

**Submission
No 9**

INQUIRY INTO POUNDS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Hello and thank you for looking into how improvements on the current pound system can be made. I approach this from a unique position, previously working for rspca nsw, and help to run a national rescue organisation that assisted with several disasters and rehoming of unfixable animals. Certified to assess "red flag" dogs from 2004 and working with over well over 10000 animals in the last 20 years.

The ideas I have are practical and currently in practice both within OZ and around the world. 1st, let's make the rangers and pound staffs job easier by utilising the facial recognition system as per rspca vic. This allows owners to send a picture into the database for faster rehoming (saving money, lives and creating good p.r. From a normally negative situation) of their much loved animals thru having the information already on the system. Now the way this is conducted around (like vic) the world is the animal has to be transported to the shelter.. Yet instead of having to return the animal to the shelter for identification, why not have 2x cameras in the rangers vehicle at each end of the cage to register the face = ability to contact owners and take home, cutting out one expensive step in the system. Off topic but relevant, why not look at the Logan city councils rangers trucks that are up there with the most advanced in the country. They are individual designs that allow for the safest and most humane method of gathering the dogs ever seen. Oh also should have mentioned I work with various councils for dangerous dog assessments and lots good and some very bad in their methods.. Now the cameras can be bought and made in OZ for around \$75-150 total cost, the system should not need to be expensive but utilise similar systems used around the world, easy to find..

2nd suggestion is related to the first.. As the animal can now be directly returned home with AI facial recognition instant or close to, with the owners contact details; (not just one contact details should be able to be stored but several as an option. I would happily give my extended family's information, Dads work, grandmars home phone to have my animals returned. Currently if the one person changes phones numbers, loses their old phone etc, heaven forbid they forgets to update, a animal can be euthanised)

Now able to be found, animal rehomed and not having more negatives due to lack of communication or progress to keep with modern technology's ability. So if the ranger sees a open gate and secure yard otherwise, able to contact owners, return animal and secure gate. If they see a hole or damaged fence, an option of fixing the fence - yard before returning animal is offered. If each council has one person who is allocated to help or use the mens shed, lions club, a plethora of people will offer to help fix basic fencing issues.. put in chicken wire near / under the fence if digging out etc.. The last option if no hole or way out obviously seen is often animals escaping due to behavioural reasons..

These can also be easily fixed by offering free training each week at the local shelter - pound.. see Steve Austin, Graham "the dog father", Jan Fennell / Tony Kinght "the dog listener" Victoria Steadwell, plus soooo many more I can name etc.. alas I know for a fact, for helping save animals lives in a new way they will happily make a video with advice and train people to help keep their animals within their yard.. that the rangers - pound or shelter staff can adopt and pass on.. Now, the old rspca saying if they can't recommend people with training methods due to conflict of interest, makes no sense.. the dogs and cats keep coming back from reasons they can fix, surly common sense says with these professionals advice previously given to Australian customs, defence force and t.v. Shows including currently on channel ten.. Let's give the people answers not fining them for not knowing.. I conducted classes every week at newcastle rspca shelter for any animals that were going to be admitted due to behavioural issues, which reduced the intake by lots.. One person could go from council to council having each day of the week allocated to fixing issues that animals would otherwise end up in shelter for.. Jumping out of yard, aggression, barking, etc all can be easily fixed.. p.S. I do not want to do this and am disabled after a motor vehicle

accident, help the little my body and mind allows now..this is not a jobs for mates, it is fixing issues..

3rd suggestion is a bit more advanced yet regularly available for human relocation programs. Rapid DNA testing, mobile tests that within a few hours the owner of the dog is able to be found. When the dog or cat, bunny or whatever pounds deal with are admitted a dna swab is taken and information placed into the national database. Localised searches first reducing time etc.. then expanding for further information gathering.. those who register as a breeder have the option to put their breeding animals dna in the system and other public non commercial owners have the option to place their animals dna also. If the animals on the dna system, no fine given. Dna recorded, for all entering the system when in the rangers truck via a stick and treat method like a swab.. if notable to read dna as they don't eat treat, then recorded at shelter - pound. This allows for good breeders to have their animals returned and irresponsible ones to be shown by multiple animals showing up at pounds.. my experience is most are responsible and want to know about the lives of the animals they create..

For those who don't wish to be a part of the new idea, they get fined and treated as per current processes. Those who do wish to join are given a waiver of fines for addressing the problems that lead the animal to end up at the shelter or rangers possession..

If they run away, why? Fence open, hole in fence, behavioural issues, all fixed so very easy.. rehomed without days of shelter - pound fees / costs put upon the councils as I know run at a loss mostly.. or even worse people go on holiday and micro chip falls out, moves or undetected.. AI facial recognition will fix this thru rehoming (with several contact information recorded giving multiple options to contact.) the dna files will create the next level of animal welfare and prevention thru figuring out where the animals that enter the system come from.. working within this industry for 20+ years it is obvious when dogs from puppy mills, back yard breeders or home environments due to the actions and behavioural quirks shall I say..

Sorry for a mini novel but the first two things are currently available, easy things to implement + improve all experiences and outcomes. Thank you for your time and consideration. More than willing to discuss several other ideas to help the pound system, some may not like but we can reskill the reception and booking in people with automated AI systems.. the dog walks into the room, thru a microchip scanner like airports that does whole body, the facial pics up information recorded previously or makes a new file. The ranger puts into cage, staff attend as per normal. The reskilling can be may places, and money + time saved +++..

P.S. as this is a wholistic approach let's also have a state wide behaviour assessment process. With dogs having 40+ tails positions 50+ types of licks that are interaction intentions clearly showing the meaning behind actions and movements. The rangers and staff need to be a quipped with the information to make life and death decisions, yet most are given minimal training or assistance. Again this is easy fixed with short videos and practical experience of which I will happily donate my time to create a state wide assessment protocol. Otherwise there are many people out there who specialise in this field who could make submissions for a method of assessment to assist. At the moment they are flying in the dark with only individual experiences to decide what lives or dies.. there is a better way to help all.. Sue Sternberg has done this for years, Ian Dunbar all have information that would assist..