

**Submission
No 10**

INQUIRY INTO POUNDS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Inquiry into pounds in New South Wales

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the pound situation in NSW. (I prefer to call the pound an Animal Shelter).

There is no consistency in who runs pounds, some are run by the RSPCA, some by councils and others by voluntary organisations. At the moment there are large numbers of animals coming into pounds because of many problems. For example animals not being desexed and breeding more unwanted animals, the rental situation where landlords are able to discriminate against people with animals also some people are doing it tough in the current economic environment. All these issues are putting strains on the pound situation.

I believe the State Government needs to put some resources into the pound system and more education of the public. As well as helping with desexing programs to help keep the number of animals down.

The major problem I see is with the breeding of animals in 'puppy farms'. NSW has many of these horrible places, (a lot near the NSW/Victorian border, after Victorian closed down a lot). All animals in these places are cruelly treated. The public is not told the full story when adopting a dog and they need to be educated to insist on checking both the parents of the dog they wish to adopt. Down the track these dogs all have health and behaviour problems and a lot end up in the pounds.

The NSW Government must close all these horrible farms and set up a Police Unit within the Police Force to prosecute and gaol the hideous people who run these places.

I see that there appears to be a lot more of cruelty to animals and the Animal Police Unit would be able to tackle this. It appears to often go along with violence against women.

At the moment the animal cruelty act is enforced by the RSPCA which is a charity with certain powers. This system is not working the RSPCA does not do a good job of prosecuting animal abusers and because they receive some government funding they do not look at the cruelty for the live trade for example and when the brumbies were murdered in KNP the RSPCA were asked to investigate and they did not even go up into the park and supported the murderers. All animal cruelty must be handled by a specific Police Unit.

I would like to see the sale of pets from pet shops also banned. These animals are usually from puppy farms (despite the shop saying otherwise). All animals should come from registered small breeders, the pound or a charity like Cat and Dog Home, Animal Welfare League, Cat Protection Society or RSPCA as well as some rescue groups.

A lot of the pounds at the moment rely heavily on welfare groups to foster cats and dogs and provide financial support so that the animals at the pound are walked and fed a decent diet. This should be fundamentally the responsibility of the council and state government.

Rescue and welfare groups and friends of the particular pound can help with fostering, fund raising for extras, helping with training of dogs and socialising of cats and dogs and helping advertising which animals are for sale. At the moment all rescue groups are under pressure, limited funds and limited helpers and are asked to step in to help the burden on the pounds. All this without any financial help.

I would like to see all pounds adopt a minimum euthanasia policy. We saw an example in Bourke where despite there being a welfare/rescue group willing to take the dogs the council shot them in a barbaric way. This must not be allowed.

Pets are an integral part of our human lives and we as a community must ensure that animals receive the best treatment and love that we can give them.