

Citizens' Jury 2015

Final Report to the
Government of South Australia

“Reducing Unwanted Dogs & Cats”

The task ...

“Last year in South Australia over 10,000 unwanted dogs and cats were put down. The State Government recently announced some reforms to dog and cat laws.

What further measures can we introduce or trial to reduce the number of unwanted pets?”

The outcome...

This work reflects the outcomes of a randomly selected Citizens Jury charged with exploring ways to reduce the numbers of unwanted pets. The Jury found that a range of interventions are needed to create a holistic system which reduces abandonment and addresses the surplus of unwanted domestic dogs and cats.

The Jury wants to see a ***society which is accountable and responsible for their pets***. Education and cultural change is acknowledged as key components that bind these recommendations together with existing and future initiatives. A high performing and effective identification system will assist in raising the standards for pet ownership, and establish strong positive social norms.

The Jury have recommended sweeping changes to the management of dogs and cats in South Australia.

The Jury's recommendations are grouped into three areas:

Preventing Abandonment: by improving education about being a responsible pet owner and establishing a system to encourage landlords to rent to pet owners (through pet bonds)

Reducing supply: by establishing a system of breeder registration and quality control, compulsory desexing and stopping pet shops from selling purpose bred puppies and kittens. The Jury would also like to see a trial of a trap neuter and release program for semi owned cats.

Reconnecting dogs and cats with owners: through a centralised system of microchipping, supported by a sophisticated central database and the removal of the duplicative system of council registration.

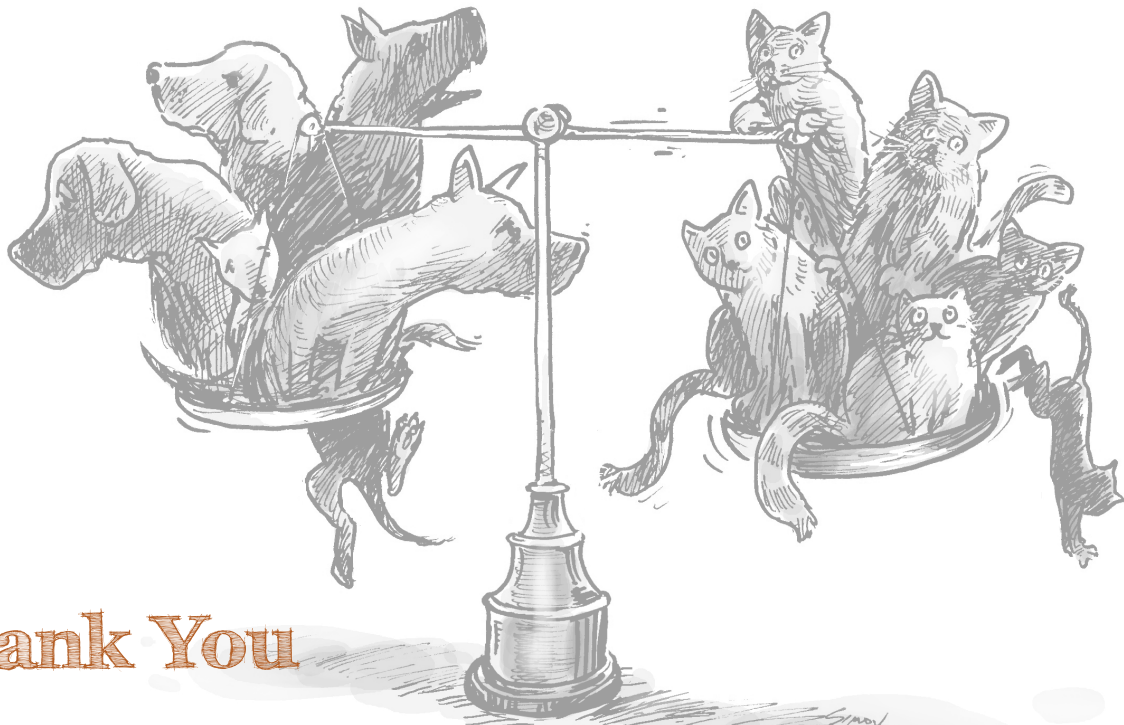
The recommendations are focused on the long term and are interconnected and interrelated.

Collectively they are greater than the sum of their parts.

The Jury prefers the reviewing/monitoring process of these recommendations (to avoid a potential long term waiting period), to be ongoing. Therefore the Jury strongly recommends that these reforms must be seen as part of a system of continuous improvement. Continuous improvement will ensure that policy and strategies are relevant and reflect fluctuating scientific knowledge and societal values.

Even though the Jury acknowledges their brief is for the Government and State of South Australia, it reinforces that the issue of dog and cat management, unwanted pets and their euthanasia requires a national approach across the relevant stakeholders and communities.

The funding for these recommendations will require the consideration and cooperation of all stakeholders especially State and Local Governments into the long term.



Thank You

The Jury wish to thank the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation and the Dog & Cat Management Board for the opportunity to contribute actively to this deliberative democratic process for South Australia.

The Jury would like to thank all of the experts who shared their professional insights and in many cases their lifetimes of knowledge. These inputs not only helped to shape the recommendations but also assisted in changing the mindsets and opinions of many jury members.

The Jury also want to thank the many people and organisations who contributed their ideas, through submissions, social media and also through online forums, both formal and informal. Like the Jury, this topic has captivated many people in SA and beyond. The wellbeing of people as well as the wellbeing of dogs and cats have been on jurors minds for this entire experience. Being closely connected to the public throughout the process helped to ground them in their work.

The Jury look forward to seeing further work undertaken to address these recommendations. The Jury has complete confidence that these recommendations (once implemented) will dramatically reduce the number of unwanted dogs and cats in South Australia.

A note from **democracyCo.**

“Over 6 weeks, the Jury heard from experts, received submissions and did extensive research both collectively and as individuals. Through out this time they discussed ideas and over time reached agreement on these recommendations. True democracy is gritty and tough at times. The Jury had to learn quickly and organise their recommendations quickly. The Jury also had to listen to differing viewpoints, and to work together, often with diverse viewpoints. This group self-managed and members were respectful of each other throughout the entire process.

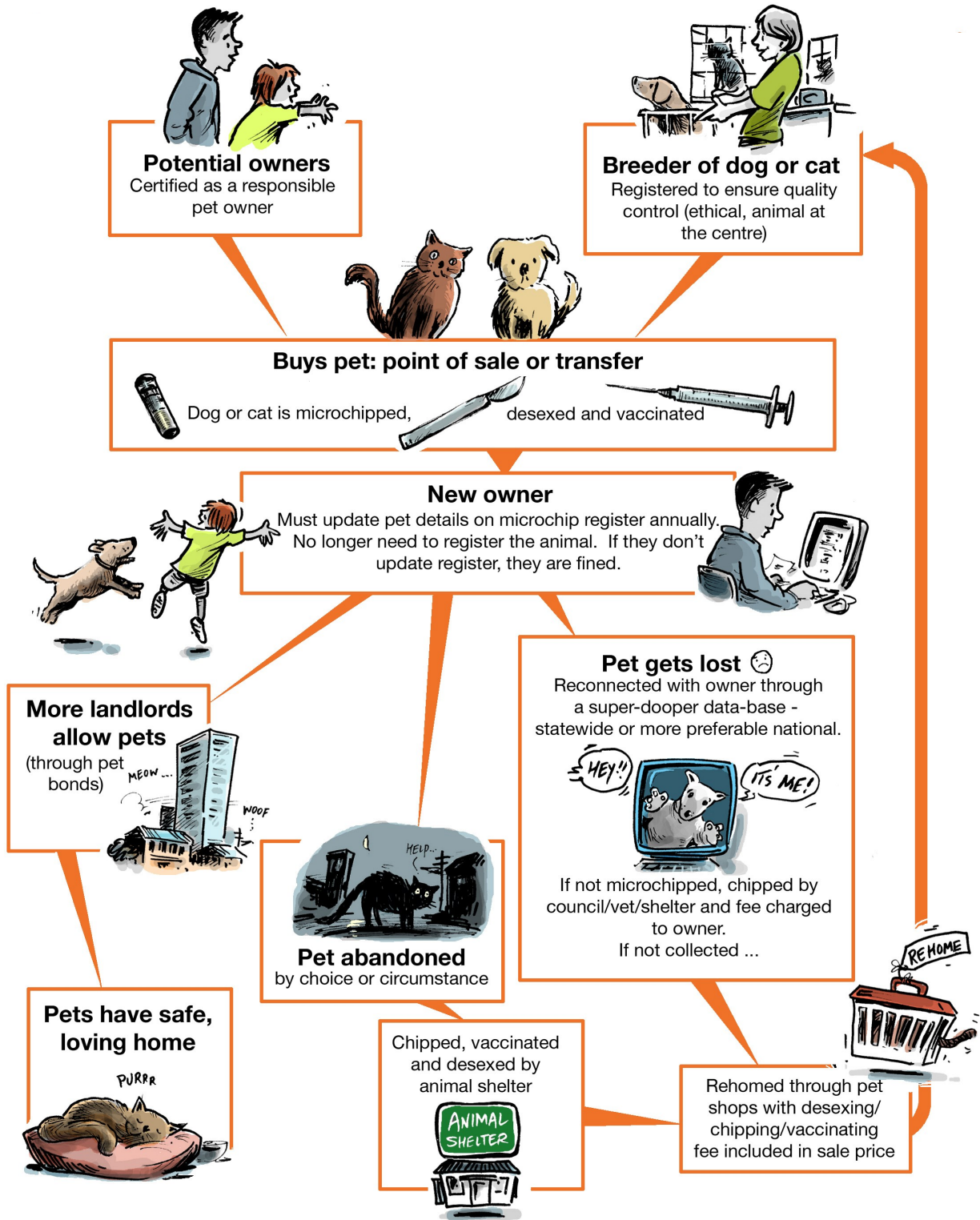
After the final Jury session a small working group of Jurors met to develop this report and it was then circulated to the whole Jury for endorsement. We worked closely with the Jury to support them throughout the entire deliberative process and have enjoyed every minute of that work.

The group of randomly selected citizens who make up this Jury are proud of their work and rightly so. They served society well. For that they are to be commended.”

Emma Lawson & Emily Jenke

Jury Recommendations at a glance..

A new system for happy dogs & cats!



Not forgetting

EDUCATION



IT UNDERPINS EVERYTHING



...FOR THIS AND THE NEXT GENERATION OF PET OWNERS!

Recommendations Summary

Preventing Abandonment

Effective Education (page 6)

The Jury recommend that a coordinated education program be developed and co-delivered by partner agencies to educate all South Australians about what it means to be a responsible pet owner. The Jury recommends that a key element of this be the introduction of a simple online test that improves understanding of what is involved in being a responsible pet owner

More dogs & cats in rental properties (page 8)

The Jury recommends, that a pet bond scheme be re-introduced to Parliament through a bill changing the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 and the Strata Titles Act 1988. The Jury recommend that private landlords, strata corporations and retirement villages (and the like) be encouraged to accept tenants with dogs and cats when renting properties. The Jury recommend the development of an optional pet bond scheme for private rental properties.

Reducing supply

Compulsory Desexing of Dogs and Cats (page 10)

The Jury recommend that the government legislate the compulsory desexing of dogs and cats for future generations of all dogs and cats from an implementation date to be determined, with appropriate exemptions. The Jury recommend that compulsory desexing for the existing population of dogs and cats not be implemented. The Jury call for a review on the effectiveness of compulsory desexing at a time frame to be determined by the Dog & Cat Management Board.

Regulate the sale of dogs and cats from pet stores (page 11)

The Jury recommend that the SA Government legislate to restrict the sale of dogs and cats from pet stores and only allow those animals to be sold which require rehoming (sourced from registered shelters). The Jury recommend this be legislated across South Australia and without exemptions.

Trial Trap/Neuter/Release (TNR) of un-owned Cats (page 12)

The Jury recommends that the Government conduct a trial on the management of semi owned cats through the practice known as trap, neuter, return (TNR) in a specific trial area with a willing community.

Mandatory Registration & Licencing of Dog & Cat Breeders (page 13)

The Jury support the draft Code of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs and Cats in Breeding Facilities as part of the 2015 Dog & Cat Management Reforms. The Jury recommend that the Government legislate for all people who sell dogs and cats (breeders) to be registered and licensed to ensure that they are ethical and meet the code of practice. The Jury recommend that the RSPCA have a central role in the registration of breeders of dogs and cats to ensure quality control.

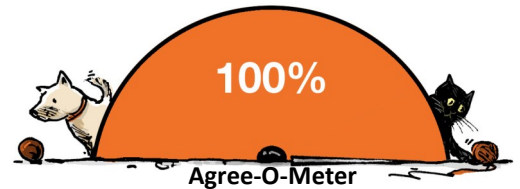
Reuniting pets with their owners

Identification of Dogs & Cats (page 14)

The Jury support the mandatory microchipping reforms currently being proposed by the Dog and Cat Management Board through reforms to the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995. The Jury recommend that Government (in collaboration with stakeholders) develop and implement one centrally managed state-wide database.

The Jury recommends that the current system of local council registration for dogs is phased out and replaced by the new mandatory microchipping system. The Jury recommend that the Local Government Association and the Dog and Cat Management Board work together to develop an appropriate funding model to maintain and/or increase the available resources that support the important work of local councils and the DCMB in animal management, given the potential loss of resources currently provided through local dog registration.

Effective Education



The intent: Changing perceptions & paradigms and promoting responsible pet ownership.

The Jury recommends that a coordinated education/awareness program be developed and co-delivered by partner agencies to educate all South Australians about what it means to be a responsible pet owner.

The Jury recommends that a key element of this be the introduction of a simple online test (and pledge of responsibility) that identifies an owner as knowing what is involved in being a responsible pet owner generating a certificate/award.

Background

An effective and penetrating education program must underpin the entire system of dog and cat management for it to achieve its goals.

The Jury is aware of the many and varied education campaigns already underway from the Dog and Cat Management Board and partner agencies like the RSPCA and the Animal Welfare League. The Jury makes the observation that these (on their own) are not effective, nor are they achieving lasting change in pet ownership behaviours & mindsets.

The Jury have seen evidence from across Australia for Dog & Cat Management initiatives, and have noted that where these initiatives succeeded most, they were accompanied by a substantial education/awareness/marketing campaign.

In particular the Jury was inspired by the whole of community approach taken by the Gold Coast City Council and the Animal Welfare League Qld with their “Getting to Zero” program. The Jury feels that working and learning with like-minded organisations will result in better outcomes and fewer setbacks.

The Jury also noted that where governments have wanted to create lasting change in society (ie smoking, road safety), education across many platforms in a coordinated approach is not only ideal, but necessary.

Ideas for Implementation

The Jury has invested a significant amount of time in developing these ideas and agree, unanimously that these programs will contribute to lasting change in society about responsible pet ownership. The Jury know that an education/awareness raising effort of this magnitude will take time, but once done its influence on society is timeless.

Over the page are some of the Jury’s initial ideas on effective education.

Effective Education Ideas cont'd...

Certified Owner

The Jury specifically recommends a program of owner certification, where owners (or potential owners) undertake a simple test, pledge or declaration of responsibility that adheres to a 'code of conduct' for the management of their pet. This certificate program will ensure that as part of their pet purchase process they educate themselves sufficiently to make the best choice of pet that suits their circumstances now and into the future. This will also influence how owners care for their pets throughout their lives.

Under this initiative, owners would be issued with a certificate/award, which they would be required to produce at point of purchase of their pet.

This program targets pre-purchase education and support, and comprehensive support for new and inexperienced owners. This could also be useful for sellers or breeders to transfer ownership, only transferring to a certified owner. The Jury is also convinced this would be useful addition for renters to qualify for pet bonds.

Cat Safe Systems

The Jury understand the impact that cats have on the environment (native animals and birds) and supports in full the promotion and education about cat safe fencing options, and containment 'systems'. The Jury understands this enjoys the support of the Feline Association of South Australia.

Desexing

A comprehensive education and awareness program will need to be developed to support the introduction of compulsory desexing. This must include the provision of information about early age desexing, post procedural care education and promotion highlighting the ways in which exemptions can be obtained.

Post Adoption Support

To encourage people to adopt mature age pets, education and promotion is required to support the purchase decision and also care of the dog or cat for the long term. Education should also promote the benefits of adopting a mature age dog or cat for owners, the animal, and for society (as it reduces abandonment).

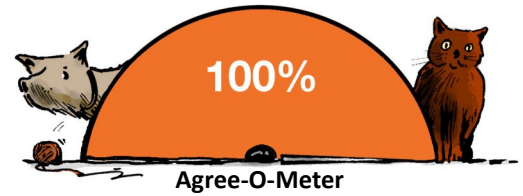
Investing in the next generation of pet owners

The Jury believe that education for children and young people needs to carry through from pre-school to University, or other tertiary education. The Jury feel strongly that this effort should be 'hands on' programs in shelters for school age children (voluntary internships), highlighting the experience for the animal and therefore preventing irresponsible pet ownership into the future. There are also opportunities to target young people with education/awareness raising initiatives to influence their parents around good decisions and responsible pet ownership.

Summary

Clearly there are many elements to an effective and penetrating education campaign. The Jury requests that the Dog and Cat Management Board convene a partnership cohort to pool resources and design and deliver an integrated education and awareness raising campaign. Education (changing attitudes and behaviours), along with the database, are key foundations of the Jury's recommendations.

More Dogs & Cats in Rental Properties



The intent: To reduce voluntary relinquishment or abandonment of dogs and cats as peoples living circumstances change.

The Jury recommends that a pet bond scheme be re-introduced to Parliament through a bill changing the Residential Tenancies Act 1995 and the Strata Titles Act 1988.

The Jury recommends that private landlords, strata corporations and retirement villages (and the like) be encouraged to accept tenants with dogs and cats when renting properties.

The Jury recommend the development of an optional pet bond scheme for private rental properties. This should apply for new rental agreements. This scheme would be linked with all of the other recommendations made by this Jury, as only pets who are micro-chipped, desexed and vaccinated can qualify for the pet bond.

Background

This recommendation is a priority for the Jury and should have a significant impact on the inflow of unowned or relinquished dogs and cats to shelters. The Jury has worked hard to develop the right approach for this recommendation.

The Jury has heard evidence that a large percentage (approximately 30%) of unwanted/relinquished dogs and cats arriving at animal shelters such as AWL and RSPCA have been abandoned due to a change in living circumstances of the owner. The Jury believes that strata owners should have the ability to determine pet ownership for their property as opposed to the body corporate.

The Jury also noted that many retirement villages and assisted living facilities prohibit pet ownership and felt that this issue should also be addressed. In making this recommendation the Jury wants to also express the many benefits of dog and cat ownership to people & families. The Jury believes that pet companionship improves community and individual wellbeing (ie promoting positive mental health outcomes and helping people in managing stress, therefore offering enormous potential savings to the State's healthy budget).

The Jury believes that there are ways to build a community through an improved 'default' approach to dogs and cats in rental properties. The Jury believes that many people either keep their pets (unapproved) or abandon/relinquish them, so this recommendation will ensure that people can continue to own their much loved dog or cat as their living circumstances change.

More Dogs & Cats in Rental Properties cont'd...

Ideas for Implementation

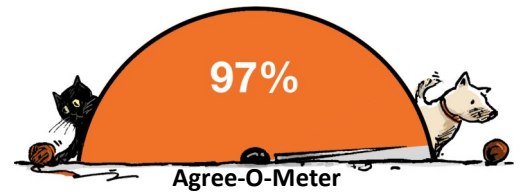
The Jury discussed the needs of the diverse range of people in rental accommodation and suggests the following be considered as part of their recommendations:

- The amount of the Pet Bond be regulated and a top limit set (i.e. 20-25% of the bond).
- That low income earners (as defined by SA Housing Trust or equivalent) are supported to cover their pet bond through an extension of their tenancy agreement.
- Pet bonds are administered by the Tenancy Board (as for Property Bonds).
- Cats and dogs must be desexed, microchipped and vaccinated to qualify for the Pet Bond.
- Retirement villages with independent living homes be encouraged to accept pets of new tenants as a default position.
- A size limit on pets could be considered to ensure that dog or cat is appropriate for the size of the property. The Jury want to ensure that pets and their owners are not discriminated against, so careful consideration of this would need to occur.
- Landlords be encouraged to accept tenants with dogs and cats as the 'default' position.
- Investment in education & awareness raising occur to support a change in landholder perceptions.

The Jury believes that the Dog and Cat Management Board in partnership with the Real Estate Industry SA, Department for Community and Social Inclusion, The Residential Tenancy Tribunal, RSPCA, Animal Welfare League and other stakeholders should collaborate to lead this ground breaking work.



Compulsory Desexing of Dogs and Cats



The intent: “You can no longer sell or transfer a Dog or Cat in SA without it being desexed”

The Jury recommends that the State Government legislates the compulsory desexing of dogs and cats for future generations of all dogs and cats from an implementation date to be determined with appropriate exemptions. The Jury requests this recommendation be implemented as soon as practicable and determined with stakeholders and government.

Central to the Jury’s recommendation is that desexing is to occur at/or prior to the point of sale of dogs and cats, with appropriate exemptions to be determined by Government in collaboration with industry and expert veterinary opinion. These exemptions could include veterinary exemptions (health & growth of animal), breeder exemptions, SA police, Security and working dog exemptions to name a few.

The Jury does not support the implementation of compulsory desexing for the existing population of dogs and cats, but strongly supports the State Government to continue in its promotional activities to encourage the community to consider desexing their pets. The Jury calls for a review on the effectiveness of compulsory desexing at a time frame to be determined by the Dog & Cat Management Board.

Background

The Jury’s predominant focus of this recommendations is to reduce the number of unwanted dogs and cats coming into shelters. The Jury explored the reasons why dogs and cats were abandoned, in depth. For dogs this could be because of negative behavioural issues, wandering and dog attacks. In the case of cats, the Jury understood that many unwanted cats and kittens were abandoned due to uncontrolled breeding.

The jury was struck by the number of dogs and cats euthanased each year, and also by the significant mental health consequences this practice has on the people who put otherwise healthy animals down.

The Jury has learnt that overall, the health of animals improves if they have been desexed. The Jury believe that desexing of dogs and cats will have long term impacts on reducing the numbers of unwanted dogs and cats in South Australia. Without enforcement this will not work. The Jury noted that the lack of enforcement in other jurisdictions (ACT) resulted in a lack of success and this should be avoided (at all costs) in South Australia.

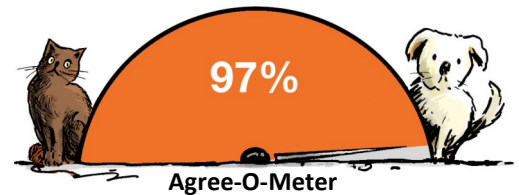
Ideas for Implementation

The Jury agrees that this recommendation requires the collaboration of all agencies interested and impacted by this recommendation, namely Local Government, the Dog & Cat Management Board, Animal Welfare League, RSPCA, Dog and Cat Breeder Associations and other interested organisations (ie Working Dogs, SAPOL etc).

The Jury recognises that this will have financial impacts on dog and cat owners, but is comfortable that this initial cost by pet owners will be outweighed by the benefits of desexing. The Jury aspires to generate a community ‘norm’ where desexing of dogs and cats is expected.

For those people who cannot afford to desex their dog or cat, the Jury suggests that Councils (in collaboration with Government) be encouraged to offer inexpensive desexing clinics. Councils and Government can also work with existing partner agencies to target areas with high populations of unowned and/or semi owned dogs and cats. Consideration needs to be given to low-income earners. The Jury also suggests that a ‘desexing voucher’ to be provided at point of sale (and paid for) should the animal not be old enough or healthy enough to undergo the procedure at that time.

Regulate the Sale of Dogs and Cats from Pet Stores



The Intent: Ban the sale of specifically bred puppies/kittens; shut down puppy/kitten farms.

The Jury recommends that the SA Government legislate to restrict the sale of dogs and cats from pet stores and only allow those animals to be sold at these outlets, that require rehoming (and are sourced from registered shelters).

The Jury recommends this be legislated across South Australia and without exemptions. Such legislation should specify minimum record keeping requirements (including the identity of suppliers and purchasers). The legislation should be implemented without delay.

Background

The Jury has a desire to immediately remove a major outlet for puppy and kitten farmers. The Jury believes that by restricting sales to cases of rehoming there will be a reduction of 'farmed' dogs and cats.

The Jury are concerned with puppies and kittens being specifically bred for sale in pet shops, effectively prioritising profits over an animals' life. The Jury considered compelling evidence from experts across the country highlighting the often unethical and inhumane conditions that many of these animals suffer. The Jury also wanted to avoid unwanted litters being given to pet stores to sell.

In their deliberations, the Jury highlighted a highly beneficial outcome from this recommendation: that pet shops could become de-facto/satellite outlets for shelters which are currently responsible for rehoming. This effectively gives pets, in these shelters, wider access to a broader market of potential owners. The Jury believes this will have a major impact on reducing the number of dogs and cats held by the RSPCA, Animal Welfare League and private shelters across the state.

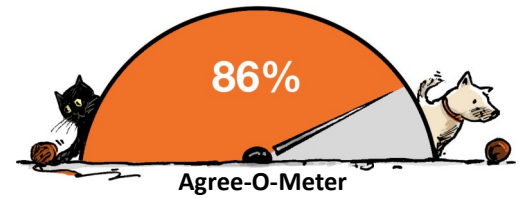
The Jury considers this legislation will also reduce impulse buying of dogs and cats, and will support & encourage desexing, microchipping and vaccination of dogs and cats prior to sale.

Ideas for implementation

The Jury noted & approve of the model adopted by Pet Stock and Pet Barn – two major pet retailers in South Australia.

The Jury also noted that preliminary discussions between the Dog and Cat Management Board & online sale portal "Gumtree" are progressing well, with willingness expressed to not allow the sale of puppies and kittens online. The Jury support this endeavour and look forward to its positive results.

Trial Trap/Neuter/ Return of Unowned Cats



The intent: to model an alternative community based management approach to unowned cats

The Jury recommends that the Government conducts a trial on the management of unowned cats through the practice known as trap, neuter, return (TNR) in a specific trial area.

Background

The Jury believes that a carefully structured and delivered TNR trial can model community shared responsibility for unowned cats. The Jury have learnt that TNR also has the ability to reduce the population of feral/colony cats in urban and rural environments, as aged animals die out. A robust TNR trial needs to allow time to see effectiveness.

Agencies can support this trial through the provision of education, subsidised desexing, microchipping and vaccination costs.

The Jury is aware that TNR is currently not supported as state policy, nor is it possible due to the regulatory definitions of ownership of cats.

The Jury point out that dissenting views within the Jury room related to the impact that cats have on wildlife, and that a TNR program might see an increase in native wildlife affected if not managed well (if animals were not fed appropriately). The Jury also considered the potential secondary impact of baiting on domestic/owned cats and native wildlife.

The Jury knows that TNR represents a whole of community approach to a problem, and that a trial such as this will result in greater dialogue & cooperation of willing neighbours, while also removing the stigma associated with caring for stray cats. The Jury believes that communities will embrace this approach more willingly than an indiscriminate baiting/culling program of unowned cats. Under this trial, the Jury expects only diseased and sick cats will be euthanased.

The Jury believes that TNR could become a model to manage unowned cats through changing social culture around the issue, as opposed to a legal or regulatory framework. TNR also helps to monitor & identify cats while ensuring they are in good health.

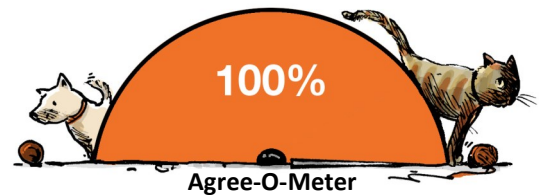
Ideas for Implementation

To support this idea the Jury suggests:

- Widespread education of the benefits to the community for desexing and microchipping cats so that they do not add to the feral or stray cat population, eliminating the need for extreme action.
- Training student veterinarians and vet nurses for desexing and microchipping activities.
- Promoting the idea of community service amongst vets and vet nurses. For example Paws and Claws run initiatives to desex and microchip at nominal cost. Councils could have similar programmes on a regular basis.

This recommendation sits with the Dog and Cat Management Board and the Department of Environment Water and Natural Resources to collaborate with local councils and communities that have identified a problem and are willing to work on a community based solution.

Mandatory Registration & Licensing of Dog & Cat Breeders



The intent: Breeders of dogs and cats breed healthy animals; shutting down puppy/kitten farms

The Jury supports the draft Code of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs and Cats in Breeding Facilities as part of the 2015 Dog & Cat Management Reforms.

The Jury recommends that the Government legislate for all people who sell dogs and cats (breeders) to be registered and licensed to ensure that they are ethical and meet the Code of Practice.

The Jury recommends that the RSPCA have a central role in the registration of breeders of dogs and cats to ensure quality control.

Background

With this recommendation, the Jury wishes to address the distressing reality of puppy farms and the annual kitten ‘tsunami’ (where each year shelters are overwhelmed by people whose cats have had unwanted litters). The Jury is strong in their agreement that people who breed live animals for sale must do so ethically, and with the animals’ best interests at heart.

The Jury is interested in promoting the humane care of animals from pre-birth to point of sale. This recommendation is designed to ensure there are checks and balances to manage and monitor the conditions in which animals live before finding their permanent homes.

This recommendation dovetails with the Jurys’ recommendation about identification of dogs, cats and their owners. The Jury is in complete agreement that this process will also allow for and facilitate better data collection for dogs and cats. This recommendation is also complementary to compulsory desexing as it provides a point at which microchipping and desexing can occur.

Ideas for implementation

The Jury sees an important role for the RSPCA in this recommendation in defining the requirements for a quality breeder. The Jury also believes that the RSPCA could receive the bulk of the licensing fee to cover the cost to manage and implement the scheme.

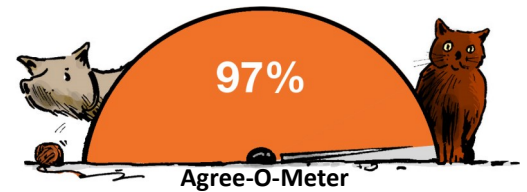
For breeders, the Jury believes that in time this will become ‘just another business cost’ which is deductible or factored in when determining the selling price of their animals. This approach will help to promote breeders as being of high quality and ethical in their nature. This recommendation could benefit from effective education and marketing to promote the standard to the public and industry.

The Jury suggests that the immediate first step be the establishment of breeder standards, with a notification period allowing breeders to meet the standards required.

RSPCA is the ideal organisation to lead this as they have current powers to prosecute non-compliant breeders in relation to animal welfare matters. The Jury recommends that breeder standards be developed in collaboration with the RSPCA, Animal Welfare League, Australian Veterinary Association and the Dog and Cat Management Board.

ID of Dogs & Cats

The intent: to easily & quickly reconnect lost pets with their owners.



The Jury supports the mandatory micro-chipping reforms currently being proposed by the Dog and Cat Management Board through amendments to the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.

In addition, the Jury recommends that the current system of local Council registration of dogs is phased out and replaced by a new mandatory microchipping system.

The Jury recommends that the Local Government Association and the Dog and Cat Management Board (DCMB) work together to develop an appropriate new system & funding model to maintain and/or increase the available resources that support the important work of local Councils and the DCMB in animal management. The Jury is not intending that a loss in resources be a consequence of this recommendation. The role of the DCMB is critical, as is the role of Animal Management in Local Council areas. The Jury does not want to lose funding for this important work.

The Jury recommends that Government develop and implement one centrally managed statewide database. The Jury suggests that at a later point in time the State Government should advocate for this database to be implemented on a national level. This database is critical for the effectiveness of the Jury's recommendations and the effectiveness of the proposed changes to the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.

Background

The Jury has a strong desire to see dogs and cats reunited with their owners when they are lost. The Jury learnt that impacts to animals and people are dramatically reduced if the reunification occurs swiftly. The Jury was influenced in their thinking in this area, after being made aware of the many different databases which are used to track microchipped dogs and cats at the moment. The Jury want the ability for agencies to quickly and easily identify owned pets from unowned pets. This can only be achieved with one, streamlined, shared database.

The Jury would like to see an effective, efficient & expedient microchipping system, which will in time replace and negate the need for registration. The Jury noted the current disparity in registration requirements for dogs and cats, and want to remove this and ensure cats are also reunited with their owners in a timely way. In the meantime it is important to continue the current system of dog registration as this new system is implemented and refined.

The Jury discussed the many ways available for people to update their information upon purchase, change of ownership/address or death of a beloved pet. The Jury want to see a society which is accountable and responsible for their pets. A high performing and effective identification system will contribute to raising the standards for pet ownership, and an increasingly strong social expectation of the norm. The Jury also noted, that if people are more responsible for their pets, they would be less likely to abandon them, regardless of their changing circumstances.

Ideas for Implementation

The Jury chose not to specify the finer details for how the identification system should work, but they did agree that an annual touch point was a critical way to ensure people focus on keeping their pet information current.

Some ideas they did explore include:

- For existing non-micro-chipped dogs/cats – pay a small fee (ie \$50?) which offers a voucher to microchip.
- For un-microchipped dogs or cats found wandering, they will be microchipped and full fee charged back to owner on collection
- Reminders/triggers could occur through Australia post redirection service (when moving house), Local Government (roll into rates), Medicare and/or MyGov.
- There is a need to make considerations for people who can't comply (older, unable to get online etc). Concession rates to be offered to low income families for any fees.