

**INQUIRY INTO 2021 INQUIRY INTO THE APPROVED  
CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS UNDER THE  
PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT 1979**

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 28 February 2022

---

Partially  
Confidential

To: Portfolio Committee No. 4 –  
Regional New South Wales, Water and Agriculture

***1. That Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Regional New South Wales, Water and Agriculture annually inquire into and report on the operation of the charitable organisations approved under s 34B of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979, and in particular:***

***(a) the matters contained in the annual reports of the approved charitable organisations, including their financial statements,***

### **Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals**

---

At present, the categories and information provided in relation to why animals are euthanised is far too general and conceals unacceptable reasons (convenience killing) for why animals are being killed.

Proper details must be provided for animals euthanised under the sections of: 'behavioural' 'fractious feline', 'infectious', 'medical' and 'organisational'. And proper details must be provided for exactly how and why animals 'died in care'.

Numbers should also be further broken down into cats, kittens, puppies, dogs – with small and large breeds specified, to determine if there is possible breed bias, i.e., whether a disproportionate number of larger breed dogs are being killed in comparison to small breeds.

Based on the charts provided, well over half the cats that enter the shelter are still killed. The numbers must be further unpacked to discover why this is still the case.

Overall, the numbers should be disassembled to give an accurate account of how many animals are needlessly euthanized. Only animals who are terminally ill, dangerous dogs and significantly mentally impaired animals can be put to sleep.

### **Behavioural**

'Behavioural' is broad and can include animals who are scared or timid – this was certainly my experience when I worked for the RSPCA up until 2018. Animals who are deemed as 'too scared and/or timid' or 'anxious' to go up for adoption and subsequently killed for this reason must be reported as such not placed under the general category of 'behaviour'.

How much of a chance they were given to adjust to being in a shelter depended on how full the different holding areas were. Often, they are very full, so animals were put to sleep because there was nowhere to house them in the shelter and/or there were no available foster carers.

Thus, if numbers are properly evaluated, many of these animals will in fact more accurately belong in the 'organisational' category, which includes for 'where resources (foster carers or physical capacity) are restricted'.

### **Fractionous Feline**

The figures must also be broken down to include which animals were actually 'fractionous', which generally includes feral cats and to ensure timid or anxious cats are not placed in this category (see above).

### **Infectious**

This category will include ringworm, cat flu, calici virus, FIV and other illnesses. Illnesses which are perfectly treatable, while we know that FIV cats can live long and healthy lives.

Numbers must be disassembled to determine exactly how many cats are euthanised due to cat flu, calici virus and ring worm. In particular, ring worm is the feline equivalent of athlete's foot, therefore, euthanising animals for this reason is unacceptable.

Again, if numbers are properly evaluated, many of these animals will in fact more accurately belong in the 'organisational' category, which includes for 'where resources (foster carers or physical capacity) are restricted'.

### **Medical**

This could include perfectly treatable illnesses, such as needing routine surgeries prior to going up for adoption but being euthanised instead due to space and/or budget reasons (this is debatable given how much is donated each year). Again, much greater detail needs to be provided. In terms of illness, apart from terminal illness, this can include animals who need to be on medication long term. The specific reasons need to be provided for in the numbers.

Surgeries for the same ailments must be made available to all animals. Proper, detailed reporting of numbers will allow determinations to be made if this is not happening. I observed a lack of uniformity of decisions and inconsistencies in this area during my time at the RSPCA, resulting in animals not receiving equal treatment in terms of medical care and a chance at adoption.

Again, if numbers are properly evaluated, many of these animals will in fact more accurately belong in the 'organisational' category, which includes for 'where resources (foster carers or physical capacity) are restricted'. Particularly, where there is said to be a lack of space for recovery post treatment surgery or lack of foster carers.

### **Organisational**

This category is said to include animals who are too young to survive without their mother and need bottle feeding. They generally need to be in foster care due to needing to be fed every few hours depending on age; however, this is a big responsibility, and many perish as they simply cannot thrive without a mother. However, this section could also include kittens who are eating on their own but who cannot be vaccinated and require foster so that they are not exposed to illness in the shelter. More details need to be provided.

### **Statistics for Prosecutions**

The previous RSPCA annual report listed over 14,000 investigations but less than 1% lead to the 'commencement' of a prosecution.

Numbers need to further be broken down to indicate why prosecutions are not brought.

Annual reports need to include number of complaints made.

In addition, number of cases assigned to each inspector each year would also bring insight into the high volume of cruelty cases one inspector is expected to take on.

### **Animal Welfare League**

The AWL appears to do better in terms of percentage of animals euthanized. However, must be subjected to the same scrutiny as above. Their current report provides even more general figures. And prosecutions are at 0.2% of complaints received.

### ***(b) the exercise by the approved charitable organisations of their compliance and enforcement functions under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979, and***

Ensure approved charitable organisations are subjected to *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW) so it can begin to be determined why the rate of prosecution is so low i.e., specific reasons for why seemingly compelling cases are not pursued, and why certain cases are not investigated.

### ***(c) any other related matter.***

More detailed information about programs and activities that are actively reducing animals entering the shelter and reducing euthanasia. For instance, annual review of the performance of such programs in terms of reducing intake and euthanasia.