

**Submission  
No 80**

## **INQUIRY INTO POUNDS IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Organisation:** Pet Industry Association of Australia

**Date Received:** 18 August 2023

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August 18, 2023

NSW Parliament – Legislative Council  
Portfolio Committee No 8 – Customer Service

Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Pounds in New South Wales

Dear Honourable committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to this inquiry into pounds in New South Wales. The Pet Industry Association of Australia is the professional pet industries peak representative body. We represent over 900 pet businesses covering all facets of the Australian pet industry including almost 200 pet boarding and pet services businesses.

The PIAA are committed to growing the pet industry in Australia and improving professional standards of our members and the broader industry. Promoting high standards in animal care and welfare practices are key to achieving this objective and maintaining our social license as an industry with the pet loving Australian public.

Our comments and members interests will primarily focus on addressing 1 (d) and 1(e) from the inquiries terms of reference.

(d) the adequacy of the laws, regulations and codes governing New South Wales pounds, including the Companion Animals Act 1998 (NSW) and the NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice No 5 – Dogs and cats in animal boarding establishments (1996), as well as the adequacy of the current enforcement and compliance regime.

PIAA agrees the existing NSW Code of practice No 5 in NSW is outdated and fully support a review and update. We request we be able to contribute through working with NSW DPI and other stakeholders to update and reconcile the NSW code against codes of practices in other jurisdictions as well as PIAA's own expected guidelines and best practices (which is in the process of being reviewed and updated to ensure it continues to reflect the highest animal care standards)

PIAA also recommend any update to the NSW code of practice No 5, should also consider the creation of a specific code for pounds and rehoming organisations (the focus of this inquiry). That will allow the specific nuances of such organisations to be addressed without unnecessarily restricting professional boarding and pet day-care facilities.

It is important that any updates not only achieve the desired outcome of improving animal welfare and enrichment outcomes but also ensure a regulatory environment that continues to allow the hundreds of professional pet boarding and day care businesses across NSW to remain financially viable and able to continue to provide their vital professional pet services to NSW pet keepers at an affordable price.

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(e) factors influencing the number of animals ending up in New South Wales pounds, and strategies for reducing these numbers.

PIAA submits that the unregulated back yard trade in companion animals is the primary source of unwanted pets ending up in NSW pounds. Greater regulation surrounding the unregistered backyard breeding, advertising, and sale of pets through channels not governed by Australian Consumer Law would be a step toward preventing pets being purchased by people not fully prepared for the commitment they are taking on.

The pet industry stands ready to work cooperatively with pounds and rehoming organisations as well as the NSW office of local government and local councils to assist in rehoming unwanted pets. To achieve this outcome pet businesses including pet stores would need to be viewed as a partner to be embraced. This could provide hundreds of locations across the state where digital rehoming kiosks could be displayed offering geographically relevant choices of pets available for adoption. This could include a short screening survey to better filter and connect prospective homes to pounds and shelters. The above however can only be achieved with full connectivity and a transparent sharing and flow of data between pounds and shelters and the rehoming kiosk portal database.

Again, thank you for this opportunity. The Pet Industry of Australia would like to be viewed as a trusted partner to assist and collaborate with to achieve any sensible reforms that lead to improved outcomes for pets in Australia.

Yours sincerely

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