

**Submission  
No 124**

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

**Organisation:** Hornsby Shire Council

**Date Received:** 24 August 2023

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Parliament of New South Wales  
6 Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir / Madam

### **Inquiry into pounds in New South Wales**

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the inquiry into NSW pounds. It is understood that the inquiry is to provide an examination into the adequacy of resourcing, building and pound facilities for strengthening operations and outcomes.

The inquiry into New South Wales pounds is welcomed by Council, with feedback on the terms of reference with regard to Council companion animal management and legislative support is provided below for consideration.

### **Resourcing challenges affecting New South Wales pounds**

1. The resources required for Councils to manage companion animals, including the holding of animals resulting from being lost, stray or surrendered is in excess of the funds acquired through pet registrations.
2. The capacity of pounds that Council utilises are increasingly at capacity. This requires animals to be held at existing Council facilities. The additional costs from sourcing rescues or other rehoming avenues and attending to the animals is significant to Councils operations.
3. The responses from rescues when Council enacts the 64B rehoming amendment of the *Companion Animal Act 1998* is minimal, with rescues either not responding or advising that they are at capacity.
4. The 64B rehoming amendments, specifically related to unowned cats, has resulted in longer holding times and increased animals being impounded.
5. The community expectation to provide ongoing care of impounded animals, exceeds the prescribed holding items required by the *Companion Animals Act 1998*. Council will seek all possible avenues to rehome any animal that can be rehomed, though the impact to Council resources should be considered.
6. The impact of RSPCA's facilities no longer accepting stray animals from the community for rehoming has reduced the available rehoming opportunities for impounded animals, reducing options available to Council.
7. The current cost of living should be considered as an impact to the ability for some residents to continuing caring for their animals, and where surrendering their animal is costly, it could lead to animals being dumped and subsequently impounded by Council.

**Factors influencing the number of animals ending up in New South Wales pounds, and strategies for reducing these numbers.**

1. Incentives should be considered for breeders and veterinarians for responsible breeding practices and adequate recording of animal's details on the Companion Animal Register. It has been observed that animals which are microchipped at veterinary practices do not have their details updated the Companion Animal Register.
2. Microchipping is an effective tool to assist Councils to locate owners and reduce companion animal numbers within pounds. However, the availability and onerous nature of the courses required for officers to microchip animals impacts the time and resources available to Council.

**The relationship between New South Wales pounds and animal rescue organisations**

1. Impacts to rehoming organisations as a result of the 64B amendment to the *Companion Animals Act 1998* should be considered, as the increased animals being rehomed creates additional pressure on the volunteers of the rehoming organisation.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to comment.