interested individual
Maggie David		Interested individual
Malcolm Fleming		Industry organisation
Mandy Sansom	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Manuela Crannis		Other
Marcela Kaspar		Interested individual
Marcia Davey	Pawsonality	Interested individual
Margaret Broughton	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Margaret Giles		Other
Margaret Mason		Interested individual
Margaret Meek		Interested individual

Appendix 2 - List of submitters to Companion Animals Taskforce discussion paper

Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Margaret Morgan		Community group
Margaret Sadana		Interested individual
Margaret Setter	Member Animal Liberation NSW	Interested individual
Margaret Stephens		Interested individual
Maria		Interested individual
Maria Reardon		Interested individual
Maria Wheeler		Interested individual
Marian Payne		Interested individual
Marianne Oxford		Interested individual
Marie Adams		Interested individual
Marie Donell		Interested individual
Mariette Blackmore	Special Dogs Rescue Group	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Marilyn Austen		Interested individual
Marilyn Hoey		Interested individual
Marilyn Parker	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Marilyn Smith	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Marina Taylor		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Marion Street		Interested individual
Marion Williams		Interested individual
Mark Legge		Interested individual
Mark Robertson	Narromine Shire Council	Council
Mark Titley		Interested individual
Marlow Magnayon	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Marnie Davidson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Marolga Tudorin	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Martha Watts		Interested individual
Martin Beves		Interested individual
Mary		Interested individual
Mary Ancich	BowMeow Inc	Community group
Mary Kerr	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Mary Law	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Maryann Whitlock		Interested individual
Maureen Baldwin		Interested individual
Maureen McNicoll	NSW CFA	Other
Megan Coller		Other
Megan Kain	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Megan Purtill	Registered Breeder	Community group
Mel Wilkerson	Tumut Shire Council	Council
Melanie Finlay		Interested individual
Melanie Harrison	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Melanie Isaacs		Other
Melinda Davis		Interested individual
Melissa Browne		Interested individual
Melissa Craig		Community group
Melissa Dean	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Melody Gouniai		Interested individual
Meredith		Interested individual
Merrilee Brookes	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Merryn Mackay		Other
MF Dalziel		Interested individual
Michael & Sandra Reeve		Interested individual
Michael Difford	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Michael Hogan		Interested individual
Michael Jarman	Shoalhaven City Council	Council
Michael Vincent		Interested individual
Michela Brown	Northern Rivers Animal Services Inc.	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Michele Cernik		Interested individual
Michele Nimmo	Alaskan Malamute Rehoming Aid Aust Inc.	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Michelle Alber	Sydney Pet Rescue & Adoption Inc	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Michelle Cook		Interested individual
Michelle Jones	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Michelle Marion		Interested individual
Michelle Pokorny		Interested individual
Michelle Read-Zorn	Warringah Companion Animal Community Committee	Community group
Michelle Roux	Cat Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Michelle S Zammit	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Michelle Strain	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Michelle Tydeman		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Mike		Interested individual
Miriam O'Callaghan	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Mirren Palmer		Interested individual
Molly Buntine		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Monica Wisniewski	Gizmo's Rescue Australia	Community group
Monika Pfeiffer	Doggie Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Monique		Interested individual
Monique & Paul Cheney		Interested individual
Motra Hayward		Interested individual
MR Hunt	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Myron Arthur		Other
Nancy O'Connor		Interested individual
Narelle & Rick Taylor		Other

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Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Narelle Hobson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Narelle Lewis	Paws N Hooves Animal Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Narelle Spencer	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Natalie Mayes		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Natalie Meyer		Interested individual
Natalie Prosser	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Natalie Teasdale		Interested individual
Natalie Will	Mosman Vet Hospital	Other
Natasha Adnol	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Natasha Charlton		Interested individual
Natasha Williams		Interested individual
Neil Curwen		Interested individual
Neil Ralph		Interested individual
Neil Weeks		Community group
Nerida Atkin		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Neva Forbes	No Kill Pet Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Neville Kirkham	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Nicholas McCreaney	Member - Dogs NSW	State agency
Nick Behne-Smith		Interested individual
Nicky		Interested individual
Nicky		Interested individual
Nicky Hay		Interested individual
Nicky Solomon		Interested individual
Nicola Vaughan		Interested individual
Nicole Dwyer	Member- Dogs NSW	Community group
Nicole Erntner		Interested individual
Nicole Lane	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Nicole Morgan	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Nigel Birt	Port Macquarie Animal Welfare Service Inc	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Nikki White	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Nita Harvey		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Noeline Purdy	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Noelle Revera	Mayday Dog Rescue Club Inc.	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Noreen Clark		Other
Norman Hunt		Interested individual
Norman Porter		Interested individual
Norman Porter	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Olga Parkes	Hunter Animal Watch Inc	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Oliver Conradi		Interested individual
Olivia Law		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
PA Gillespie	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Paddy Murdock	NSW and ACT CKAs	Interested individual
Pam Cameron		Interested individual
Pam Holmes	Grafton Animal Rescue inc	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Pam Withers	Member- Dogs NSW	Community group
Pamela & Charles Gauci	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Pamela Ellis	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Pamela Gerrey	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Pamela Moodie	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Pamela Traynor		Interested individual
Pat Kentwell	Member - Dogs NSW	State agency
Patricia Cassidy	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Patricia Stammers	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Patricia Thomas	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Patty Sedat	Celticbrae Kennels	Interested individual
Paul Crossley		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Paul Curley	Campbelltown City Council	Council
Paul Hofman	Member - Dogs NSW	Industry organisation
Paul Hutton		Interested individual
Paul Lewis	Paws 'n' Hooves Incorporated	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Paula Bologa		Interested individual
Paula Bradley		Interested individual
Paula Dodson		Interested individual
Paulene Andrews	Dogs NSW breeder show exhibitor	State agency
Paulene Zullo	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Pauline Nyburg	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Pearl Champion		Interested individual
Penelope Fischer		Interested individual
Penelope Wardle	Volunteer at CPS Enmore	Interested individual
Penni Potts	Traks Group	Interested individual
Penny Nowland	Hunter Animal Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Penrith City Council		Council
Peter	Oscars law	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Peter Aland		Interested individual
Peter Cook		Interested individual
Peter Field	Excelsior Park Bushland Society	Community group
Peter Frost		Community group
Peter Hunt		Interested individual
Peter Lake	LLYNRIC Kennels	Other
Peter Marsh		Community group
Peter Ridgeway		Interested individual
Peter Roberson	NSW Farmers	Industry organisation

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Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Peter Schaufler	Waaini Pekingese	Interested individual
Peter & Hilda Foster	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Pevlin Price		Community group
Phil Hunt		Interested individual
Phil Janson		Interested individual
Philip Jones		Interested individual
Philip McCord		Interested individual
Philip Roberts	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Phillip A Brown	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Phillipa Perkins		Interested individual
Pretoria Harris	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Priscila Neill		Interested individual
Priscilla Hickie	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Priscilla Nobes	Australasian Bosdog Society Incorporated	Community group
R C Callaghan		Other
R Clarke		Other
R Valore	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Rachel Stock	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Rachel Ward		Interested individual
Rae Auland		Interested individual
Ray Barter	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Raymond Parker	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Rebecca		Interested individual
Rebecca Daly		Interested individual
Rebecca Finlaison	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Rebecca Hitchcock	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Rebecca Jones		Interested individual
Rebecca Preece-Harvey	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Rebecca Rafton	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Rebecca Tilbrook		Interested individual
Rebekah Livingstone		Interested individual
Reg Parker	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Renae		Interested individual
Renee Crea		Interested individual
RH & VJ Hutton	Dogs NSW	Other
Rhonda Green	Member of Happy Paws Haven	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Rhonda Ralphs		Community group
Richard Palmer	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Rick		Interested individual
Rick Scott	Kalkite Papillons	Interested individual
Rina Hill		Interested individual
RJ & BA Hill		Other
Rob Schuck	Member - Dogs NSW	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Rob van Hese	Wyong Council	Council
Robbie Widdrington		Other
Robert Boyce	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Robert McNab	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Robert Pozo	RSPCA Life Member and concerned individual	Interested individual
Robert Sadler	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Robyn Bates		Interested individual
Robyn Druce	Strathfield Municipal Council	Council
Robyn Gudgeon		Other
Robyn Hurford	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Robyn Mostyn	Northern Rivers Animal Services Inc	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Rochelle Sutherland		Interested individual
Roger Villa		Interested individual
Ron Cross		Interested individual
Rosalee Murial Smith		Interested individual
Rosemary Wilson		Interested individual
Roslin Ellis	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Roslyn Day	Member of Cat Protection Society	Interested individual
Ross & Barbara Armstrong	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Ross Robert Mathew	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Roslyn Rothwell		Interested individual
Rowena Morgan		Interested individual
RSPCA Australia	RSPCA Australia	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Ruth Hardy	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Ruth Thurling	Breeder Feline	Interested individual
S J Keogh		Interested individual
S Richards		Community group
S Witton		Interested individual
S Cornell		Interested individual
Sabine Bischkopf	Member - Dog NSW	Community group
Sabine Jamieson		Interested individual
Sabine Wincote		Interested individual
Sabrina Gabrielle		Interested individual
Sabrina Pratt		Interested individual
Sally McDowell		Other
Sally McDowell	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sally Topp	Sandy Paws Dog Walking	Interested individual
Salvatore Zumbo		Community group
Sam Knox		Interested individual

Appendix 2 - List of submitters to Companion Animals Taskforce discussion paper

Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Samantha Grabda		Interested individual
Samantha Hales		Interested individual
Samantha Hynds		Interested individual
Samantha Spiers	Cat Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Sandra	Pound Rounds	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Sandra Boronyak		Interested individual
Sandra Dukes		Interested individual
Sandra Elliott	Sydney All Breeds Dog Training Club	Community group
Sandra Exelby		Interested individual
Sandra Henderson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sandra Patterson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sandy Lack	Animal Welfare League	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Sarah Bryan	Paw Prints Private Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Sarah Day		Interested individual
Sarah E Dwyer		Interested individual
Sarah Gaffikin	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sarah Gonzales		Interested individual
Sarah Harrison		Interested individual
Sarah Jones	Cresara Working Dogs	Community group
Sarah Mathysen		Interested individual
Sarah McCord		Interested individual
Sarah Menzies		Interested individual
Sarah Moulton		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Sarah Pickering	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sarah Smith		Interested individual
Sari Alisalo		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Sarita Verma	Animal Welfare League NSW	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Sandra Wood	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Scott & Stephanie Slavin	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Scott Wardle		Other
Senka Adams		Interested individual
Shandel Burns		Interested individual
Shane Brinkworth		Community group
Shane Hearn		Community group
Sharon & Colin Squires	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sharon & Wayne McGrath	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sharon Andrews		Interested individual
Sharon Fray		Interested individual
Sharon Hannigan	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sharon Jackson		Interested individual
Sharon Lowe	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sharon Patterson	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sharon Toomey		Interested individual
Sharon Travers	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Shaunagh Sullivan	Salvation Army	Other
Sheridan Ledger	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sherrie Grady		Interested individual
Sherry Bohatko		Interested individual
Shirley Hamilton		Interested individual
Shona Fisher		Interested individual
Sian Mckeown	Trade & Investment	State agency
Siaw-Yean Woon	University of Sydney Animal Welfare Society	Community group
Sigrid Lublow		Other
Silvia MacDonald		Interested individual
Silvia Martin		Interested individual
Simon Stevenson		Interested individual
Simone Bowskill		Interested individual
Simone Helene Thomson		Other
Simone Hewitt	Nonhuman Rescue Ops	Community group
Skye Danaher	Hunter Animal Watch	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Sonia Tribe		Interested individual
Sonia Trichter	Friends of the Pound Tweed Inc	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Sonia Trichter		Interested individual
Sonya Pacek	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sophia		Interested individual
Sophie Bush		Interested individual
Stephanie		Interested individual
Stephanie Badal		Interested individual
Stephanie Chew		Interested individual
Stephen Holmes		Interested individual
Stephen Montgomery		Interested individual
Stephen Nicholas	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Stephen Oliver	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Stephen Pilgrim		Interested individual
Stephen Presgrave		Interested individual
Steve Gow and Phillip Evans	Armidale Dumaresq Council	Council
Steven Ferguson	President - The Australian Veterinary Association	Industry organisation
Steven Woods	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Storm Smith	Member - Dogs NSW	Other
Stuart Barr	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Stuart Slatyer		Other

Appendix 2 - List of submitters to Companion Animals Taskforce discussion paper

Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Sue Evans	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sue Fletcher	Member- Dogs NSW	Community group
Sue Higginson		Interested individual
Sue Lane	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sue Mears	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Sue Steel		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Sue Worboys		Community group
Sue Yelland		Interested individual
Sue-ellen Falabella	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Sunishka Hughes (Dr)		Interested individual
Susan		Interested individual
Susan Babic		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Susan Dellas		Interested individual
Susan Donahue	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Susan Morris	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Susan Platts		Interested individual
Susan Steen	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Susan Turner	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Susan-lea Mitchell		Other
Susannah Hayward		Interested individual
Susie Hearder		Interested individual
Susy Johnson		Other
Suzanne Knowles		Community group
Suzanne Liberatore		Interested individual
Suzanne Marks		Interested individual
Sylvia Cooper		Interested individual
Tabatha Speight		Interested individual
Tammy Tantschev		Interested individual
Tammy Warnock	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Taneile Stephens-Gent		Interested individual
Tania Duratovic		Interested individual
Tara Honeyman		Interested individual
Tarsha Andrews		Community group
Taryn R		Interested individual
Taylor Foster		Interested individual
Tegan Whalan		Interested individual
Teneale Cameron		Interested individual
Terri King	North and North West Community Legal Service Inc	Other
Terry Cattell		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Terry Donnell		Interested individual
Terry Marshall	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Tiarne Allen	Oscar's Law	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Tiffany Courville	Barnville Rescue Cats	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Tim Vasudeva	Animal Welfare League NSW	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Timothy Boyce	Dogs NSW	Community group
Tina Moore		Interested individual
Toby Dorn		Other
Todd Armstrong		Interested individual
Tom Couchman	Royal NSW Canine Council Ltd Dogs NSW	Community group
Tom Tammark		Interested individual
Toni Dennis	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Tonia-Anne Gray	Dogs NSW	Community group
Tony & Bev Hurry	NSW Cat Fanciers Inc	Other
Tony Chomicki	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Tony Ryder	Lost Pet Finders Pty Ltd	Other
Tony Tau		Interested individual
Tony Tau	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Tony Twining	RSPCA	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Tori		Interested individual
Tracey Baker		Interested individual
Tracey Gleeson		Other
Tracey Waters	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Tracey Willow		Other
Tracie McGregor		Interested individual
Tracie Thompson		Other
Tracy Bassett	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Tracy Hood	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Tricia Knight		Interested individual
Trisha Taylor	Victorian Dog Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Troy Holbrook		Interested individual
Trudi Counsell		Interested individual
Trudy Adamson		Interested individual
Trudy Stubbs	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Val Down	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Val Edwards	Bark Busters Australia	Other
Valerie Morse	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Valerie Philip	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Vanja Neus		Community group
Vicki Karoubas	Pawshooves Animal Rescue	Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Vicki McGregor		Interested individual
Vicki Rodney		Interested individual

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Name	Organisation	Organisation type
Vicki Sutcliffe	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Vicki Martin	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Vicky Topp	Sandy Paws Dog Walking	Interested individual
Victor Hugo	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Victoria Bonham		Other
Vida Porteus		Interested individual
Virginia Brown	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Virginia Duigan		Interested individual
Viv claxton		Interested individual
Warren & Brenda Solomon	Member - Dogs NSW	Interested individual
Warren Murphy	Gosford Council	Council
Warrick Hay	Holroyd City Council	Council
Wendy Colhoun		Other
Wendy Herne		Interested individual
Wendy Roydhouse		Interested individual
Wendye Slatyer		Other
William Shaw	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Yasmin Morris		Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation
Yendi		Interested individual
Yetta Abrahams		Interested individual
Yvette Watt		Interested individual
Yvonne Cairney	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Yvonne D Meintjes	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Yvonne Spek	Member - Dogs NSW	Community group
Zoe		Interested individual

Appendix 3 - Analysis of Companion Animals Taskforce submissions

Overview of submissions received

Number of submissions received:	1405
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Responses by category

Animal Welfare/Rescue Organisation	123
Council	42
State agency	10
Industry organisation	21
Community group	397
Interested individual	682
Other	130

Form letters

Organisation/group	Number of submissions
Dogs NSW members	355
Lawyers for Companion Animals form submissions	45

Petitions

Death Row Pets	1539 signatures (including a large number of signatories from other Australian States and Territories)
<i>Petition suggestions:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Restrict the sale and rehoming of cats and dogs to ethical regulated breeders, pounds, animal shelters and approved rescue groups2. Stop all sources of mass production of kittens and puppies for profit (ie: stop puppy and kitten farms and backyard breeders)3. Achieve widespread desexing of all pets4. Increase the rehoming rate in pounds and shelters via better low-kill policies, and5. Educate everyone on caring and responsible pet ownership.	

Late submissions (received after 1 July 2012)	16
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REGULATION OF BREEDERS

Option 1 Introduce a breeder licensing system

Do you support the introduction of a breeder licensing system to strengthen the regulation of cat and dog breeding practices?

Yes	No*	Unsure
796	519	34

*Note: Includes 355 "NO" responses from Dogs NSW members opposed on the grounds that existing members of registered breeding organisations (including Dogs NSW) should be exempt.

Comment	No. of submissions
<i>Nature of scheme</i>	
Must have enforceable conditions based on Breeding Code of Practice	15
User pays to obtain a licence	13
Needs to differentiate between "commercial" and hobby breeders	7
Must be adequately enforced	4
Encourage reporting of backyard & illegal breeders and introduce an anonymous caller hotline for the public to report complaints/incidents that will be followed up by enforcement officers	4
Greyhound breeders must be included	2
Must include unannounced random audits	1
Must apply to anyone who breeds a companion animal or allows one to breed, whether by accident or design (regardless of motive, purpose or profit)	1
Should be separated for breeders of cats and dogs as requirements are different	1
Option for temporary licence number for those who are not registered breeders and don't want to be	1
Breeders must apply to breed each litter and pay a separate application fee each time (Microchip numbers allocated on approval)	1
Inspection program based on number of 'entire' animals kept	1
Must include regulation around animals sold from interstate to owner in NSW online and bought into NSW	1
<i>Licence fees (cost and nature)</i>	
Licence fees to be used for inspections and enforcement of scheme only	6
Licensing scheme must be self funded and adequately resourced	3
Licence fees should be scaled by number of dogs (including for Dogs NSW members)	3
Licence fees should be set on a sliding scale (lowest for hobby breeders, highest for commercial breeders)	3
Grade licence fees according to their compliance with compliance - higher licence fees for those that breach legislation/licence conditions	3
Annual licence fee	2
Non Dogs NSW breeders should pay much higher registration costs	1
Discount licence fees for pensioners & seniors	1
<i>Licence conditions</i>	
Introduce a limit of breeding dogs per breeder (eg: 5 or 10)	78
Impose time limit between litters	47
Mandatory record keeping for all litters	47

Maximum 1 litter per year for cats	47
Pre licence inspection required	6
Licensing to require desexing of kittens and puppies before sold unless sold to the	5
Introduce limits to the number of breeder business in each local govt area	4
All animals must be microchipped and vaccinated before sale	2
Breeders to only allow animal to have litter when new owners are on a waiting list	2
Breeders should be required to complete an annual on line test in relation to regulatory standards which should be a prerequisite for obtaining the licence	1
Mandatory DNA identification of puppies/kittens to prove parentage	1
It should be compulsory for microchip details of mother & father be recorded against each microchip record for each pup or kitten	1
Breeders to issue a health/warranty card and take back/pay for medical costs where hereditary issues identified as cause of health problems	1
Exemptions	
Breeders who are part of a recognised breeding organisation (incl Dogs NSW)	346
No exemptions	61
Dogs NSW members only	15
Hobby breeders	3
Who should regulate	
Licence information to be kept by State Government or independent authority	56
Inspection program resourced by RSPCA & AWL inspectors	11
Dogs NSW to register "Domestic Animal Breeders" (ie: both cats and dogs) subject to them meeting strict conditions	6
All state & territory governments to work together, combine national research with that of other countries resulting in a national approach to regulation and enforcement	4
AWL	1
Needs to be independent from RSPCA & AWL	1
Related provisions	
Breeder details must be linked to each animal's microchip number to allow tracking from birth	58
Minimum penalties under POCTAA should also be raised to encourage compliance	56
Require breeders to take back animals whose owners take them to the pound	11
There must be capacity for consumers to verify licence no's (eg: online searchable breeder register accessible to the public)	9
Licence system to be accompanied by broad and ongoing community education program about ethical breeding practices	7
Ban animal ownership for those who continually surrender/dump animals or are guilty of cruelty	5
Update CA Register to cater for licence no.'s (funded by CA Fund)	4
Amend legislation for selling, transferring or advertising pet in NSW to quote breeder licence number	3
General comments	
Prohibit large scale commercial breeding and backyard breeders	47
Unethical breeders will not comply anyway	19
Registered breeders are already well regulated	17
Concern about breeding stock, health concerns when no testing of hereditary diseases completed and increased potential for surrendering when problems	12

Hobby breeders provide a high level of care and socialisation for their animals already	11
Breeders already incur high costs	9
Dogs NSW breeders already take dogs back when owners can't keep them	3
Concern about inspectors experience/expertise (RSPCA & AWL)	2
Breeder "identification" (ie: by linking to an animal's microchip number) is more important than breeder licensing	2
Existing Dogs NSW regulation is adequate	2
Existing animal breeder groups do not have the resources to conduct proactive comprehensive Code of Practice inspections	1
Concerns about reduced competition for breeders do not outweigh the need for the breeder licence system	1
Do not penalise "accidental" breeders	1
All dogs and cats should be registered with Dogs NSW	1
Current Breeder Code is strong enough	1
Dogs NSW should stop requiring cross breed dogs to be desexed	1
Pets should be harder to obtain	1
Discourage cross breeding	1
People that allow animals to have a litter should NOT be able to sell pups/kittens but pay to have them rehomed	1
"Breed specific' breeding reduces diversity and increases hereditary problems	1
Concern about privacy of information kept as part of a breeder licensing system	1
Immediately ban breeding and only allow for registered breeders once the number of pound animals are reduced	1

REGULATION OF BREEDERS**Option 2 Revise the Breeding Code of Practice to make existing guidelines enforceable standards**

a. Do you support revising the Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding Dogs and Cats so that the guidelines contained within the document apply to breeders as enforceable standards?

Yes	No	Unsure
857	226	90

Comment	No. of submissions
Should address socialisation requirements, staff to animal ratios, housing, breeding management, veterinary and general care, retirement and rehoming policy, transfer and transport of animals	2
Should apply to anyone identified as owning an entire female dog or cat	1
Current standards are sufficient enough to ensure prosecution	1
Concerns about the negative impact this would have on hobby breeders	1
More emphasis should be placed on the enforcement of the existing Code	1
Should require the desexing of all cats and dogs not intended for breeding	1
Breaches should attract substantial penalties	1
Well balanced family pets, giant breeds and working dogs are not suited to rearing conditions of larger scale breeding and boarding establishments.	1
Inspectors should visit all homes	1
Dog minding businesses should be regulated by the Code as well	1
All breeders should have to pass a test	1
The code currently applies to the breeding of animals as a business activity and not to just the breeding of animals, therefore it is doubtful that it applies to hobby breeders or accidental breeders	1
Focus on community education instead	1

REGULATION OF BREEDERS**Option 2 Revise the Breeding Code of Practice to make existing guidelines enforceable standards**

b. Do you think that such standards should also form the basis of requirements for a breeder licensing system (see Option 1)?

Yes	No	Unsure
774	284	97

Comment	No. of submissions
No specific comments made	

REGULATION OF BREEDERS**Option 3 Clarify planning legislation requirements relating to the approval of commercial breeder, boarding and shelter premises**

Do you support the development of planning guidelines applying to breeding, boarding or shelter constructions across the state?

Yes	No	Unsure
843	192	120

Comment	No. of submissions
Should be linked to breeder licensing criteria	52
Must ensure backyard breeders are covered under development applications requirements	49
The Code of Practice for pounds and shelters needs to be finalised	48
Should be linked to the requirements of the Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Breeding Establishments	2
Should be compulsory for all new establishments and those who update their facilities	1
Coffs Harbour Council has implemented the DA guidelines well in this regard	1
Councils should be part of the process in determining the number of animal licensed to breed at each premises	1
Clear guidelines should be developed for the assessment of DA's for commercial breeding, boarding and shelters	1
"Commercial breeder" needs to be defined under planning law (so that more onerous requirements do not apply to hobby breeders).	1
Use Companion Animals lifetime registration fee money to fund a public education campaign on relevant development requirements	1
Pets shops, kennels and catteries should be licensed using this mechanism	1
This would increase costs and reduce number of animal boarding houses, as they are often family homes	1
ATO classification as a 'hobby' breeder allowing a loop hole in relation to planning guidelines	1
Must allow leeway to determine appropriate numbers of animals based on size & location of property	1
Must be clarified to ensure that development for the purpose of animal boarding or breeding establishments cannot occur as Exempt Development under the relevant State Environmental Planning Policy	1

ADVERTISING AND SALE OF CATS AND DOGS**Option 4 Mandatory listing of an animal's microchip number or breeder number in all cat and dog advertisements**

Do you agree that all advertisements for cats and dogs offered for sale (including internet advertisements) should include either the animal's microchip number or the number of the animal's registered breeder?

Yes	No	Unsure
893	181	125

Comment	No. of submissions
Breeder number only (not microchip as they are too long/open to fraud)	51
Concerns about identify theft/fraud if breeder/microchip number is mandatory	10
Needs to be backed up by enforcement	5
Needs to be adequately resourced	3
Concerns about early age microchipping (ie: before 3 months)	3
A register of breeder numbers must be available to buyers to search	3
No exemptions	2
Harsh penalties for non compliance	2
Should cover ads in shop windows/bulletin boards	1
Also include breeder number of pup's Dam and Sire	1
Ban advertising of animals before 8 weeks of age	1
Need a national approach to advertising & sale	1
Better managed through breeder licensing system	1
Must be supported by broad education program informing consumers they should only buy pets from licensed breeder	1
Difficult to enforce for backyard breeders - requires education	1
Special categories need to be developed for pounds, shelters and rescue groups	1

ADVERTISING AND SALE OF CATS AND DOGS**Option 5 Issue guidelines on the advertising and sale of cats and dogs**

Do you agree that guidelines on the advertising and sale of cats and dogs should be provided by the Government?

Yes	No	Unsure
809	237	138

Comment	No. of submissions
Include ban sale of pets from pet shops	129
Introduce a pet licence system	52
Include ban sale of pets from markets & fairs & fetes	58
Include a mandatory returns policy for animals that do not work out with their new owners	47
Encourage pet shops to sell animals from pounds/rescue organisations only	25
Introduce measures to address impulse buying	18
Permit sale only from licensed breeders	12
Ban selling of pets in online and print classifieds	11
Include mandatory "cooling off" period for all animals sold	8
Pet shops should only be able to refer people to recognised breeders	6
There should be an enforceable guideline on sale of animals	6
Include media ban on accepting advertisements for animals for sale unless registered breeder	6
Permit sale only from rescue organisations	5
Dogs NSW members should be exempt from any requirements	5
Implement a Government website showing all impounded animals	5
Guidelines should be mandatory and enforced	4
Permit sale only if desexed	3
Must be appropriately resourced	2
Encourage councils to advertise impounded animals online	2
Include ban on advertising 'Free to good home' in press	2
Encourage more consultation with breeders as they spend time educating when selling animals	2
PIAA membership should be compulsory for all pet shops/animal sellers	1
Introduce mandatory pre-sale conditions for people buying animals	1
Pets should not be able to be purchased as gifts	1
Details of the pet store that supplied the animal should be kept on the animal's microchip record	1
Pet shops should also be liable if a supplying breeder is guilty of cruelty/poor breeding conditions	1
Must be comprehensive but understandable	1
Sellers must be required to provide information to buyers about the source of animals (eg: health of animal, hereditary issues, breeding conditions)	1
Could be provided by Dogs NSW	1
Working dogs should not be sold from pet shops	1
Make it illegal to breed & sell dogs or cats unless a member of an approved organisation	1

MICROCHIPPING, REGISTRATION AND DESEXING**Option 6 Remove existing “two step” registration process to require microchipping and registration of cats and dogs by 3 months of age**

Do you support revoking the existing “two step” registration process to require the microchipping and lifetime registration of cats and dogs by 3 months of age?

Yes	No	Unsure
488	482	210

Comment	No. of submissions
Remove registration exemptions for pet shops, markets or fairs	4
Adequately enforce existing regulations instead	3
Reintroduce annual registration	3
Increase compliance period to 6 months of age	2
Allow online registration at point of microchipping	1
Increase mandatory microchipping age to 5 months (when animals are better socialised)	1
Lifetime registration at 3 months of age increases costs of pet ownership at a time when associated purchase costs are already high	1
Current system very time consuming for large councils to enforce compliance	1
Concerns that Authorised Identifiers would be required to accept registration money	1
Breeders who prefer to let their puppies/kittens go at 10 weeks of age should be exempt	1
Vets should be able to register animals when microchipping them	1
Rego fees to be included in desexing fee charged by vets who enter data and forward fee to councils	1
Introduce fee payment by instalments for lower income earners (means tested)	1

MICROCHIPPING, REGISTRATION AND DESEXING**Option 7 Provide a registration fee rebate for owners who desex their animals within 3 months of registration**

Do you support a registration rebate for owners who desex their animal within 3 months of registration as a means to encourage desexing?

Yes	No	Unsure
981	147	60

Comment	No. of submissions
<i>Nature of scheme</i>	
Concerns about early age desexing	20
Rebate needs to be sufficiently attractive	5
3 month registration rebate for desexing an animal may be too restrictive (ie: longer time required in some cases).	4
Concerns this system will be cumbersome for councils and owners	2
Concerns about the affect this will have on owners of larger breeds of dog who choose to desex later than 9 months	2
Provide rebate only if microchip number is listed on desexing certificate (Statutory declaration should no longer be accepted)	2
Increase rebate period to 12 months	1
Registration rebate should be available within 6 months of registration as some vets recommend desexing at 8-9 months	1
Ensure there is a higher microchipping & registration rebate for pensioners	1
Good option in principle but who manages rebate?	1
<i>Alternative options to encourage desexing</i>	
Introduce mandatory desexing for all animals sold from pounds and animal welfare organisations	75
Introduce high-volume low cost desexing programs similar to those in USA and NZ	49
Provide more funding for subsidised desexing	28
Introduce mandatory desexing for all animals sold	26
Introduce mandatory desexing (except for breeders)	21
Introduce mandatory desexing	7
Discrepancy between desexed and non-desexed registration fee rates needs to be widened significantly	5
Focus instead on discounted desexing (eg discount desexing voucher provided to owner at time of microchipping and has chip number printed on voucher)	2
Introduce a scaled desexing rebate instead - 100% if desexed by 6 months of age, 75% by 12, 50% by 18 months.	2
Introduce a registration fee amnesty (for a limited period) to encourage desexing	2
Introduce discount desexing voucher redeemable at any vet surgery	2
Education and incentives to encourage desexing more beneficial than introducing mandatory desexing	2

Option for rebate where proof of veterinary advice stating it is not recommended for medical reasons at an early age	1
More research into the breeding of dogs with sound temperaments and socially balanced - focus not just on desexing	1
Council should have low cost desexing days	1
Agreements with vets to provide rebate immediately and DLG remits amount to vet after full registration has been paid at 3 months	1
Set time from "identification" and only for those under 9 months age - exceptions (animals from pounds etc)	1
Introduce split registration system - lifetime registration for desexed animals/annual rego for undesexed	1
Registration should be free for desexed animals	1
Introduce mandatory desexing for cats only	1
Allow chemical desexing for discounted registration fee purposes	1
Desexing rebate should be transferable to new owner	1
No evidence that mandatory desexing reduces euthanasia rates or unwanted animals (ACT study)	1
Desexing & registration should be tax deductible	1
Early age desexing leads to poor development - male dogs should have vasectomy	1
Owners who don't desex should be fined (excluding recognised breeder dog kept for show or breeding)	1
All cats/kittens to be sold desexed, chipped and vaccinated	1
All dogs to be sold desexed, chipped and vaccinated	1
All puppies to be sold with desexing certificate desex fee included in price) & ownership not transferred until proof of desexing	1
All dogs/cats sold should be desexed except those members belonging to an approved organisation (not just breeders) by time animal is 12 mths old	1
Desexing blitz that incorporates 'corporate sponsors'	1
Free & subsidised desexing, even when people who would have desexed anyway as there is still a proportion of others who take it up	1
Investigate introduction of the CSIRO vaccine that "sterilises" animals	1
Desexing of kittens prior to 10 weeks of age is safe	1
Mandate standard desexing rates for all vets	1

MICROCHIPPING, REGISTRATION AND DESEXING**Option 8 Raise cat and dog registration fees to fund additional council and State Government cat and dog management programs**

a. Do you think that registration fees should be increased to make more funding available for council and State Government cat and dog programs?

Yes	No	Unsure
376	648	178

Comment	No. of submissions
<i>Nature of scheme</i>	
May discourage compliance (eg: from low socio-economic groups)	22
Do not punish responsible owners by raising fees	7
Undesexed fee needs to be greater than the cost to desex	3
Entire animal registration should be increased but desexed animal should remain the same	3
Make allowances for low income families	2
Offset by discounts on desexing, vaccinations etc, which keeps costs similar for responsible owners	2
Increase fees for undesexed animals more than for desexed	2
More funding should be provided for pounds	2
More funding should be provided for animal rescue and welfare organisations	2
Additional revenue must only be used for animal welfare (not council revenue)	2
May result in less animals being rescued	1
Means test to make it more affordable to lower income households	1
Raise all fees by 10% initially	1
Increased fees will increase people's sense of value of animals	1
Must include a pensioner concession	1
<i>Other alternatives/comments</i>	
Introduce a surrender tax on breeders who leave animals at the pound	51
Introduce a State-wide levy on all revenue generating members of the pet industry (except animal rescue groups/shelters) for animal welfare purposes	49
Introduce a new mandatory council rate - "animal welfare contribution"	48
Make sure registration fees are only spent on companion animals issues	47
Increase penalty amounts for breaches instead	4
Fees are unreasonably high and must be reduced	1
Councils should have to show the percentage of funds they spend on education & animal welfare	1
Focus on education of next generation	1
Better recognition of 'assistance dogs' with cheaper/free registration	1
Importation of cats & dogs should be automatically registered on a database upon arrival	1
Imported cats & dogs must be desexed	1
Advertise microchipping & registration requirements	1
Introduce a tax on the sale of all animals - excluding pounds, rescue groups	1

MICROCHIPPING, REGISTRATION AND DESEXING**Option 8 Raise cat and dog registration fees to fund additional council and State Government cat and dog management programs**

b. Do you support amending the Companion Animals Regulation to allow registration fees to be annually indexed to inflation?

Yes	No	Unsure
349	554	237

Comment	No. of submissions
Should be a periodic review (eg: 5 years)	2
Only supported if the money is to be spent on saving the lives of animals	1

MICROCHIPPING, REGISTRATION AND DESEXING**Option 9 Establish new registration categories to encourage desexing**

a. Do you support the implementation of “Desexed animal – purchased from pound” registration category?

Yes	No	Unsure
943	137	96

Comment	No. of submissions
<i>Nature of scheme</i>	
Also include animals purchased from animal welfare organisations and community-based rescue groups	53
Registration exemptions should be provided for animal rescue groups	48
Remove the current discount applied by some councils for registering more than one dog	1
Should not be set so low as to reduce the perceived value of the animal	1
<i>Other comments</i>	
Need a national approach to desexing	3
Existing registration exemptions for pets kept at pet shops, markets and fairs should be removed	2
Registration and desexing fees should not be prohibitive	2
Registration exemptions should be provided for purebred dogs	1
Registration fees should be lower in low socio economic areas	1
Stray/unowned cats should be desexed at a discount rate	1

MICROCHIPPING, REGISTRATION AND DESEXING**Option 9 Establish new registration categories to encourage desexing**

b. Do you support the implementation of “Desexed animal – post-purchase consultation by owner” registration category?

Yes	No	Unsure
615	205	334

Comment	No. of submissions
Should be supported by compulsory veterinary checks supplied at reduced or no cost by vets	1
Should include standardised information on desexing and socialisation	1
Potential pet owners must do RPO course run by council then produce certificate to the breeder before obtaining pet	1
Appears overly complicated. Discounted lifetime registration fees for desexed animals would give similar outcomes	1
Include puppy lessons in purchase price of dog and provide a rebate when owners prove they have attended the course	1

MICROCHIPPING, REGISTRATION AND DESEXING**Option 10 Introduce measures to improve compliance with companion animal legislation data entry requirements**

a. Do you support encouraging breeder and animal welfare organisations listed in the Companion Animals Act to become “registration agents” to process registration fees and change of animal details?

Yes	No	Unsure
611	315	248

Comment	No. of submissions
Vets & vet nurses should be able to update owner details	2
Vets should be required to scan all incoming animals for their microchip and implant a microchip if it is not present	2
Should include registered animal rescue organisations	1
Improve registration forms (eg: tear off section to be given to owner)	1
Concerns about resourcing implications for animal rescue groups	1
Change of address & telephone number only	1
Should stay with AWL only	1
Authorised microchippers and breeders can't fill forms out correctly now so this will create problems with enforcement	1
Vets & vet nurses should be able to hand out registration forms	1
Vets should be better educated about microchipping and registration requirements	1

MICROCHIPPING, REGISTRATION AND DESEXING**Option 10 Introduce measures to improve compliance with companion animal legislation data entry requirements**

b. Do you support establishing a fee for service model for such registration agents to encourage uptake of this arrangement?

Yes	No	Unsure
420	411	331
Comment		No. of submissions
Money should not be an incentive for such agents to comply		1
Must include promotional/marketing strategies to ensure uptake		1

MICROCHIPPING, REGISTRATION AND DESEXING**Option 10 Introduce measures to improve compliance with companion animal legislation data entry requirements**

c. Do you think that online owner “self service” data entry options should be developed?

Yes	No	Unsure
704	249	217

Comment	No. of submissions
Could work in a similar way to pink slip/green slip system for motor vehicles	47
Investigate the modern options for payment of fees	4
Restrict access to change of address/telephone number only	4
Costly to fix mistakes	3
Public already use such services - pink slips etc	3
Open to abuse by owners	2
Link to moving house e.g. Australia Post Kit	2
Should be limited to councils only	1
DLG must ensure security of animal data	1
Limited access for owners may be useful	1
Include on a standard checklist when moving house such as that used by Blacktown Council	1
Owners must be required to provide DOB at point of registration	1
Online payment of Registration	1
Current system confusing - owner thinks animal registered at identification stage	1
Allow previous owner transfer - which automates an emailed login for new owners	1

MICROCHIPPING, REGISTRATION AND DESEXING**Option 11 Establish a grant funding initiative for councils/partner organisations to deliver targeted microchipping, registration and desexing programs**

Do you support the establishment of a grant funding program (sourced from the Companion Animals Fund) for councils to promote the microchipping, registration and desexing of cats and dogs?

Yes	No	Unsure
987	114	66

Comment	No. of submissions
UK Dogs Trust has very successful programs of this type	48
Provide more funding to councils for education programs	4
Mechanisms need to be in place to ensure the funding is used for the purpose it was intended	2
Should involve corporate sponsorship	1
Provide rebate to pet owners who participate	1
This option is a waste of money	1
Should be part of a collaborative approach between state and local government, vets, breeders, pet clubs, pet shops, wildlife and animal rescue groups	1
Should cover training for vet students in early age desexing and work experience in pounds and shelters	1
Should be used to support wholesale microchipping and desexing services for pet shops, breeders, and rescue groups	1
Could be used to develop community awareness of unowned or roaming cats, what authorities are able to do in response to roaming cats and the need for owners to confine their cats at night	1
Provide grants to AVA for cheaper desexing	1
Desexing vouchers funded from CA Fund - no income test - 2 vouchers per household	1
Set up desexing clinics per council area for low income earners and provide payment plan system	1
Funds to come out of DLG portion of funds not councils	1
Enforce existing legislation	1
Targeted and include responsible pet ownership	1
Extend to feral cat control, overwhelmed pensioners, volunteer cat rescuers	1
Coordination at the state level	1

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

Option 12 **Develop a community wide socially responsible pet ownership education campaign**

a. Do you support the development of a whole of community socially responsible pet ownership education campaign?

Yes	No	Unsure
1,109	34	49

Comment	No. of submissions
<i>What the campaign should cover</i>	
The importance of desexing	53
Current education system must be completely overhauled to change the emphasis from dangerous dogs to responsible ownership	48
Full disclosure of expected lifetime costs and imposts of pet ownership	48
Animal husbandry	13
Basic pet issues - adoption, desexing, vaccination, training etc.	10
Focus on animal welfare/responsible pet ownership, not just 'child safety'	3
Information on how to manage animals - barking dogs etc	3
Pre purchase guidance on purchase & training and lifetime of care	2
Companion animal surrender & awareness of euthanasia rates	2
To value animals more by treating them with dignity and respect as this will assist long term welfare of animals	2
It is not necessary for a female animal to have a litter before being desexed	2
Include a TV campaign	2
Include a radio campaign	2
Collate existing information on a website and producing a small brochure which directs people to this	1
Should occur pre purchase and cover what is involved in owning a dog covering all breeds and sizes	1
Vaccinations	1
Requirements of the Act eg must notify council by filling out form when change of ownership/details occurs, Gov. Register & confidentiality	1
Importance of socialisation and choosing an appropriate breed	1
Encourage adoption at of animals from pounds & shelters	1
The flaws with breed specific legislation	1
A campaign explicitly for cats	1
Include options for owners who do not have internet/computer access	1
Include damage/injuries done to native animals and require animals out at night to be impounded	1
Include impacts on native wildlife	1
Support program targeted at negligent owners	1
Information about types of breaches - animal welfare/companion animals	1
Directed at supporting animal rescue groups and encouraging the public to consider adoption of these relinquished/abandoned/neglected animals.	1
An emergency service warning to inform pet owners of storms and potential reactions to and safety of animals during storms	1

Encourage potential pet owners to consider adopting pets from pounds or shelters over pet shops or a breeder.	1
Who should the campaign be directed at?	
Target specific ethnic groups (eg: Multilingual information given out of care of animals at point of immigration, translation into Asian languages etc)	4
Use existing bodies/events to target specific groups (eg: community language outreach, seniors week etc)	3
Target low socio economic areas (low income, education and high unemployment)	3
Target rural areas	2
Wider community as 26% base their purchase on the look of animal alone	1
Preschools, primary & secondary	1
Backyard breeders	1
Should be compulsory in schools	2
Build on TAFE NSW system and include education of school children	1
Benefits to the pet no just the owner	1
Vets, pet industry & councils	1
Who coordinates the program	
Must come from the State level	1
Use volunteers to do the training	1
Should not be funded by higher registration fees	1
Should not be developed solely by industry groups	1
Developed in consultation with appropriate experts on subject matter and delivered by qualified trainers	1
Government to fund	1
Other comments	
Concern if it turns into a money grab for RSPCA, ACAC, PIAA etc	6
Develop an education program for veterinarians on microchipping and registration requirements	2
Establish a Good Dog Citizen' program	2
Mandatory responsible pet ownership course (eg: Swiss model)	2
DLG must provide details of how the CA fund is used	2
Supported by multi-media campaign	2
Provide appropriate discounts or rebates on registration for those who complete training	1
Include take home materials with the responsible pet education program	1
AVA has already developed a program: www.petpep.ava.com.au	1
Liaise with licensed breeders and supply educational material for distribution at point of sale	1
DLG website is poor and doesn't reflect changing community opinions	1
Advertise to remind owners to notify local council that their animal is deceased	1
Encourage council rangers to provide education in relation to encouraging the community to keep their animals and return them to their owners	1
Mandatory puppy training classes	1
Allow register report with owner information so education material can be sent (preferably emailed)	1

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION**Option 12 Develop a community wide socially responsible pet ownership education campaign**

b. Do you support providing school based socially responsible pet ownership programs to students outside of the 5 to 7 year old age group?

Yes	No	Unsure
1,085	50	50

Comment	No. of submissions
Only if it includes statistics about the number of animals killed in pounds each year	47
Must not solely focus on increasing pet ownership (ie: for the financial gain of the pet industry)	47
Target high school children (Y7 12-13 year olds - as they are mature enough to understand responsible pet ownership and have greater influence on parents for compliance)	3
Target ages 2 to 6 year olds	2
Help owners determine what pet is most suitable to them	2
Delivered in conjunction with Dogs NSW	1
Target adults	1
Only supported if also supported by schools	1
Target every year from 1 to 6	1
Target 16+ as they are nearing moving out of home	1
Include positive programs rather than only avoidance of harm	1
Include visit to shelter for high school students	1
<i>Related provisions</i>	
Educators should be paid from CA Fund	3
Use Pets4life Community program for pet owners - collaboration from AWO's Local Gov. and pet industry - includes free information sessions on issues to think about when thinking about getting an animal, choosing the right pet and post purchase consultation & helpline	1

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION**Option 13 Develop mandatory standardised information on socially responsible pet ownership to be given out at point of sale and introduce initiatives to reinforce such information**

a. Do you support the development of mandatory, standardised information to be provided at point of sale?

Yes	No	Unsure
1,002	104	68

Comment	No. of submissions
<i>What should be covered in such material</i>	
Full disclosure of expected lifetime costs and imposts of pet ownership	58
Should include a requirement for pet owners to sign a declaration that they have read and understood the pet ownership responsibility requirements	47
Information about dog obedience/training providers	4
Should include breed specific information	2
Should be accessible to people from different cultural backgrounds	1
Desexed cats still hunt and kill wildlife	1
<i>Who should develop/implement?</i>	
Should be run by Dogs NSW	1
Should be run by vets	1
The people delivering the education must be suitably qualified	1
Should be supported by a wider advertising campaign	1
<i>Other comments</i>	
As Dogs NSW members already provide such information to new owners they should be exempt from such a requirement	8
Vets already provide such information to new owners	5
All media outlets that facilitate advertising animals for sale should have a mandatory advisory statement outlining sellers & purchasers rights	1
Must be part of a whole of community education campaign	1
Must be carefully developed because of the large amount of out of date information - recommend Dr Ian Dunbar's After You Get Your Puppy book or the RSPCA's book developed by the ACT.	1
Should be in the form of an information sheet or checklist	1

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION**Option 13 Develop mandatory standardised information on socially responsible pet ownership to be given out at point of sale and introduce initiatives to reinforce such information**

b. Do you support post-purchase socially responsible pet ownership consultations as a means to reinforce point of sale information?

Yes	No	Unsure
803	169	188

Comment	No. of submissions
Concern that this may be difficult to enforce due to high number of animals sold	47
Too costly & there is enough pre purchase educational information available	1
Vets already doing this - puppy preschool etc	1
Concerns this would be time & resource intensive	1
Irresponsible owners will ignore this anyway	1

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

Option 14 Establish minimum qualification requirements for pet shop, breeding establishment and pound/shelter staff

a. Do you think that it should be compulsory for at least one staff member working in a pet shop, breeding establishment, shelter or pound to have a minimum qualification in animal care and management in-line with the recommendations of the Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Sale of Animals in Pet Shops?

Yes	No	Unsure
946	145	81

Comment	No. of submissions
Pet shop managers should have specific training requirements	52
Should be a minimum requirement for at least one staff member "on duty" to have these qualifications	52
Crucial for pet shop staff	47
Expand requirement to include animal welfare/rescue organisations	2
May discourage volunteers	2
Concerns this would increase costs for those affected	2
Clarify what is meant by "breeding establishment"	1
Dogs NSW already provides such education for breeder members	1
Pet shops should employ a vet nurse	1
Consider online training options with work based requirement	1
Pet shops, shelters & pounds - good idea. Breeders go to their vets if they don't know	1
The qualified person should be responsible for ensuring the establishment adheres to the relevant Code of Practice	1
Also include operators of boarding establishments	1
Concern over who checks and enforces the system and the consequences for non compliance	1
Pet shop employees are generally very young & have little understanding of animal welfare or codes	1
Exemptions	
Breeders	3
Dogs NSW members	3
Volunteers	2
Hobby breeders	1

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION**Option 14 Establish minimum qualification requirements for pet shop, breeding establishment and pound/shelter staff**

b. Do you think that a Certificate II level qualification should be developed for this purpose?

Yes	No	Unsure
761	177	213

Comment	No. of submissions
Suitable qualifications already in place/available	3
Requirements should be less onerous for shelter volunteers than pet store workers	1
Concerns about non-compliance if requirements are too onerous	1
A suitable existing Certificate II is already available	1
All pound staff should undertake a microchipping implant accreditation course and have a Certificate III in companion animal management.	1
Pet shops should have a enforceable standard code of practice with permit based on inspection for compliance	1

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION**Option 15 Provide more funding for research on key cat and dog issues**

a. Do you think that a portion of the Companion Animals Fund should be set aside for annual research grants on cat and dog issues?

Yes	No	Unsure
749	130	273

Comment	No. of submissions
Needs to be focussed on practical solutions to euthanasia of impounded animals/over-breeding etc	49
Set aside a portion of money to cover the vet bills of people who rescue injured animals (eg: hit by cars)	47
Better statistics/information required - there appears to be minimal qualitative data available such as social attitudes of different demographic groups to companion animal ownership, the links or otherwise between puppy farmers and animals impounded or the reason for the proliferation of cats being impounded	5
Should focus on introducing measures to curb feral cats & dogs	3
This option is not a priority	2
Applicant must be able to clearly articulate how the research will benefit companion animals	1
Applicant must declare they do not have any vested interests that will bias the results	1
Needs to be independent of RSPCA, ACAC, PIAA etc	1
Engage veterinary students	1
Focus on practical solutions to the problems of over-breeding, pound entrance and pound killings, and rehoming	1
Applicant should not receive funding to conduct research that would financially benefit them, unless the research had support from (and was scrutinised by) welfare and rescue organisations	1
More research on permanent sterilisation techniques such as tablet or injection	1
Animal welfare issues only	1
Dogs NSW members already contribute to nationally funded Australian Kennel Council research.	1
Should be concentrated on unowned and/or roaming cats as they are not effectively managed by CA Act	1
Must include identifying areas of highest need or low cost desexing	1
Needs to encourage more research into the breeding of dogs with sound temperaments and socially balanced - focus not just on desexing	1
Research why members of the public abandon animals to pounds	1

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION**Option 15 Provide more funding for research on key cat and dog issues**

b. Do you think that such funding should be limited to key organisations or individuals involved in cat and dog research?

Yes	No	Unsure
406	320	423

Comment	No. of submissions
Should not be available to RSPCA NSW, ACAC, PIAA, Dogs NSW or other organisations with a vested interest in money making	48
Should be open to animal rescue organisations to apply if they meet the criteria	2
Researchers should be adequately experienced/qualified to perform the research	1
Should not be available to bodies who undertake animal testing or invasive research	1
Should support university & scientific research	1
Should be a merit based system where a specific need for research is identified, a brief developed, applications for funding advertised and funding is provided based upon the submissions received	1
In addition, many concerns associated with responsible pet ownership relate to broader social issues where research by non-animal related organisations may be appropriate	1
Should only be available for research into animal welfare	1
<i>Who should regulate</i>	
Dogs NSW in conjunction with animal welfare organisations	1

IMPOUNDED CATS AND DOGS**Option 16 Encourage greater collaboration between councils and animal welfare organisations on the delivery of impounding and re-homing services to reduce euthanasia rates**

Do you think that increased collaboration between councils and animal welfare organisations in the delivery of impounding services will improve re-homing outcomes for impounded animals?

Yes	No	Unsure
955	101	107

Comment	No. of submissions
Make it compulsory for councils to adopt "Getting to Zero" no-kill policies	62
Animals available for rehoming should be advertised on council's website and social media sites (including photos)	54
Introduce key performance indicators for council and pound staff focussed on reducing euthanasia rates	50
Implement council foster care programs for impounded animals	55
Redefine temperament testing of impounded animals to improve rehoming	50
Council pounds must be required to better utilise volunteers	50
Focus on changing culture at councils through better training for council pound staff	50
Make it mandatory for councils to have an animal welfare charter or strategy	49
Needs to be supported and facilitated (ie: not just partner councils with AWO's and expect good results)	49
Council pound opening hours must be extended	10
Code of practice for pounds must be finalised	8
Government should provide more financial support to animal welfare/rescue organisations	7
Councils who do not collaborate and cooperate with rescue organisations to reduce their kill statistics are not meeting their legal obligations under section 64 of the Companion Animals Act	5
Reduce fees to encourage owners to collect and not surrender animals	5
Independent monitoring on animals rehomed from pounds is required to improve animal welfare	4
Councils must have a dedicated Animal Welfare Officer who focuses on community liaison/education	4
Councils must be required to have a better focus on managing unowned cat colonies (eg: trap neuter return programs)	3
Make it 'compulsory' for councils to release healthy and adoptable animals to welfare and rescue orgs (clause 16(d) exemption holders)	3
Councils should be required to train animals to increase rehoming	2
Concerns that RSPCA does not abide by legislation in running its pounds and in undertaking behavioural assessments	2
Increase the time pounds have to keep animals before euthanasia	2

A lot of work is already being undertaken between councils and animal welfare organisations	2
All animals found roaming that are not microchipped and registered should be immediately destroyed	2
No kill policies do not take public safety into account	1
RSPCA NSW to work with other AWO's	1
No kill practices should be encouraged and enforced	1
Promote programs that retrain pound dogs including older dogs for re-homing to help change perception of animals sold from pounds	1
Highlight council shelters where better practice is taking place (eg: Wyong)	1
Councils should have very clear euthanasia criteria developed	1
All pounds need a resident veterinarian	1
Councils should adopt a social work approach to people wanting to surrender animals to work out other alternatives	1
Provide a financial incentive to pounds that have high rate of rehoming success	1
Conduct dog walker groups to promote dog weight loss	1
Pounds to conduct offsite adoption events	1
No pound fees to be incurred in first 24 hrs of care	1
Impounding pens should be of sufficient size to allow animals to express their nature behaviours	1
Councils be required to provide enrichment and socialisation of animals to alleviate stress	1
Make pounds more pleasant for animals (not like prisons)	1
Careful monitoring of any scheme required to prevent potential abuse of system	1
Fine owners of impounded animals who refuse to take their animal back	1
Establish a register of people who have refused to take their animal back from a pound	1
Develop guidelines/standards for smaller rescue organisations	1
Pounds should have standard criteria for assessing animals prior to euthanasia 1) assess by pound 2) assess by rescue group 3) assess by qualified animal trainer	1
Councils should be required to undertake treatment of animals with treatable medical conditions (including psychological)	1

IMPOUNDED CATS AND DOGS**Option 17 Investigate the development of an integrated impounded animal management tool**

Do you support the development of an integrated impounded animal management tool to improve policy responses for impounded cats and dogs?

Yes	No	Unsure
898	59	193

Comment	No. of submissions
Make it mandatory for pounds to keep records as to why they euthanise animals	48
Develop an application to notify lost and found animals	3
Must include why animals were surrendered	2
Need to capture statistics about where abandoned animals come from	1
Must allow councils to record a surrendered animal's subsequent behaviour at the pound as this may influence whether animal is rehoming	1
Current Companion Animals Register should be used	1
Will be critical to measure impact of any mandatory training program introduced	1
Includes information about: animal welfare, pet ownership, pound locations, details (incl. photos) of available animals, legal requirements, how to raise issues/complaints about animals in the community	1
Centralised with links to individual council pounds showing animals that need a home	1
Needs a consistent approach & technology - needs to take into account possible inflated statistics where one animal may go through pounds a number of times	1
Needs to capture information from animal welfare groups as well	1
Include information on how to find a lost pet	1
Needs to take into account possible inflated statistics where one animal may go through pounds a number of times	1

IMPOUNDED CATS AND DOGS**Option 18 Review barriers to cat and dog ownership in relation to residential tenancy laws**

a. Do you agree that NSW residential tenancy and strata management legislation should be reviewed to identify barriers to the ownership of cats and dogs in rental accommodation and units?

Yes	No	Unsure
1,023	86	78

Comment	No. of submissions
Concerns about noise from pets in units	10
Allow animals to be kept in retirement villages and nursing homes	8
Pets should be banned from apartments	3
Make the "no pets rule" illegal	3
Dogs should not be allowed to be kept in units	3
Need to adequately address health and amenity issues	2
"Public" residential tenancy main problem - Housing NSW rules/guidelines should be withdrawn	2
Real estate agents should not be allowed to determine as they may discourage because it could mean more work for them	2
Should only apply to small dogs and cats	1
Needs to prevent the feeding of pets in common areas	1
Change Strata By Laws in NSW similar to that operates in ACT (ACT Unit Titles Act 2001) where an owner is required to provide reasonable excuse in writing why a pet cannot be kept on premises	1
Amend Strata Scheme Management Act 1996 (NSW) & Residential Parks Act 1998 (NSW) to limit the powers of owners corporations and park operators to may by-laws and park rules that restrict the keeping of animals, such that any restriction is reasonable and disputes may be resolved by the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal.	1
Provide a qualified right for a tenant to keep an companion animal with the consent of the landlord, and the landlord owner cannot unreasonably withhold consent	1
By-laws with options such as: only desexed animals, allowable pets based on floor space, cats to be kept indoors, animals not left unattended on balconies or verandas, standard rules developed	1
Also consider encouraging the use of pet resumes	1
Should not be responsibility of local government for regulation	1

IMPOUNDED CATS AND DOGS**Option 18 Review barriers to cat and dog ownership in relation to residential tenancy laws**

b. Do you support the development of a pet bond scheme to encourage landlords to accept more cat and dog owners as tenants?

Yes	No	Unsure
1,043	97	86

Comment	No. of submissions
Must be supported by education of tenants and owners	5
Bond amount should be capped	4
Include as part of a general bond scheme (not a separate bond)	2
Must be an item included in regular inspections (to ensure damage is not occurring)	1
The bond amount should be set by the local council	1
Needs to include conditions on garden care, tick and flea prevention	1
Landlord should have the right to require tenant to steam clean carpet when vacating premises	1
Pet Bond can operate with Pet Resume	1
Pet Bonds are currently unlawful and should remain that way. Rental housing is 'pet unfriendly' because the tenants freedom to choose to have a pet is restricted, not because of any deficient tenant liability	1
If Pet Bond goes ahead they should be subject to the limitations provided under the WA model, and other safeguards	1
Any amendment to allow Pet Bonds must also provide a clear right to companion animal ownership in rental housing	1
Claims should be limited to the costs of cleaning and fumigating premises where premises is unclean	1
Pet Bond should not be payable relating to an animal kept by a tenant at the time of commencement of any amendment	1
Supported with education to reduce problems of barking etc	1
Only eligible on properties with suitable secure fencing	1

IMPOUNDED CATS AND DOGS**Option 18 Review barriers to cat and dog ownership in relation to residential tenancy laws**

c. Do you support the development of targeted education to promote cat and dog ownership in rental accommodation?

Yes	No	Unsure
996	97	86

Comment	No. of submissions
Target education material at real estate agents	1
Target tenants and landlords	1

IMPOUNDED CATS AND DOGS**Option 19 Introduce measures to encourage the confinement of cats to their owner's property**

a. Do you support providing councils with voluntary powers to issue local orders to cat owners to confine their cats (where appropriate and enforceable)?

Yes	No	Unsure
850	187	148

Comment	No. of submissions
Need to address semi-owned, un-owned and undesexed cat problems that are not defined in the Companion Animals Act	8
Declare native wildlife protection zones & enforce/introduces measure to protect the animals in them	7
Trap/desex/return discussion about semi-owned, un-owned or colony cats	6
Increase cat controls in bushland/fauna protection areas	5
Must include requirement to reduce impact on native wildlife	4
Education would be more productive	3
Address the definition of stray cat and council's refusing to take them as they are allowed to wander	3
Do not introduce capture - desex - release	2
Trap/desex/rehome or trap/euthanise - only options for feral animals	2
Difficult to enforce	2
Review laws around abandoning animals when trap/desex/return is used by some organisations who are performing a community service	1
Councils must be required to have a better focus on managing unowned cat colonies	1
Introduce a broad education campaign about confining cats at night	1
Large cost of enforcement is an issue	1
Cats should be confined either indoors or in outside run	1
Develop advertising showing that "putting the cat out at night" is irresponsible	1
Cat penalties should be increased	1
Rangers should have cat carriers	1
Require cats to wear a collar and tag from time of identification	1
Registration cost should include supply of a tag that contains name, chip no. owners phone no., desexed status of animal	1
Need to focus on control of feral cats	1
Provide information to trades people about constructing cat netting	1

IMPOUNDED CATS AND DOGS**Option 19 Introduce measures to encourage the confinement of cats to their owner's property**

b. Do you support the development of resources that encourage cat owners to confine their cats, particularly at night?

Yes	No	Unsure
1,033	79	69

Comment	No. of submissions
Cats should have same controls as dogs	8
Encourage use of trap neuter return programs	4
Cats should be confined to property during the day as well	4
Cats to be controlled by owner while outside - on a leash or in a cat run	2
Concerns that councils may introduce laws that are too restrictive	1
All people who own pets must be required to have adequate fencing to contain them	1
It is unrealistic to penalise owners whose cats roam	1
Focus instead on increasing cat desexing rates	1
Needs to be a broad community education program	1
Cat curfews are a waste of council resources	1
Cats should NOT be confined to the house in the day	1
Existing cat nuisance orders to be expanded to include containment orders	1
Cat control is a low priority	1
Legislation must be changed so this is mandatory	1

IMPOUNDED CATS AND DOGS**Option 20 Establish an ongoing reference group on cat and dog management and welfare issues**

Do you support the establishment of an ongoing reference group on cat and dog management and welfare issues?

Yes	No	Unsure
949	100	115

Comment	No. of submissions
<i>Who should be on ongoing reference group</i>	
Animal rescue organisations (ie. 'no kill' and animal welfare advocacy groups)	70
National Parks & Wildlife Service	3
Cat breeder association	2
Councils United for Pets	2
Australian Veterinary Association / Veterinarian representatives	2
Dogs NSW	2
Cat Fanciers Association	1
Waratah Cat Alliance	1
Councils	1
Clover Moore MP	1
NSW Wildlife Council	1
Native wildlife group (eg WIRES)	1
RSPCA	1
Getting to Zero advocates	1
Should not include RSPCA, AVA or PIAA etc	1
Bark Busters Australia - reduce potential for problems in units etc	1
Should have a floating structure to allow drafting of key interest groups when needed and annual appointment/reappointment	1
Should include pure breed clubs not just animal welfare organisations	1
Should include a community representative who is a pet owner	1
<i>Make up of existing Taskforce</i>	
Is not indicative of the range of views in the industry	49
Dogs NSW should not be on taskforce as they are biased	47
Concerns that all members (except AWL and Cat Protection Society) are not making decisions in the best interests of animals	47
Should have included rescue organisations	1
Must include a community representative who is a pet owner	1
<i>Other comments</i>	
Existing taskforce members should be required to witness animal euthanasia once a week for 12 months to understand the seriousness of the issue	47
Taskforce is not acting with enough urgency	47
Future group must focus on animal welfare	4
Taskforce should consult more widely (eg: with academics/researchers)	3
Taskforce decisions should be based on scientific fact	2
Animal Welfare Advisory Council should be used instead	1
Must focus on reduced euthanasia and improving rehoming	1
Taskforce members to be sent to relevant national & international conferences	1
Animal welfare and management issues should be considered separately	1
Must include work on cat issue and desexing of animals	1

Other key issues raised in submissions not addressed in discussion paper options:

Comment	No. of submissions
<i>Animal welfare (general)</i>	
Ban dogs be allowed to be kept on a chain	2
Investigate reports of dog fighting eg in Hunter area	2
Establish a central data base of animal abusers and people banned from owning or selling animals	1
Regulate guide dogs to ensure adequate down time	1
Strengthen welfare requirements for pet groomers	1
<i>Animal welfare/rescue groups</i>	
Instigate enquiry into RSPCA's high euthanasia rate and lack of action on animal cruelty cases	56
Regulate animal rescue groups	5
Allegations that such groups have too much power and are only interested in revenue raising	2
Regulate animal welfare groups (e.g. AWL/RSPCA etc)	2
Rescue groups should have had a representative on the Taskforce	2
Introduce self regulation of animal welfare/rescue groups	1
RSPCA needs to release animals to rescue groups	1
RSPCA should not be governing body	1
<i>Council & pound activities</i>	
Pounds need to be reviewed for compliance with animal welfare	3
Council pounds use unlawful temperament testing as a means to prevent the sale of dogs	1
Council should have to show evidence of % funds spent on companion animal management	1
Councils charge unlawful prices for impounded animals instead of the minimum tender being the cost to process the sale	1
Councils do not own impounded animals after 1-2 weeks and therefore can't make decisions about them	1
Councils illegally enforce compulsory desexing of impounded companion animals	1
Councils illegally offset the cost of their pound through their fees	1
Councils should be required to enforce animal welfare regulations to assist RSPCA and AWL	1
Establish local animal control committees (councils, National parks, vets, local boarding proprietors etc)	1
Guidelines should be produced to help councils determine when a dog is a working dog	1
Many provisions of the Companion Animals Act breach POCTAA	1
Pounds should be privatised	1
Surrender statistics - euthanasia rates be supplied by RSPCA/pounds when an animal is being surrendered	1
<i>Courts</i>	
Concerns that people banned from owning animals can get around this by changing address	1
Gaol time for repeat offenders	1
Magistrates need to be educated to ensure less section 10s are issued for people who contest council issued fines in court	1
<i>Dangerous Dogs</i>	

Dangerous dog legislation does not prevent a dog from being sold	1
Discussion paper should have addressed dangerous and restricted dogs	1
Independent behaviour assessment should be undertaken before a dog can be declared dangerous	1
More information for owners	1
More options available to councils and review penalties e.g. for animals where it is clearly out of character	1
Should be desexed	1
Should be registered nationally	1
Unclear definition of a 'dangerous dog'	1
Discussion paper content	
Funding needs to be made available for the enforcement of discussion paper options	5
Assistance dogs are not addressed	1
DLG must apologise and outline misinformation the taskforce discussion paper	1
Does not mention Councils activities such as pack fining, writing infringements without Prima Facie evidence, and being in general anti-dog	1
Does not recognise arguments against desexing	1
Layout of discussion paper is unclear	1
Should address sale of working dogs to pet shops	1
That most councils destroy animals in contravention of POCTAA (Sections 4 to 6) is not recognised by the DLG and missing from the Discussion Paper	1
The relationship between the Impounding Act and the Companion Animals Act and how it applies is missing and denied by the DLG	1
Enforcement	
Better enforcement of current regulations would improve things	21
Tougher penalties for animal cruelty, animal welfare problems	14
Concerns that councils do not have resources to enforce & enforcement over weekends is a problem	7
Tougher penalties and enforcement for unrestrained dogs and roaming dogs	4
Enforcement must be proactive (not complaints based)	3
More animal welfare inspectors required (north coast)	3
Taskforce to stop dog stealing/increased penalties	3
Better follow-up on allegations - even when proof is not provided	1
Clearer information on who is responsible for ensuring compliance	1
Concern about rumours of dog fighting	1
Pet industry requires a single controlling body in which represents the entire industry	1
Police training to enforce animal welfare	1
General	
Include other animals in companion animals legislation eg rabbits, horses and donkeys	54
Allow appropriately controlled animals on public transport	5
Introduce Oscar's Law	5
More regulation will not automatically improve outcomes for animals	2
Regulate dog training groups	2
Working dogs should be microchipped with \$0 registration fee	2
Allow dogs on leashes at outdoor dining areas	1

Amend the CA Act to give greater powers to councils to address barking dogs (including mandatory pre-licensing education or puppy training and a mandated monitoring system to collect objective evidence)	1
Breeders should have more access to Register information to help ensure pups sold are desexed by six months by new owner	1
CA Act is unclear about dogs coming into school grounds. Complaint made to DEC about teachers bringing their on dog to school	1
Concern regarding welfare of other companion animals	1
Council to reward responsible owners with fee vaccinations or check-ups	1
Create centralised public portal that also includes trend information that vets can update and also provides education	1
Development of a native animal pet program	1
Gov should have independent governing body to oversee AWO's, Rescue Groups, Vets and Pet Shops	1
Helpdesk information line for owners	1
No change is necessary - current legislation is sufficient	1
Offer tax breaks/financial incentives for people to provide foster care for animals	1
Require people who buy a pedigree pet to sign a contract saying they will desex it at an appropriate age	1
Stand alone annexure of the Act available for public at council, libraries, online, vets, etc	1
Too many microchip mix ups with breeders already	1
Greyhounds	
Greyhound over breeding & rate of euthanasia needs to be addressed	61
Expand Greyhound Adoption Program	47
Greyhound breeders treated same as puppy farmers	2
Greyhound breeding and management removed from Greyhound Racing	2
Ban greyhound racing	1
Greyhound breeder & trainer should pay tax on winnings for adoption program	1
Greyhounds - introduce a cap on the number of animals bred	1
Greyhounds to be accepted at pounds & re-homed	1
Modify Greenhound Assessor qualification requirements to allow those who have attained a Certificate III in Dog Behaviour and Training	1
Identification issues	
DLG should distribute list of microchippers to the public	2
Requirements for AI's should made more stringent	2
Allow verification by phone for incomplete forms	1
An audit should be undertaken of all existing AI's to determine if they remain competent	1
Owners should have to verify their identity	1
Quality of microchipping labels is poor - standardise to ensure consistent font type will reduce errors	1
Standardise microchipping equipment to ensure all microchips can be read	1
Update forms to include breeder details	1
Leash Free Areas	
Expansion of leash-free areas to allow more socialisation	2
DLG to issue guide on number, size & construction for leash-free areas to aid developers to plan	1
Fence leash-free areas to protect drivers passing by as well	1
Limiting number of kept animals	
Limit of 2 dogs & 2 cats to residential premises	1

Maximum 2 animals per property with annual renewal approved by council	1
Pet insurance	
Introduce a pet insurance scheme to increase the sense of value of pets	1
Tax exemption/claims eg for insurance	1
Pet shops	
Pet shops to collaborate with animal rescue organisations & pounds to sell animals	14
Better regulations around pet shops	3
Investigate PIAA	2
Pet shops needs to disclose breeder details	2
Examination of other states and countries policies on banning/controlling puppy farms	1
Register Issues	
Council staff need to clearly understand requirements with clear information provided on websites	2
Audit of Register records and "clean-up" should be undertaken	1
Automated clear instructions sent to new owners when change of owner & other forms processed	1
Concern forms are not processed - simpler process required with options for both previous and new owners to verify change of owner has been updated on Register	1
Develop national 'stolen animal' register	1
Developed further to enable use as a statistical database to capture information about excessive breeders etc with automated alerts for enforcement investigation	1
Enable bulk upload of forms - especially when register down	1
Enable cross referencing with breeder standards - e.g. number of litters a bitch has had over a time period	1
One unified national register	1
Owner history view for council rangers	1
Restricted dogs	
Abolish breed specific legislation	2
Include American Staffordshire Terrier on restricted dog list	2
Ban aggressive breeds like Pitbulls	1
Give council rangers the power to determine restricted breeds	1
Keeping dogs in cages creates more of a nuisance from noise	1
Stop delaying on introducing effective legislation to stop Pitbulls and other aggressive breeds	1
Use Register information to identify breeds responsible for majority of dog attacks and restrict breeds	1
Veterinarians	
AVA should encourage vets to work at preferential rates for rescue groups	47
Vets should be encouraged to work as small scale rehoming centres	47
Vets must include microchip number on any sterilisation certificate	1
Vets should be required to be trained in early age desexing	1