

The Unwanted Dog and Cat Problem in Australia

An estimation of pound and shelter admissions and outcomes



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Aim of research study

To determine on a state and national basis,

➤ **dog and cat intake**

➤ **Subsequent outcomes –
live release & euthanasia**

Based on data obtained from state and animal welfare agencies.



Methods & Materials

Most recent, publically available data

Annual reports, websites,
published government reports &
journal articles



Contact of individual councils or
state government agencies and
animal welfare agencies via email,
and by phone



Only preliminary data so far

Initial data

Help us to ensure the correct data

Plan to publish data

**Please contact us if you have questions
or more current/accurate data**

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Dogs



NSW DOGS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
Dept of Local Govt	48,427	41.2	10.3	17.4	18.9	70.3	28.2	2010-11 NSW Dept of Premier & Cabinet
RSPCA	11,989	7.5	41.0	44.4	5.1	53.6	40.6	2011-12 RSPCA NAT Stats
Animal Welfare League	181	0.0	55.8	55.8	4.7	60.5	39.5	2010-11 Companion Animals Taskforce Discussion Paper Mar 2012
Lost Dogs Home Wingecarribee	445	63.8	21.8	60.2	0.2	35.8	4.2	2011-12 LDH Annual
Total	62,671	33.7	17.6	26.5	15.7	66.9	30.8	
No. /1000 human pop	8.53	2.87	1.50		1.34		2.63	

VIC DOGS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanased %	Year data collected
Dept of Local Govt	39,672	58.9	15.0	36.4	0.7	74.6	14.0	2012-13 Websites
RSPCA	15,466	53.1	27.5	58.6	0.0	80.6	14.9	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Lost Dogs Home (Campbell, N Melbourne & Cranbourne)	14,944	59.7	17.8	44.3	0.6	78.1	11.9	2011-12 LDH Annual
LORTSMITH ANIMAL HOSPITAL (AWL)	242	0.0	52.5	52.5	38.8	91.3	8.7	2013 LORTSMITH
Total	70,318	57.6	18.5	43.5	0.7	76.7	15.9	
No. /1000 human pop	12.38	7.13	2.28		0.08		1.96	

SA DOGS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
SA Dog & Cat Management Board	20,628	51.7	8.6	17.8	0.4	60.7	15.5	2011-12 Dog & cat managemt Board Annual
RSPCA	(4284)	(47.7)	(22.1)	(42.2)	(7.5)	(77.3)	(21.00)	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Animal Welfare League	Declined	to	provide	data				
Total	20,628	51.7	8.6	17.8	0.4	60.7	15.5	
No. /1000 human pop	12.41	6.42	1.07		0.05		1.93	

ACT DOGS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
Domestic Animal Services (DLG)	1453	94.0				94.0		2011-12 TAMS Annual
RSPCA	1807	53.5	19.8	42.6	13.6	86.9	6.5	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Total	3260	71.6	11.0	38.6	7.5	90.1	3.6	
No. /1000 human pop	8.59	6.15	0.94		0.65		0.31	

QLD DOGS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanased %	Year data collected
Councils	14,764	59.6	12.9	31.8	12.8	85.2	6.8	2012-13 Council Stats
Animal Welfare League QLD	5810	44.0	44.5	79.4	0.0	88.5	10.2	2009-10 AWLQ Stats
Lost Dogs Home (Wirra & Willawong)	2510	64.7	11.3	32.1	1.7	77.7	22.3	2011-12 LDH Annual
RSPCA	18,028	28.5	33.2	46.4	4.4	66.1	29.1	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Total	41,112	44.1	26.2	46.8	6.6	76.8	18.0	
No. /1000 human pop	8.92	3.93	2.33		0.59		1.60	

NT DOGS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
Councils	1736	56.6	11.5	26.5	3.2	71.3	26.6	2012-13 Council stats
RSPCA	721	19.6	52.1	64.8		71.7	20.8	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Total	2457	45.7	23.4	43.2	2.3	71.4	24.9	
No. /1000 human pop	10.37	4.74	2.43		0.24		2.58	

WA DOGS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
Councils	4125	67.4	13.3	40.9	10.7	91.4	5.5	2012-13 Council Stats
RSPCA	1434	39.5	31.8	52.5	0.0	71.3	21.5	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Total	5559	60.2	18.1	45.5	7.9	86.2	9.6	
No. /1000 human pop	2.25	1.35	0.41		0.18		0.22	

TAS DOGS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
Councils	2844	65.1	24.1	69.1		89.2	10.9	2012-13 Council Stats
Dogs' Home of Tas	4066	48.1	33.9	65.4		82.0	11.5	2012-13 Dogs of Tas Annual
RSPCA	1840	36.2	37.0	58.0	3.0	76.3	17.8	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Total	8750	51.1	31.4	64.2	0.6	83.2	12.6	
No. /1000 human pop	17.08	8.73	5.36		0.11		2.15	

Cats



NSW CATS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
Dept of Local Govt	26,477	2.7	8.8	9.0	18.0	29.5	67.9	2010-11 NSW Dept of Premier & Cabinet
RSPCA	16,409	1.5	28.0	28.4	4.5	33.9	58.1	2011-12 RSPCA NAT Stats
Animal Welfare League	2726	0.0	46.4	46.4	29.9	76.3	23.7	2010-11 Companion Animals Taskforce Discussion Paper May 2012
Cat Protection Society	106	1.2	92.7	93.8	0.0	93.9	6.5	2011-12 Cat Protection Society Annual
Lost Dogs Home Wingecarribee	274	3.6	58.8	61.0	2.2	64.6	35.4	2011-12 LDH Annual
Total	46,943	2.1	19.9	20.3	13.5	35.4	60.3	
No. /1000 human pop	6.39	0.13	1.27		0.86		3.85	

VIC CATS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
DPI VIC	29,132	7.2	19.0	20.5	0.3	26.5	57.2	2001-2 Benchmarkng: Bureau of Animal Welfare
RSPCA	11,787	7.6	41.6	45.0	3.1	52.3	42.0	2011-12 SPCA AUS Nat Stats
Lost Dogs Home (Campaspe, N Melbourne & Cranbourne)	11,902	6.3	17.3	18.5	1.9	25.6	75.1	2011-12 LHM Annual
Cat Protection Society	15,206	0.8	18.8	19.0	0.0	19.6	73.7	2005-6 Munston LC, Bennett PC (Journal Article)
LORTSMITH Animal Hospital	495	0.0	79.8	79.8	9.3	89.1	10.9	2013 LORTSMITH
Total	68,517	5.6	23.0	24.4	1.1	29.7	61.1	
No. /1000 human pop	12.03	0.65	2.77		0.12		7.37	

SA CATS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
SA Dog & Cat Manage mt Board								2011-12 Dog & cat managemt Board Annual
RSPCA	3942	3.2	36.6	37.8	2.7	42.4	53.9	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Animal Welfare League								
Total	3,942	3.2	36.6	37.8	2.7	42.4	53.9	
No. /1000 human pop	2.37	0.08	0.87		0.06		1.28	

ACT CATS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
Domestic Animal Services (DLG)	0							2011-12 TAMS Annual
RSPCA	2400	9.4	51.8	57.2	0.0	61.2	34.3	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Total	2400	9.4	51.8	57.2	0.0	61.2	34.3	
No. /1000 human pop	6.32	0.60	3.27		0		2.17	

QLD CATS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
Councils	6865	13.3	7.1	8.2	28.9	49.3	45.8	2012-13 Council Stats
Lost Dogs Home (Wirra & Willawong)	1626	3.5	12.2	12.7	3.9	19.6	80.4	2011-12 LDH Annual
RSPCA	13,600	4.3	45.5	47.5	1.3	51.1	41.8	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Animal Welfare League Qn	3788	5.4	64.7	68.4	0.0	70.1	23.4	2009-10 AWLQ Stats
Total	25,879	6.8	36.0	38.7	8.6	51.4	42.6	
No. /1000 human pop	5.61	0.38	2.02		0.48		2.39	

NT CATS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
Councils	342	3.5	17.5	18.2	0.0	21.1	78.9	2012-13 Council Stats
RSPCA	627	2.6	46.1	47.3	0.0	48.6	30.0	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Total	969	2.9	36.0	37.1	0.0	38.9	47.3	
No. /1000 human pop	4.09	0.12	1.47		0		1.93	

WA CATS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
Councils	156	14.1	1.3	1.5	64.7	80.1	15.4	2012-13 Council Stats
RSPCA	738	1.2	60.4	61.2	0.0	61.7	32.0	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Cat Haven	8488	1.4	44.9	45.5	5.9	52.2	41.8	2012 Cat Haven
Total	9382	1.6	45.4	46.1	6.4	53.4	40.6	
No. /1000 human pop	3.79	0.06	1.72		0.24		1.54	

TAS CATS	Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %	Year data collected
Councils								2012-13 council stats
Hobart Cat Centre	2620	3.6	31.2	32.4	0.0	34.8	63.5	2011-12 Hobart Cat Centre
RSPCA	2839	2.4	49.0	50.2	1.5	52.9	39.2	2011-12 RSPCA AUS Nat Stats
Total	5459	3.0	40.4	41.7	0.8	44.2	50.9	
No. /1000 human pop	10.65	0.32	4.31		0.09		5.42	



Limitations of the study

- Data - not available from many councils (underestimated intake)
- Transferred animals – number transferred to major agencies not estimated (double counted – overestimated intake) or to rescue and other small agencies, including breed-specific rescue groups (not included in data)
- Small agencies with intakes of <1000 dogs – not included unless had larger branches in other states (underestimated intake)



Limitations of the study

- Small percentage of animals not accounted for in data provided → deceased, fostered or in system at the start or end of time period
- Trapping of feral cats may not be included in impoundment data (Brisbane City Council did not include 261 feral cats)

Documented National Statistics

Generated from known data

➤ Dogs

Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %
210,990	47.8	19.1	36.6	6.7	77.1	20.9

➤ Cats

Intake	Reclaimed %	Rehomed %	% rehomed after reclaimed	Transfer %	Live Release %	Euthanised %
163,491	4.5	26.9	28.1	6.1	44.6	55.8

So this means...

- **Lack of readily accessible data from agencies**
 - No centralised data (exception of NSW)
 - Limited transparency and approachability
 - Right to Information Act



Outcomes: Dogs versus cats

- **Marked difference in documented outcomes between dogs and cats**
 - More than half of cat intake (56%) euthanased compared to dogs (21%)
 - Generally outcomes better than previously quoted
 - Intake & number euthanased over time
 - no improvement for cats compared to dogs (NSW)



Opportunities for improvement

➤ Variation in agency performance

➤ Individual councils and welfare agencies performing above the national average while others underperforming in some areas

→ opportunity to share successful strategies



And...,

- Need for transparency of council pounds and animal welfare agencies' performance
- Need for a centralised database for analysis and assessment of pound and shelter performance on a state and national level
- Need to identify agencies with effective management strategies to be acknowledged and be publicly evident so others can learn → improve outcome



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Questions

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