



# REACHING OUT TO THE Community

6TH NATIONAL G2Z SUMMIT & WORKSHOPS  
14-19 SEPTEMBER 2015, MANTRA ON VIEW HOTEL, GOLD COAST



## Trudie Chant

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President  
Sunraysia Animal Rehousing Group

Trudie Chant is a passionate animal lover and the President of Sunraysia Animal Rehousing Group (SARG). Trudie is a firm believer in community collaboration to improve animal welfare outcomes.

She holds a Bachelor of Health Science Nursing, and Advanced Diploma of Management. She applies business acumen to the work of SARG, diligently working to bring relevant key organizations to the table in Mildura. She holds a Director position at the Sunraysia Institute of TAFE.

Mid 2015 Trudie commenced employment at Mildura Veterinary Hospital as Business Development Manager, aiming to further deepen relationships and collaborations within the Mildura community.

## Abstract

### **Collaboration and whole of community-approach to responsible pet ownership is the key to mildura's success**

Rescue, local government and education providers collaborate in Mildura - responsible pet ownership. In 2010, the Mildura Animal shelter experienced high rates of animal impounds combined with 59% drop to rehousing rates and 39% increase in euthanasia rates.

In a view to address these alarming numbers, Council formed collaborative relationships with local not for profit rehousing groups and education providers like schools and SuniTAFE to deliver educational programs/classes, tours and talks about responsible pet ownership.

In December 2013 this drive culminated in receiving \$50k from State Governments Animal Welfare grants program to build and relocate a bungalow from Mildura SuniTAFE site to the Mildura Animal Shelter. The 16880mmx60000mm bungalow opened in September 2014 has a dual purpose of delivering community education and training programs about responsible pet ownership through a partnership with SuniTAFE and provide an improved environment for the community when potentially adopting, caring for or re-housing animals.

This was a collaborative project between Sunraysia Animal rehousing Group, SuniTAFE and Mildura Rural City Council problem.



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## Full Presentation

In 2010, the Mildura Animal Shelter experienced high rates of animal impounds combined with 59% drop to rehousing rates and 39% increase in euthanasia rates.

In a view to address these alarming numbers, Sunraysia Animal Rehousing Group (SARG) in conjunction with Sunraysia Institute of TAFE (SuniTAFE) and Mildura Rural City Council (Council) embarked on a collaborative project to provide the Sunraysia community with an Education and Introductory Space (centre) at the Mildura Animal Shelter. The aim, through the new centre, was to encourage responsible pet ownership, deliver community education and training programs and provide a significantly improved environment for the public when making enquiries to adopt, care for and rehouse animals.

The project received:

- \$50,000 from the Victorian Government which covered the completion and relocation of a 16880mm x 60000mm SuniTAFE bungalow from the Mildura SuniTAFE site to the Council's animal shelter site. The funding covered installation and supply of material for external cladding, internal plaster, internal and external painting, installation of a roof cavity and basic plumbing and electrical by SuniTAFE building apprentices.
- \$52,000 in funding from Council which in scope covered building plans and engineering reports, disability access requirements, stumps to place the building onto, supply of telephone, power, sewer and water, security (grilles and blinds), floor insulation and garden beautification.
- \$5,000 worth of cash and donated items from private businesses and community groups within the Mildura region. Contributions covered the donation of a 46cm flat screen TV, an overhead projector and screen, 20 desks and 40 chairs, couches and tables for the introductory space, a second-hand kitchen, a gas hot water system and \$1510 in cash or cash discounts.

Within six months of receiving the funding, the facility was built, relocated and opened before an audience of 70 people. In attendance were the Mayor of Mildura Cr. Glenn Milne, member for Mildura Peter Crisp, local Councillors, SARG representatives, SuniTAFE representatives (including the Director of Education), private businesses, community organisations and television and newspaper representatives.

The project had three key milestones which were widely advertised in the local media:

- The commencement of the build in February 2014
- The relocation of the facility from the SuniTAFE site to the Mildura animal shelter site in August 2014
- Official opening September 2014

Within 4 weeks of being opened, the facility was being utilised for training and education purposes by SuniTAFE and SARG.

The Mildura Animal Shelter Education and Introductory Space was officially opened in the first week of September 2014. Year on year stats from September to April over a three year period (2012/13; 2013/14 and 2014/15) provide evidential proof of the success of this project.

Over an 8 month period from September 2013 to April 2014 and September 2014 to April 2015 (the period after the new facility was opened):

- Animals rehoused as a percentage of impounds has increased from 33% to 58%
- Animals claimed as a percentage of impounds has increased from 19% to 22%

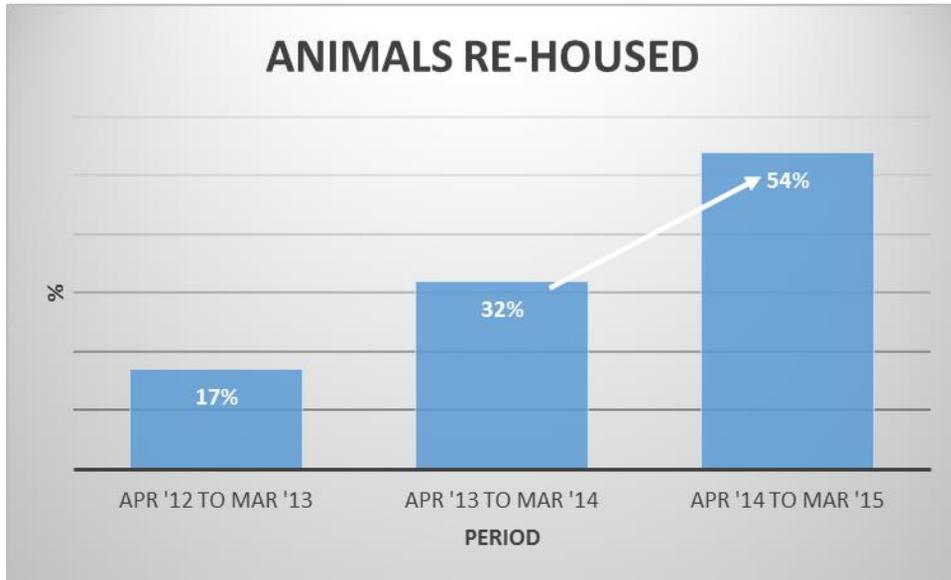
Over a 12 month period from April 2013 to March 2014 and April 2014 to March 2015

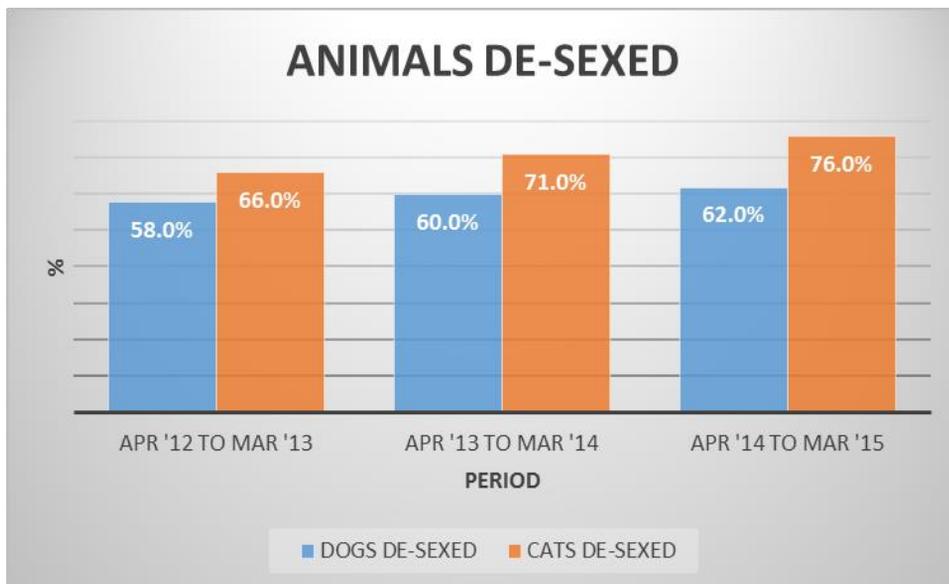
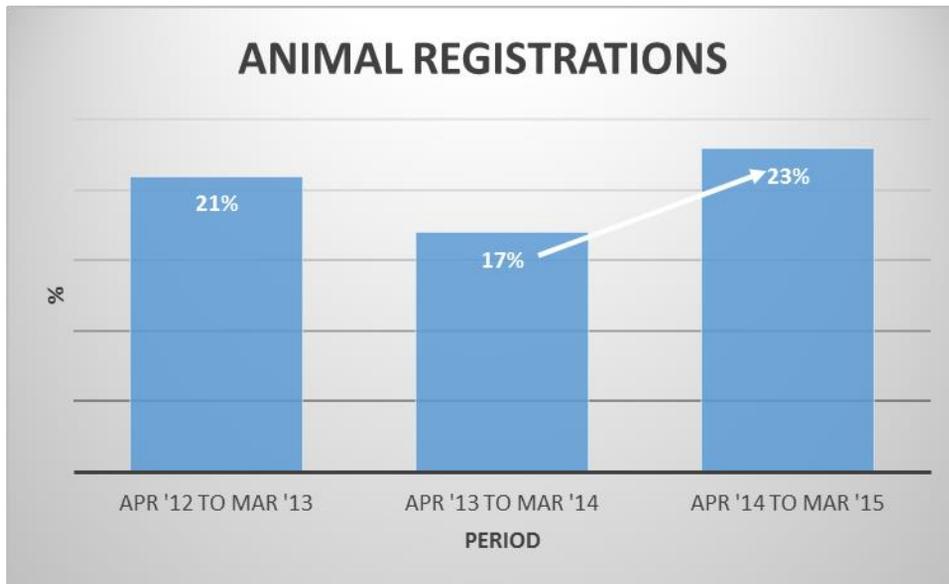
- Animals rehoused as a percentage of impounds has increased from 32% to 54%
- Animals claimed as a percentage of impounds has increased from 18% to 22%
- Animal registrations have increased by 21% from 6546 to 7936
- The number of dogs desexed have increased from 60% to 62%
- The number of cats desexed have increased from 71% to 76%



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For the Sunraysia community this facility is only the beginning as further programs are being planned to capitalise on the newly established community asset which includes:

- School visitation programs
- Marketing and communication of the facility to local schools, rehousing groups, service clubs etc. through a collaborative approach
- Continued focus on applying for State and Federal grants centred around education and desexing programs
- Recording of facility use by community groups through a visitors book



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To further capitalise on this new facility, SARG, together with Mildura Veterinary Hospital and Mildura Rural City Council were successful in receiving a \$10,000 grant in early 2015 for an animal desexing and foster care training program in Mildura. Two of the three, 3 hour training programs were delivered within the new facility by June 2015. A final program will be scheduled later this year. Each training program has had between 15-20 participants.

This project demonstrates how various levels of government and local private and not-for-profit organisations have worked together to improve animal welfare within their community.

[www.sarg.net.au](http://www.sarg.net.au) [www.mildura.vic.gov.au](http://www.mildura.vic.gov.au) [www.sunitafe.edu.au](http://www.sunitafe.edu.au)