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The Relevance of Animal Welfare in Urban Animal Management

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RSPCA (Vic)



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What is Animal Welfare?

“Humans must treat animals humanely. Where humans make use of animals, or interfere with their habitat, they should bestow a level of care befitting human dignity as a rational, intelligent, compassionate being, and a level of care merited by the nature of the animal as a sentient creature capable of responding to human care and attention. Such care should be marked by empathy, consideration, compassion and tenderness towards animals.”

*Dr Hugh Wirth, AM
President, RSPCA Australia*



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How is Animal Welfare measured?

The Five Freedoms of Welfare

- Freedom from Hunger and Thirst
- Freedom from Discomfort
- Freedom from Pain, Injury and Disease
- Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour
- Freedom from Fear and Distress



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RSPCA in Australia

- First established in 1871.
- Eight incorporated RSPCA societies in Australia
 - Victoria, NSW, QLD, Tasmania, ACT, South Aust, West. Aust, NT.
- RSPCA societies are 'Not for profit', non-government organisations
- In most cases, RSPCA societies receive less than 2% of their annual income from state government funding



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RSPCA in Australia

Each society contributes to the management of animals in the urban environment by:

- Managing municipal pounds and providing alternative animal management options
- Desexing and microchipping programs
- Campaigns for improved legislative governance
- Education across a broad range of the demographic
- Community programs
- Animal welfare intervention



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RSPCA in Australia

Animals received nationally by the RSPCA for the 2004-2005 financial year

Total Animals Received: 132,159

Dogs

Total Admitted	60,030	45.4% of total animals
Reclaimed	16179	27.0% of total dogs
Rehomed	17520	29.2% of total dogs
Euthanased	20658	34.4% of total dogs

Cats

Total Admitted	55,291	41.8% of total animals
Reclaimed	1365	2.5% of total cats
Rehomed	16589	30.0% of total cats
Euthanased	31941	57.8% of total cats



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RSPCA in Australia

- RSPCA operates 39 shelters in metropolitan, regional and rural Australia
- Currently there are 61 formal agreements between the RSPCA and local government animal management authorities
- Of the total number of companion animals admitted into RSPCA shelters, less than 25% are surrendered, the remainder are stray



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The broader Animal Welfare community

- The RSPCA makes up a very small portion of animal welfare groups in Australia
- Key organisations include, but are not limited to:
 - Animal Welfare League, Cat Protection Society, Lost Dogs Home
- 79 metropolitan, regional and rural councils in Victoria
- 42 have agreements with animal welfare groups to provide pound services
- 35 are managed in facilities owned by the animal welfare organisation



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The broader Animal Welfare community

Animal Welfare Shelters in Victoria

	RSPCA (Vic)	%	Vic Animal Aid Trust	%	Lost Dogs Home (Vic)	%	Australian Animal Protection Society	%	Lort Smith Animal Hospital	%	Cat Protection Society (Vic)	%	Geelong Animal Welfare	%	Accum Total	%
Dogs Admitted	16506		2483		10988		1611		780				3066		35434	
Reclaimed	6667	40.4	1286	51.8	4846	44.1		0.0	222	28.5			1729	56.4	14750	41.6
Adopted	4534	27.5	585	23.6	1474	13.4	972	60.3	396	50.8			537	17.5	8498	23.9
Euthanased	4717	28.6	510	20.5	4499	40.9	243	15.1	162	20.8			778	25.4	10909	30.8
Cats Admitted	16411		1588		10250		3393		3400		15387		2666		53095	
Reclaimed	647	3.9	57	3.6	344	3.4		0.0	56	1.6	630	4.1	94	3.5	1828	3.4
Adopted	5520	33.6	794	50.0	375	3.7	943	27.7	1600	47.1	5139	33.4	573	21.5	14944	28.1
Euthanased	8933	54.4	593	37.3	9394	91.6	2320	68.4	1744	51.3	9618	62.5	1982	74.3	34584	65.1
Total	32917		4071		21238		5004		4180		15387		5732		88529	



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Animal Welfare impact on UAM in Victoria

- An estimated total of at more 88,529 animal were admitted into welfare run facilities
- The benchmark for care provision sits in the Code of Practice, these organisation work well above that
- Costs of rehousing and care beyond the 8 day statutory period met by the welfare organisation
- All animals rehoused are desexed, vaccinated, microchipped and wormed



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The cost

- A recent cost model conducted at RSPCA Vic to rehouse an animal
 - 4 year old female dog
 - Held for eight day statutory period
 - Held for adoption for 14 days
 - Desexed, vaccinated, microchipped and wormed
 - Required no further medical treatment→ Total Cost - \$468.48
- RSPCA Vic rehoused 10,256 animal in the 2005/2006 financial year
- RSPCA Organisations across Aust rehoused over 34,000



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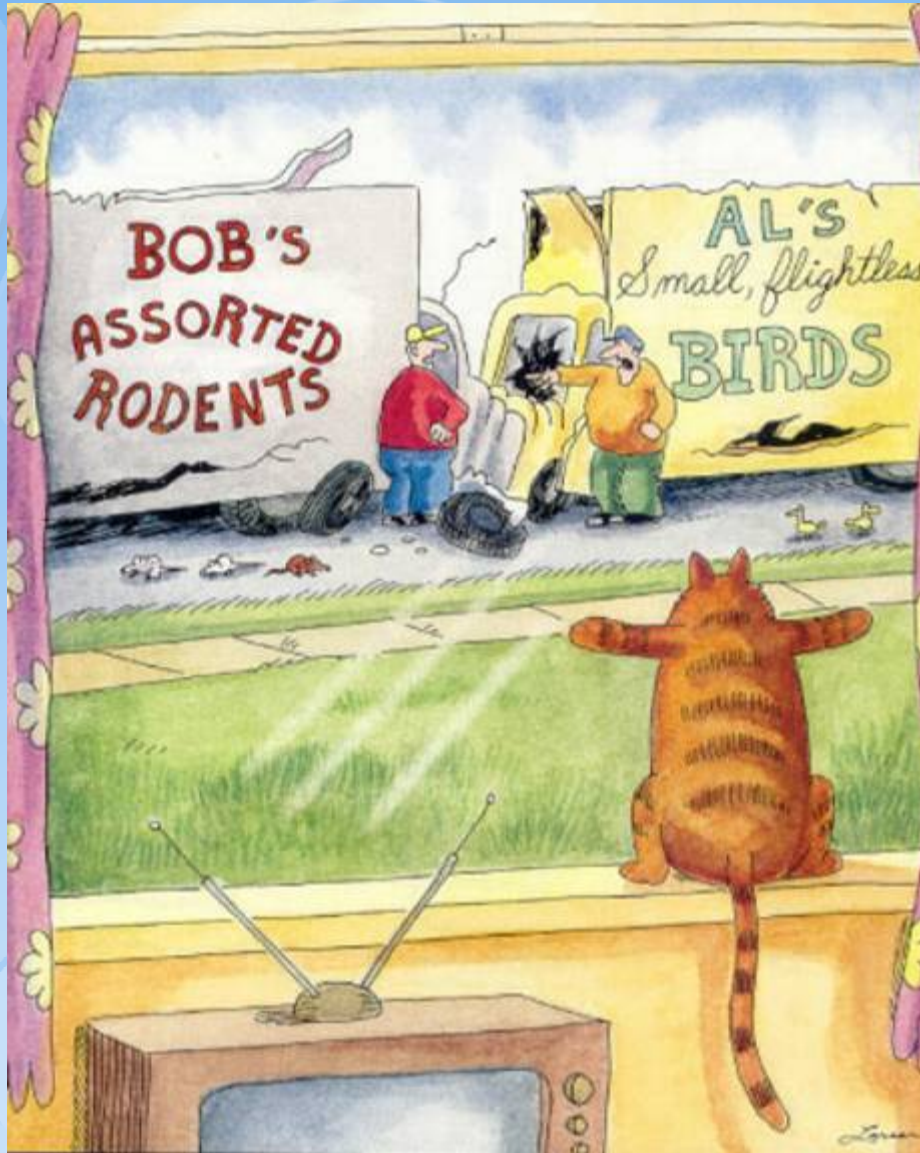
Broader approach to Animal Welfare

- Welfare groups work beyond the micro of rehousing and rehabilitation of lost, surrendered, sick and injured animals
- Seek to have influence in the local, national and international animal management and welfare arena
- Active within the community through independent or 'in-partnership' programs facilitating and promoting:
 - Microchipping
 - Desexing
 - Education
 - Health Care
 - Broad social issues - Relationship between domestic violence and animal cruelty



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Getting out into the 'real world'



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Getting out into the 'real world'

- 'In-partnership' programs jointly managed with local government, veterinarians, and state government departments such as Department of Primary Industries
- The most prominent partnerships that have the greatest impact are those with local government
- Enables the impact to reach a broader range of the community demographic
- Animal welfare organisations are becoming more progressive



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Getting out into the 'real world'

- In Victoria, the RSPCA and many other animal welfare organisations conduct microchipping programs with local government that regularly attract more than 200 companion animal owners per day
- In other states programs such as that between the Animal Welfare League of QLD and Gold Coast City Council re-enforce the benefits of 'in- partnership' programs.



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Who are the winners

- For Animal Welfare organisations, the simple answer is the animals
- A in-depth review would suggest more
 - Increased financial efficiencies for all participating groups
 - Larger 'pulling power'
 - Increased range of skills and knowledge
 - Opportunity to further develop strong and viable relationships



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The future

- Animal welfare group will continue to seek partnerships with local government
- The continual development of these relationships will impact animal welfare in a positive and progressive way
- With a continued commitment to contribute from both local government and animal welfare groups, companion animals in urban environments will receive an exceptional level of care



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Thank You



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