

From: [Diana Rayment - PetRescue](#)
To: [Portfolio Committee 8](#)
Cc: [Teneale Houghton](#)
Subject: CM: Re: Pounds in New South Wales - Post-hearing responses - 15 December 2023
Date: Monday, 29 January 2024 5:11:05 PM
Attachments: [image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Dear Teneale,

Sorry that my reply is so late.

The transcript is good, thank you.

I have linked to some resources below, to support the information in the PetRescue submission and my evidence at the Inquiry.

- The Association of Shelter Veterinarians "The Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters" that I mentioned at the Inquiry can be accessed for free [here](#). The Guidelines are the only evidence-driven document outlining minimum and ideal standards of care for pets in the care of shelters, including government-run shelters.
- I mentioned the HASS pilot shelters in my evidence. One of these shelters is [Cabot Animal Support Services](#) in Arkansas. The Director of Community Services for Cabot, [Mike Wheeler](#), also holds positions in both the National Animal Care and Control Association and in the Human Animal Support Services project. As Nell mentioned in her evidence, Mike presented at the Big Hairy People and Pets Summit last year, and is very generous in giving his time to anyone who would like to discuss how to take this approach in their own municipality. If the Committee are interested in hearing more about the practical application, learnings, and outcomes that Mike and his team have experienced as they transformed Cabot's approach to animal management services, I would suggest reaching out to Mike directly.
- Regarding behavioural assessments, I feel that expecting the Committee to become familiar with the complexity of information about how difficult it is to do in-shelter assessments well is unreasonable. I have linked several documents below, in the event that any of the Committee members would like to explore the topic in more detail.
 - [In-shelter/pound behaviour assessments: If temperament tests are out, what do we do now?](#) (Summit presentation paper, and associated [presentation recording](#).)
 - ["Applied personality assessment in domestic dogs: Limitations and caveats"](#) (published literature review)
 - [ASPCA Position Statement on Shelter Dog Behaviour Assessments](#)
 - ASPCA ["Is That Cat Feral" presentation](#) on Margaret Slater and her teams research on behaviour assessments in cats
 - Published review of [current knowledge of cat welfare assessment in animal shelters](#)
- That said, there are guiding principles for all organisations who care for a rehome animals should be following and these are ideas and concepts that the Committee can discuss and think about how to build into whatever frameworks and recommendations they develop. These principles include:
 - Collecting objective information about all animals at all contact points throughout the animal's interaction with the organisation, including reported history from owners, finders or other community members who interacted with the animal, all staff and

volunteers, and from adopters during post-adoption follow up. This information must be collated and easily accessible for review of both individual animal pathways and organisational processes

- Pathway decisions for pets should be made by more than one, appropriately senior team members, using guiding principles for what the organisation considers safe to release back into the community, what animals need further rehabilitation or assessment beyond what the organisation can provide (so are eligible for transfer to partner organisations such as rescue), and what animals should be considered for euthanasia on health or behavioural grounds.
 - While individual animal records are internal documents, frameworks for decision making and internal processes around how pathway decisions are made should be publicly available and organisations, especially councils, must be transparent about how and why they make decisions. Visibility of these processes and the the factors impacting pathway decision making is crucial for improvement in the system.
 - All organisations must strive to meet the ASV Guidelines, and provide a level of care of animals that at least meets but ideally exceeds the minimum standards. For councils, it is not possible to do this using paid staff only, due to the volume of animals cared for and resource restrictions. As such, all facilities run by local government should be actively leveraging their local communities to provide volunteer and foster care for animals.
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- Lastly, to illustrate the vast difference between our typical Australian approach to desexing pets through vet clinics, and the scale and outcomes achievable through well-run, large scale High Quality, High Volume Spay Neuter clinics, I have included some links below to information on this model. The provision of training in HQHVSN techniques to all vets is just one aspect of the movement towards training all veterinarians, including new graduates, to provide veterinary care to all community members at a level accessible to them - this is called the [Spectrum of Care Initiative](#).
 - [High level information about HQHVSN through the HSUS](#)
 - [Spayathon Puerto Rico](#) is a great demonstration of very large scale events, with 150-200 surgeries per day being performed in the one facility over the course of a week, from a large sports stadium of similar (non-veterinary) venue. While the Puerto Rican events have been cancelled due to the COVID pandemic, HQHVSN is still occurring at a local level around the US and beyond, with Shelter Medicine departments of multiple universities actively teaching these techniques as their [safety is more widely accepted](#), and increasing recognition of the importance of access to care for all members of the community is more widely embraced.
 - Published review paper [discussing the practical implementation of HQHVSN](#), and challenges to acceptance of HQHVSN by private veterinarians
 - Key points from the [2016 Association of Shelter Veterinarians Medical Care Guidelines for Spay-Neuter Programs](#)

Thank you again for the opportunity to present evidence to the Portfolio Committee as part of this Inquiry.

Kind regards

Dr Diana Rayment,
Program Specialist

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