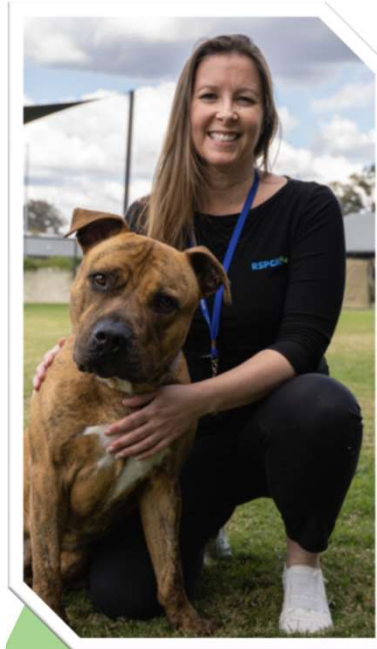


Inclusive Enforcement

***Balancing Animal Protection
and Human Vulnerability to
Keep Pets and People Together***



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Chief Inspector

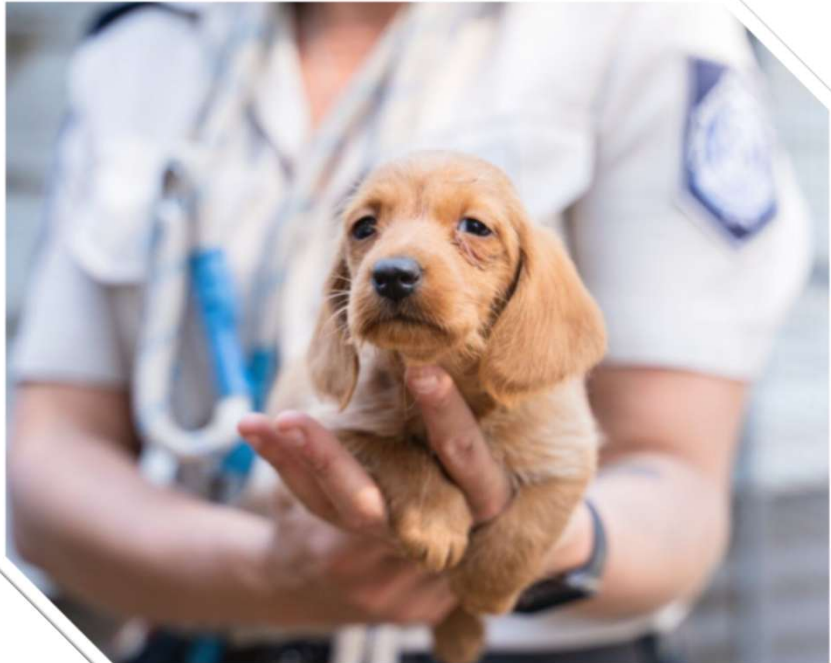
Bachelor of Criminal Justice and Criminology

Session Aims



- RSPCA Qld inspectorate journey
- What “inclusive enforcement” means
- Funding a One Welfare approach

Our Inspectorate Experience



- Average 16,000 animal welfare complaints annually
- Enforcing the *Animal Care and Protection Act (2001)* and Regulations
- 85% of complaints involve neglect – *failure in a duty of care*
- Factors: financial hardship, housing insecurity, mental illness, domestic violence, family breakdown

The Concept of Inclusive Enforcement

**People
& Pets**
better together!



- Shift from punitive to inclusive enforcement
- Inclusive enforcement recognises that improving animal welfare often requires addressing human vulnerability
- Grounded in **One Welfare**: interconnection of human, animal, and environmental wellbeing

Why Inclusive Enforcement Matters



DV Connect for Pets in Crisis

- Inspectors assess *why* welfare concerns arise, not just *what* has occurred
- Referrals made when neglect stems from hardship, not cruelty (e.g. poverty, housing, DV)
- Enforcement still occurs, but is paired with tailored support where appropriate
- Partnerships with DV services, councils, and community programs are vital
- Early intervention helps prevent escalation, reduce seizures, and avoid repeat complaints
- Keeps more animals safely in homes and improves voluntary compliance
- Frees up resources to focus on high-risk cases and serious cruelty

Inspectorate Referral Anna and Trixie



- Complaint: Dog tethered to vehicle rim outside local library with no shelter
- Owner, Anna, was experiencing homelessness and living rough with her french bulldog, Trixie
- Barriers to housing included lack of desexing, microchipping, and registration
- Inspector built rapport and referred Anna to our People and Pets program
- Practical outcomes achieved:
 - Trixie desexed, microchipped, vaccinated, and registered with council
 - Anna connected with a local service provider and secured temporary housing
 - Later obtained employment and now lives independently
 - Anna now volunteers with the same service provider, referring others to the People and Pets program

Inspectorate Referral Reign & Cloud



- Welfare report received for two dogs believed to be abandoned at a Brisbane property
- On attendance, owner disclosed she had fled a domestic violence situation
- Inspector referred the owner to DV Connect and the Pets in Crisis Program
- Dogs received health checks, preventatives, and safe temporary boarding
- Within two weeks, owner secured housing and was able to reclaim her dogs
- A powerful example of reclaim through Pets in Crisis after Inspector referral
- Shows how timely, trauma-informed support can keep animals and people safely together

The Funding Challenge

Why Sustainable Investment Matters

- Proactive services largely donor-funded
- Must compete with reactive demands: rescues, sheltering, rehoming
- Prevention reduces recidivism, improves compliance, and decreases shelter intake
- Strengthens community trust and willingness to report



Key Takeaways



1. Enforcement and empathy are not mutually exclusive
2. One Welfare approach is essential for lasting change
3. Partnerships make inclusive enforcement possible, but funding sustainability is the key

Questions? ?

**Make a note of your
Questions for the Q&A with
RSPCA Qld Chief Inspector
Sheree Nitkiewicz**

