

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: You may, given the time, take this on notice. In their submission Local Government NSW on page 14 under the heading, "the relationship between New South Wales pounds and animal rescue organisations" stated: Ideally, rescue and rehoming organisations would have some form of minimum accreditation, and all those working with companion animals would be required to have mandatory basic training so that basic knowledge, competence and safety is assured. They recognise the role of volunteers, and limited resources and go on to say: It may be necessary to subsidise training and accreditation if this option is pursued. I was wondering if anyone has any comments on that proposal?

**Response to question taken on notice:**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the proposal regarding minimum accreditation and mandatory training for rescue and rehoming organisations, as discussed during the recent parliamentary enquiry.

We appreciate the recognition of the crucial role played by rescue and rehoming organisations in safeguarding the well-being of companion animals. It is undeniable that these organisations often operate under challenging circumstances, relying heavily on volunteers and limited resources to fulfill their missions.

In response to the proposal, we wholeheartedly support the idea of establishing some form of minimum accreditation for rescue and rehoming organisations. This accreditation could serve as a benchmark for ensuring that organisations adhere to standards of care, knowledge, and competence. By doing so, we can enhance the safety and well-being of the animals under our care and reinforce public trust in the sector.

Furthermore, we recognise the importance of mandatory basic training for all individuals involved in the rescue and rehoming process. This training would not only equip volunteers with the essential skills and knowledge required for their roles but also contribute to a consistent and high standard of care across the sector. We understand that volunteers are the backbone of our organisations, and their dedication is invaluable. However, we believe that funded training opportunities are essential to ensure that volunteers receive the necessary education to handle the diverse challenges associated with animal care.

The suggestion to subsidise training and accreditation is particularly noteworthy, considering the financial constraints faced by many charitable organisations. Adequate funding would enable us to provide comprehensive training programs, ensuring that volunteers are well-prepared and competent in their roles. This investment in education would, in turn, contribute to the overall success of our rehoming efforts and, most importantly, the welfare of the animals in our care.

In conclusion, we believe that establishing minimum accreditation standards and providing funded training opportunities for rescue and rehoming organisations is a proactive and necessary step towards improving the sector's effectiveness and accountability. We

appreciate the consideration of these proposals and welcome any further discussions or collaboration to ensure the highest standards of care for companion animals.