

The issue of unwanted animals



Adopting a strategic and practical approach
Dr Mark Lawrie

please...

NEUTER YOUR PETS

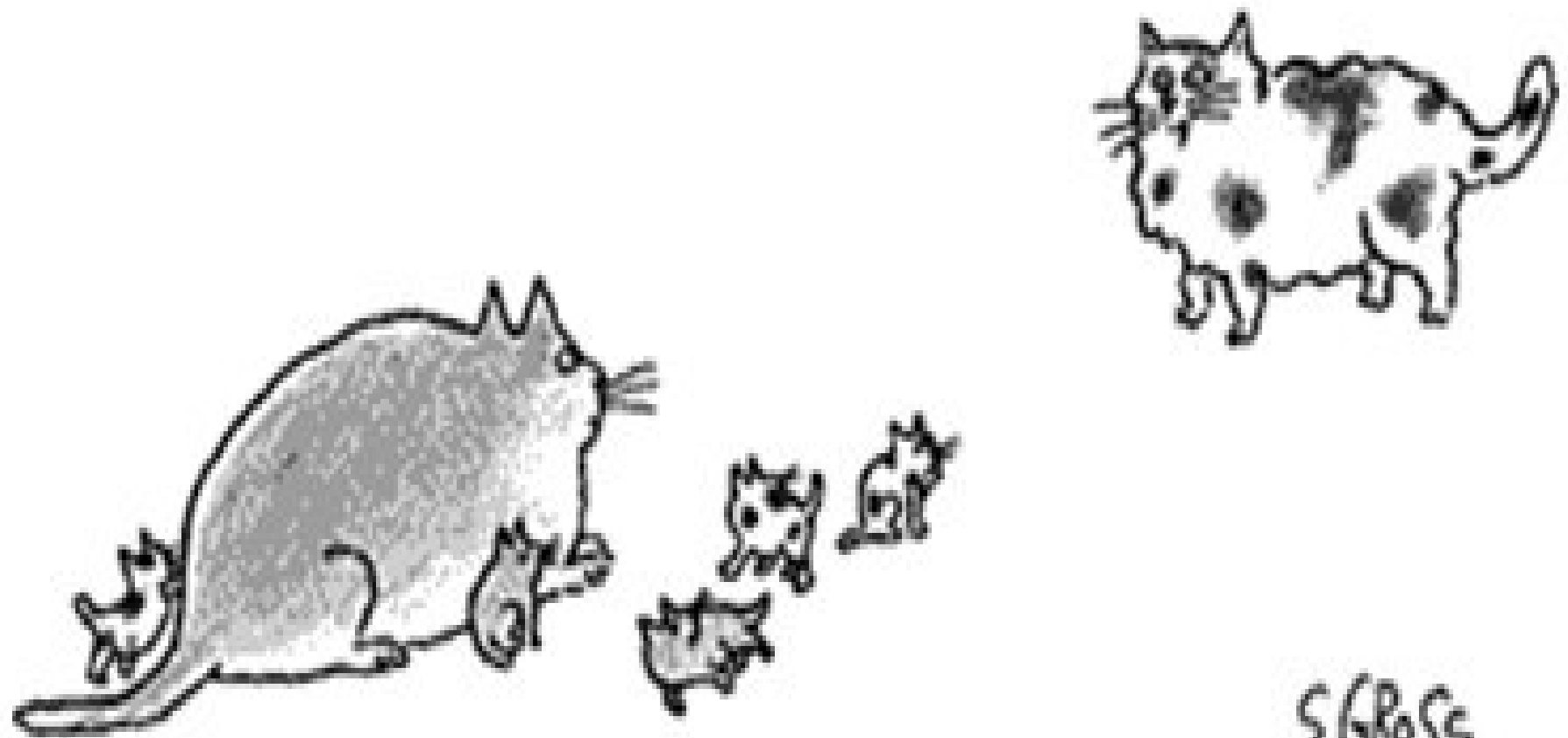
AND

WEIRD FRIENDS & RELATIVES



The issue of unwanted animals

- CAWS programs + how they evolved
- Issue of unwanted companion animals
- Have we made progress in last decade?
 - How do we compare re UCA with USA?
- How do we make further progress?
- Best ways forward-programs + research



S. GROSS

*"Can I borrow those kittens for an hour?
I want to freak out the people who had me spayed..."*

The issue of unwanted animals

- Kelso Project-Bathurst May 11, 2003
 - AMO Margi Gaal-IFAW award 2003
 - 126 dogs and cats male and female in 1 day
 - Multi-stakeholder-AWO, Gov, Vets, others
 - Significant volunteer labour
 - Education + Public awareness-long term effect
 - Utilised local vet clinic-capacity building

ANIMALS

WINTER 2003

\$5-\$5.50

Proceeds from the sale of this magazine go directly to the RSPCA to help animals in need

RSPCA 

FREE GAME INSIDE

Snake and ladders the RSPCA way!
Special children's pullout

No more stray dogs! -
RSPCA gets strays off
the streets in the west

When love hurts -
how to cope with loving and
losing your pet

The last waltz for India's
dancing bears

RSPCA 
For all creatures great and small

Kelso Program

- In 6 months prior to project 62 dogs impounded from Kelso area (124 annualised)
- Dogs impounded at BRC pound and from Kelso
- Jul 03-Jun 04 812 18
- Jul 04-Jun 05 792 15
- Jul 05-15 May 06 664 25
- figures courtesy of Bathurst Regional Council, Gaal (2006)

CAWS Programs in NSW

- Was Kelso model sustainable statewide?->CAWS
- Collaboration betw RSPCA NSW and NSW AVA
- 3 pronged approach with 2 week program
 - Education through AVA PetPEP, (?SPOT)
 - Public Awareness thro local, regional, state media
 - Targeted Desexing programs through local vet clinics
- Recognition that regional + remote areas have more problems in dealing with Unwanted Companion Animals (UCA) than cities



CAWS Programs in NSW

- 2004
 - Bourke, Coonamble, Gilgandra, Bathurst
- 2005
 - Bourke, Inverell, Coonamble, Gilgandra, Bathurst, Griffith
- 2006
 - Inverell, Bourke, Griffith, Bathurst, Dubbo
- Expansion-subject to further funding
 - RSPCA NSW, AVA NSW, Councils, JS Love Trust, M Carroll An Welf Fund, Local Vets, Corporate Sponsors-Fort Dodge, Provet, Merial, Pfizer, Novartis, Jurox, Bayer, Livingston's, Peptech-Suprelorin

CAWS Programs in NSW

- 600 dogs and cats desexed annually
- Another 400 microchipped, vacc, treated
- Strongly targeted to low income.
- Organised by locals-vets, AMOs, RSPCA branch
- Ongoing uptake of veterinary services-up to 25% revisits at one site over 18 month

Pet program a great success CAWS the 'battlers' love it

A PET desexing program for the "battlers" in the community is proving to be a runaway hit with residents.

The RSPCA-backed Community Animal Welfare Scheme (CAWS) is in full swing and by the time it finishes at the end of next week 120 cats and dogs will have been desexed, microchipped and vaccinated.

A similar program made its debut in Bathurst about two years ago, but was confined to one day.

However, it proved such a success that it is back in an expanded format.

Dr Ann-Margret Withers, from the RSPCA in Sydney, is in Bathurst helping run the program, which has the support of local veterinary practices and Bathurst Regional Council.

She said the program would also involve visits to local schools, starting next Monday, to preach the importance of responsible pet ownership.

"The program is aimed at pensioners and low income earners, the battlers in society," Dr Withers said.

"It's been a success in Bathurst and we've had great support from council and local vets, who are all involved.

"Thanks to a media campaign to highlight the program there has been a great response and by the time we finish 120 animals will have been desexed."

Western Advocate (Bathurst)
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DESEXED: RSPCA vet Dr Ann-Margret Withers desexes Tiger the cat at the Stewart Street Veterinary Clinic yesterday as part of the Community Animal Welfare Scheme.

11/24/05/05/05

The issue of unwanted animals

- Other RSPCA targeted programs in NSW
 - RSPCA branch + auxillary schemes
 - Indigenous communities-AMRRIC, GWAHS
 - Socioeconomically challenged areas in cities-DLG + DOH + RSPCA + local councils- 4 sites
 - Other sub cultures ?-cultural, religious issue
 - Remember education + public awareness
 - Need to improve statistics + analysis

The issue of unwanted animals

- Other Desexing Programs-eg
 - AWL eg Wollongong
 - CPS eg Blacktown
 - Hunter Valley Animal Watch-Newcastle
 - DABS-Sydney
 - Others-NZ Desex in the City-Auckland
 - Don't forget presale desexing numbers!
 - Over 8,000 a year by RSPCA alone
 - What about pounds





Is your pet a sex offender?

If you haven't neutered your dog or tom he will stray and get females pregnant against their will, creating unwanted and unloved litters. Far too many puppies and kittens turn up on the SPCA's doorstep because owners don't get their pets fixed.

So stop the offending. Get your pet desexed.



SPCA
SUCKLAND

The issue of unwanted animals

- Australia last 10 years
 - Decline in strays?
 - More marked than US, though some feel no change
 - Cognitive dissonance
 - Lower % impounded and euthanased tho variation
 - High sterilization rates of owned dogs and cats
 - 10% higher than US tho min. ds progs till recently
 - Presale juvenile desexing by shelters
 - Implemented from early to mid 90s
 - Need to extend where not happening esp council pounds

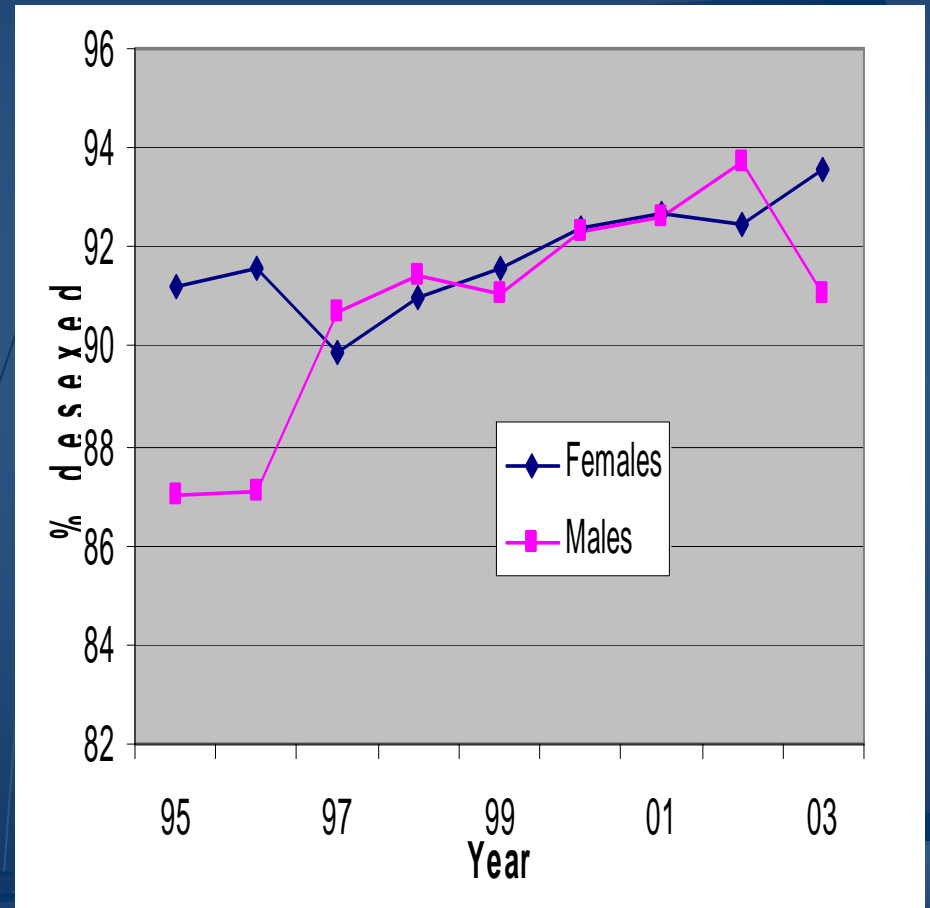
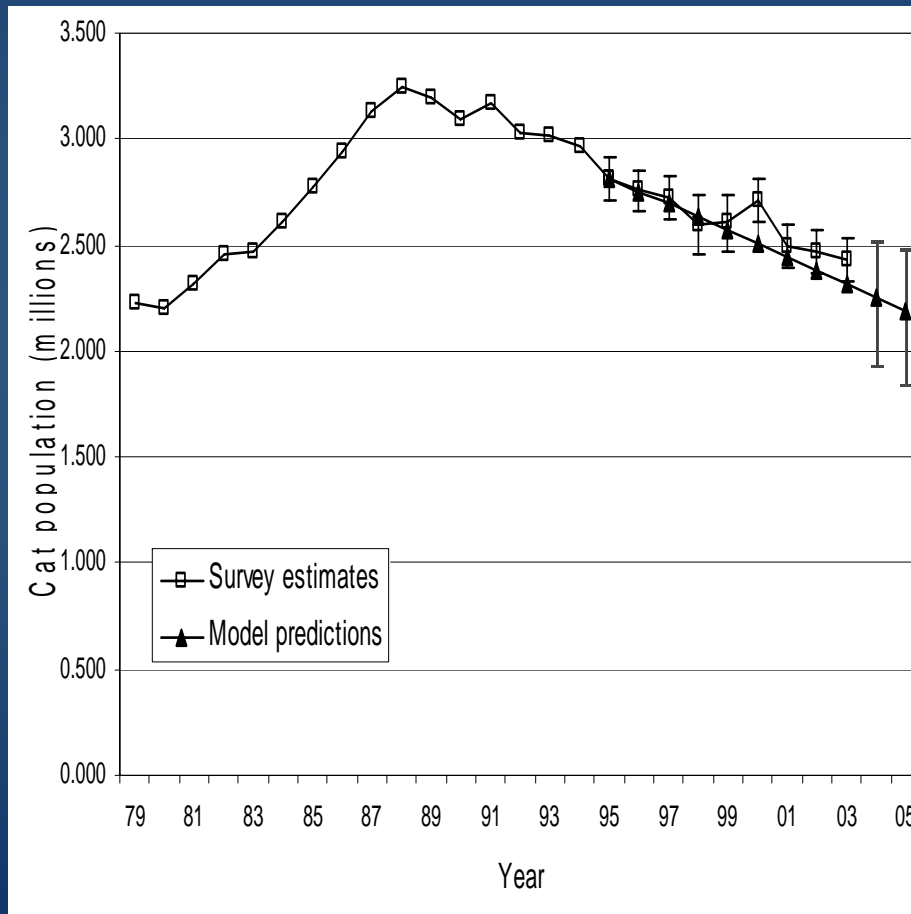
The issue of unwanted animals

- Australia last 10 years and compared to USA
 - Increasing level responsible ownership?
 - Urban Animal Management Group-"organised systems"
 - Micro-chipping (Compulsory) NSW + Vic
 - Social marketing/public campaigns-slip, slop, slap?
 - Better distributed wealth and rise in wealth last 10years
 - How do we learn from USA mistakes and strengths
 - Capture good data + measure impact of strategies
 - Research-evidence based, non-agenda driven
 - Continue working on behavioural modification

US Situation

- “Failure to standardise and broaden data collection continues to hinder progress”
 - Clancy and Rowan, 2003
- “Changed so much in US thro past decade– like separate countries with regional diff so marked”
 - Patronek, 2006
- Huge amount of money directed at various facets of overpop. problem by Maddie's Fund
 - Christensen, 2003
 - Eg. \$4.6 million over 2 years to Texas VMA
- “Untargeted spay neuter wastes 75% of funds”
 - Marsh, 2003 Petsavers

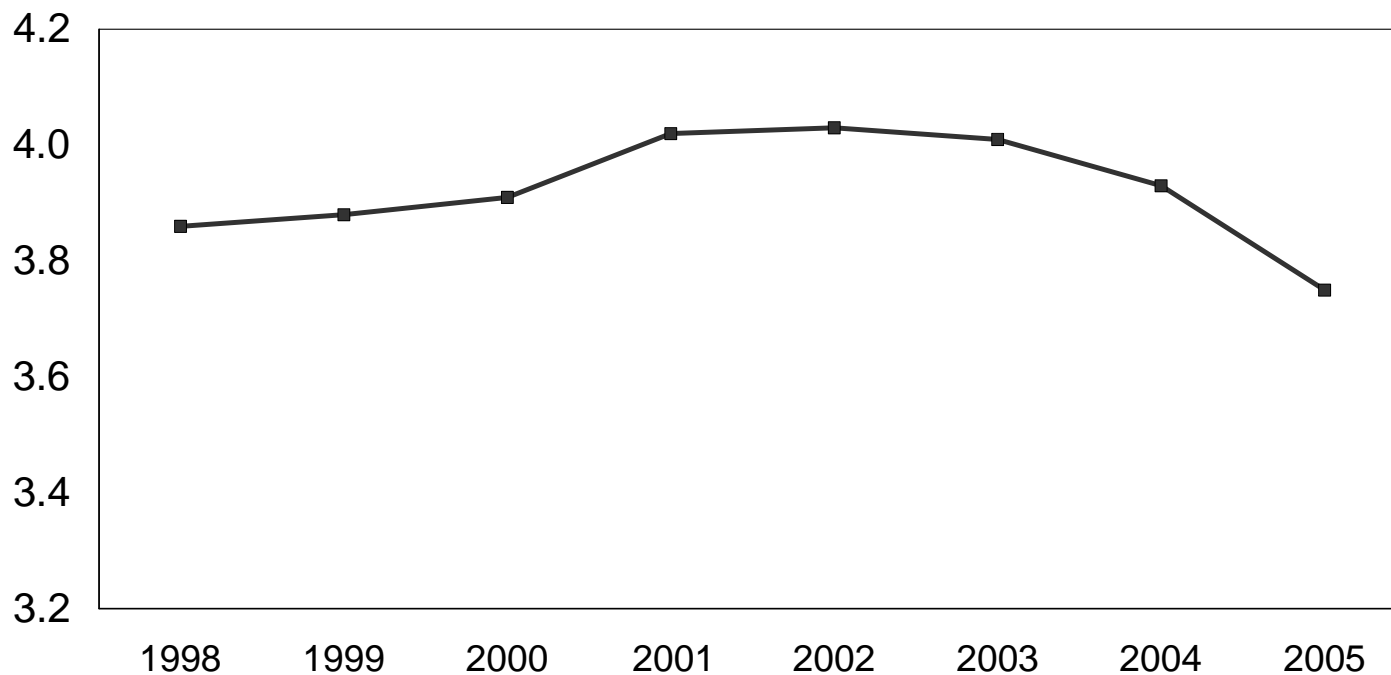
The Population Paradox



The “Population Paradox”

The national owned DOG population

Dog population - trend line estimates, 1998-2005



Source: TNS

Data: Year end June

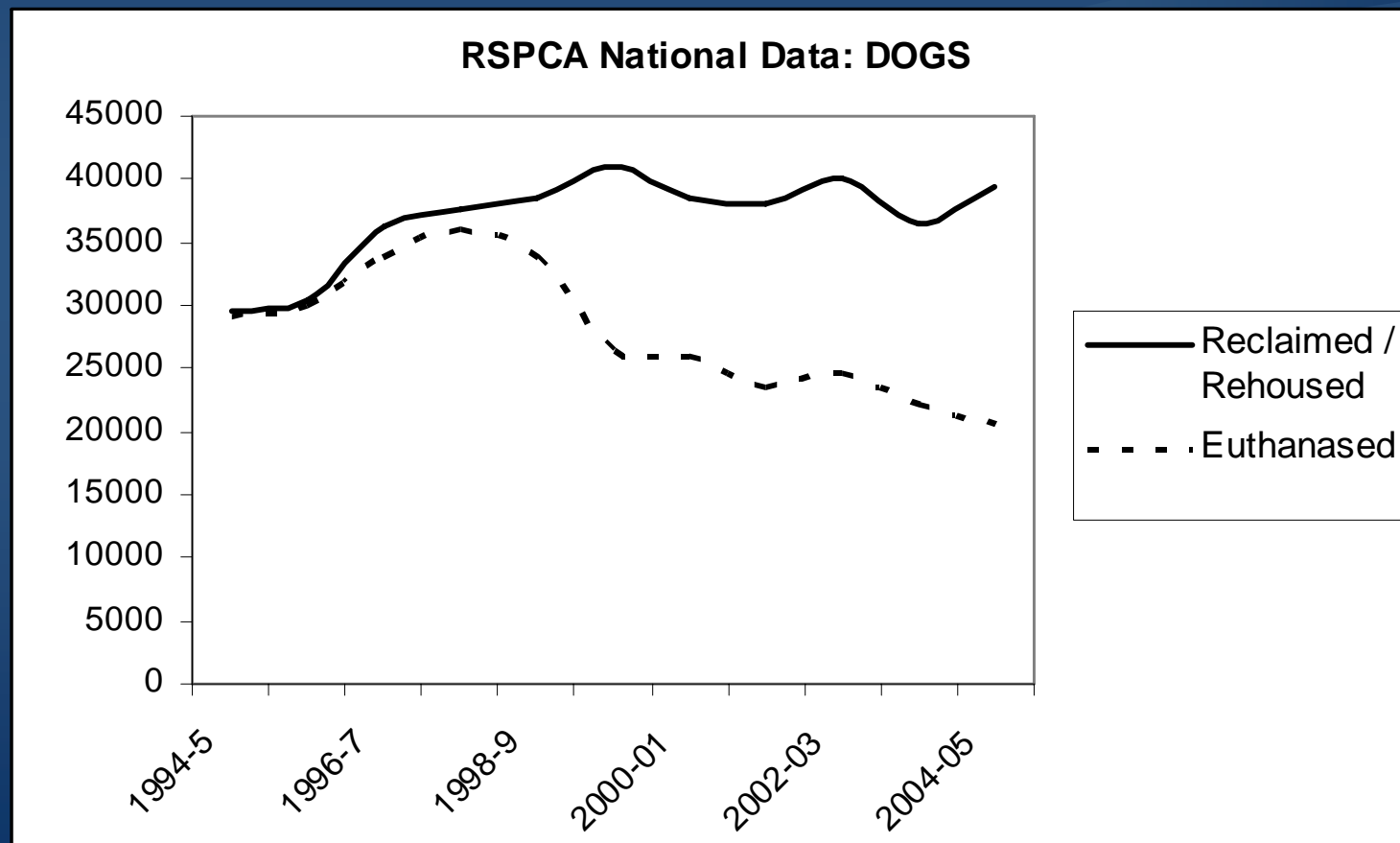


Australian Statistics

- RSPCA National Statistics-Intake and Euthanasia
 - No. of dogs coming into RSPCA shelters peaked at 80,776 (97-98), declined to 60,030 in 04-05
 - This represents a reduction of 25.9%
 - The euthanasia rate declined by 42.7%
 - Cats peaked at 62163 in 96-97, declined to 49,754 in 01-02 (almost 20%) before a worrying rise back to 55,291 (still an 11% decline)
 - Lack of management then increased management?
 - Euthanasia nevertheless declined by 33.1%

Australian Statistics

The fate of DOGS received nationally through RSPCA shelters



NOW & THEN

Now The proportion of dogs received

by the RSPCA

in Australia and rehomed is

56.2 per cent

Then In 1997-98

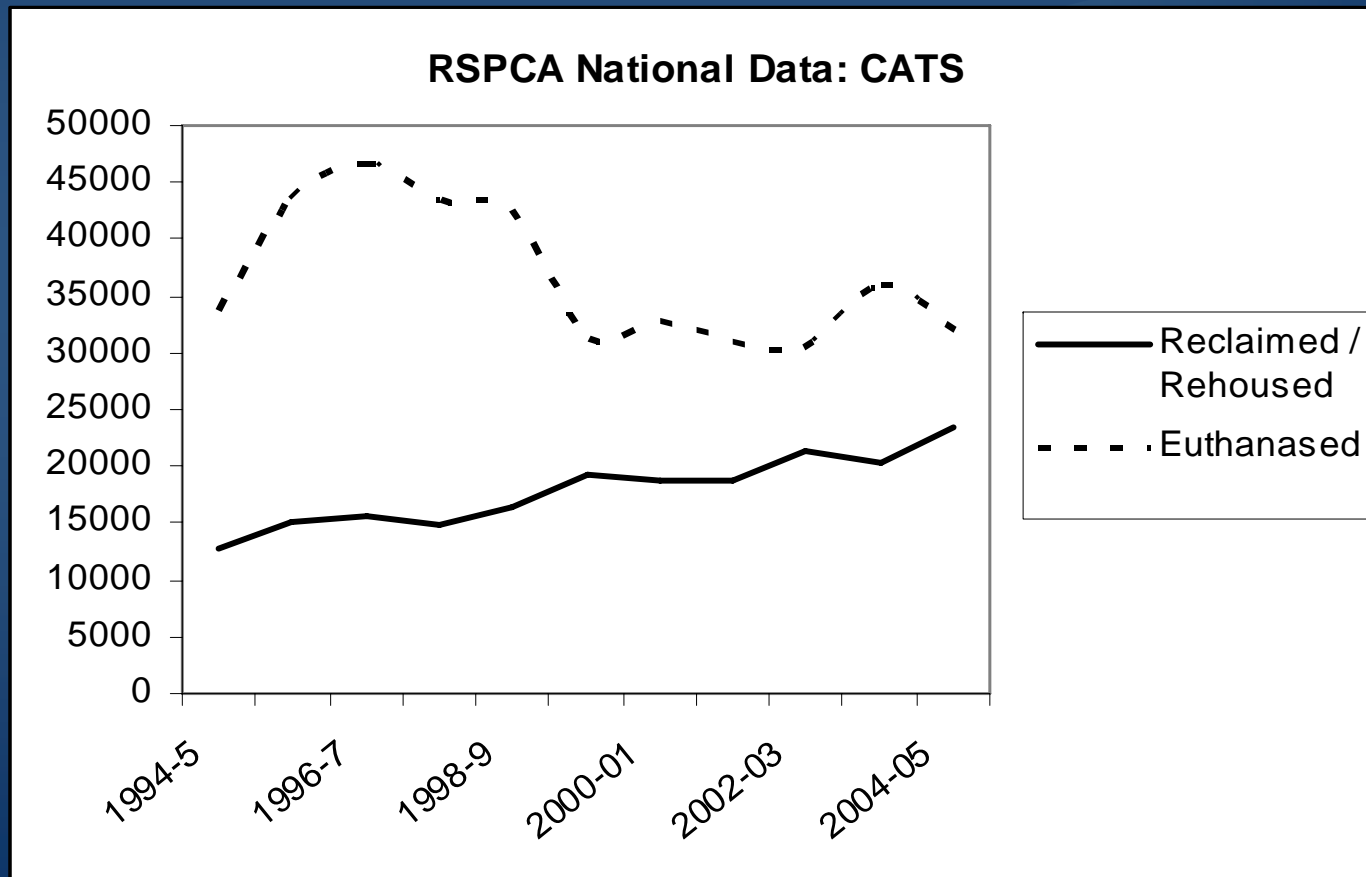
it was

28 per cent.



Australian Statistics

The fate of CATS received nationally through RSPCA shelters

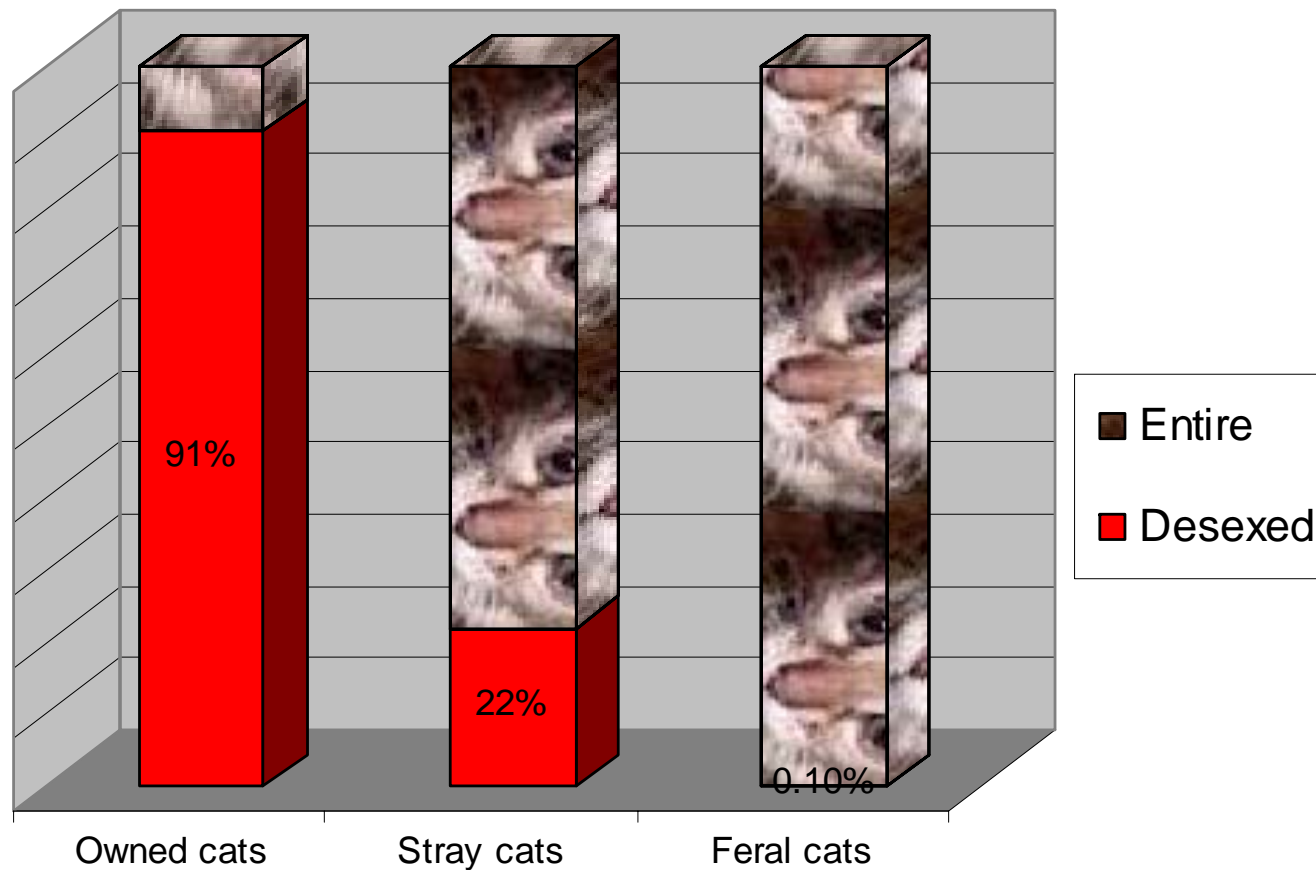


Australian Statistics

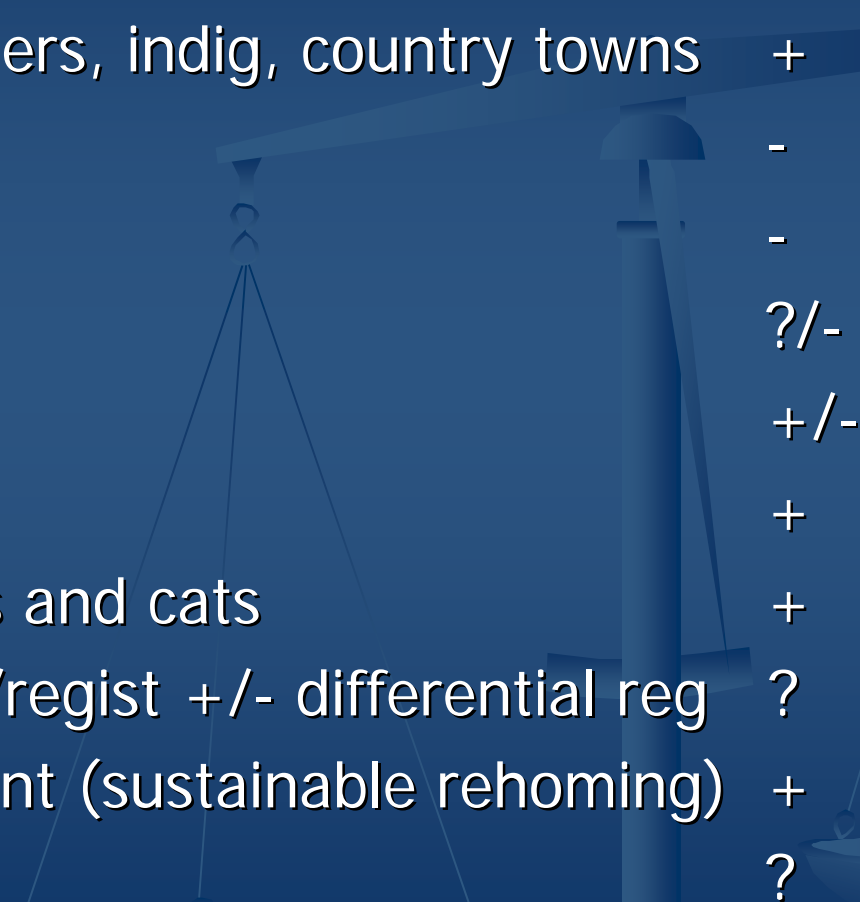
- ACT only jurisdiction with total coverage
 - Dog Intake reduced by 21.3% (97-05)
 - Dog Euthanasia reduced by 65.1%
 - Cat Intake reduced by 10%
 - Cat Euthanasia reduced by 18.1%
 - Despite significant “importation” of puppies and kittens and dogs in recent times

The “Population Paradox”

Cat Sub-Populations



Other strategies

- 
- Earlier desexing of cats by vets +
 - Targeted progs-hoarders, indig, country towns +
 - Mobile vet clinics -
 - No kill shelters -
 - Trap neuter release ?/-
 - Trap and euthanase +/-
 - Contraceptive drugs +
 - Redistribution of dogs and cats +
 - Compulsory ds/micro/regist +/- differential reg ?
 - Behaviour management (sustainable rehoming) +
 - Task Forces/AAWS ?



Populate and Perish

- Australia-Problem areas
 - Regional towns-economics and vet capacity
 - Poor urban enclaves-economics and education
 - Hunting dogs-poor behaviour and control
 - Hoarders-legislation, education and monitoring
 - Indigenous communities-education and employment see www.amrric.org

DOG PEOPLE

In tribal groupings across Australia, individuals are traditionally designated stewards of distinct aspects of tribal life. DOG PEOPLE are those that tend the lore, management and health of the dog in the community.

Darwin 16-21 July, 2006



Dialogue, care and respect

There are DOG PEOPLE working in remote indigenous communities right across Australia (and internationally). As well as the traditional custodians, there are many others: Vets, Community Development Officers, health and social workers, academics and politicians. Many different backgrounds, one focus.

All of these people recognise the significance of the dog in these communities and work towards creating sustainable health management practices.

The flow-on benefits of this work for the health and well-being of the broader community are well documented.

"DOG PEOPLE" is the name of an international conference held in Darwin from July 16th to the 21st, 2006. The aim of this event is to bring together the many different groups operating in this field, around Australia and the world, to consolidate knowledge and establish benchmarks for best practice.

The DOG PEOPLE conference is an initiative of AMRRIC, Animal Management in Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities. AMRRIC is an independent group of veterinarians, academics and community health workers. Formed in 1998, it works to coordinate, promote and advance the management of companion animals in Indigenous communities.

AMRRIC has been successful in creating solid dialogue between Indigenous communities, regulatory bodies and health workers, both human and veterinary. Recent support from the federal government has greatly enhanced the work and, amongst other things, has made the DOG PEOPLE conference possible.

"AMRRIC's work includes education as much as it does treatment of symptoms. It involves a form of community partnership that the Government is keen to encourage in resolving the health and social challenges facing Indigenous communities." Amanda Vanstone, the federal minister for Indigenous Affairs, 2004

If you are interested in participating in this work, or just getting more information, please contact us through the website or via the contact details below.

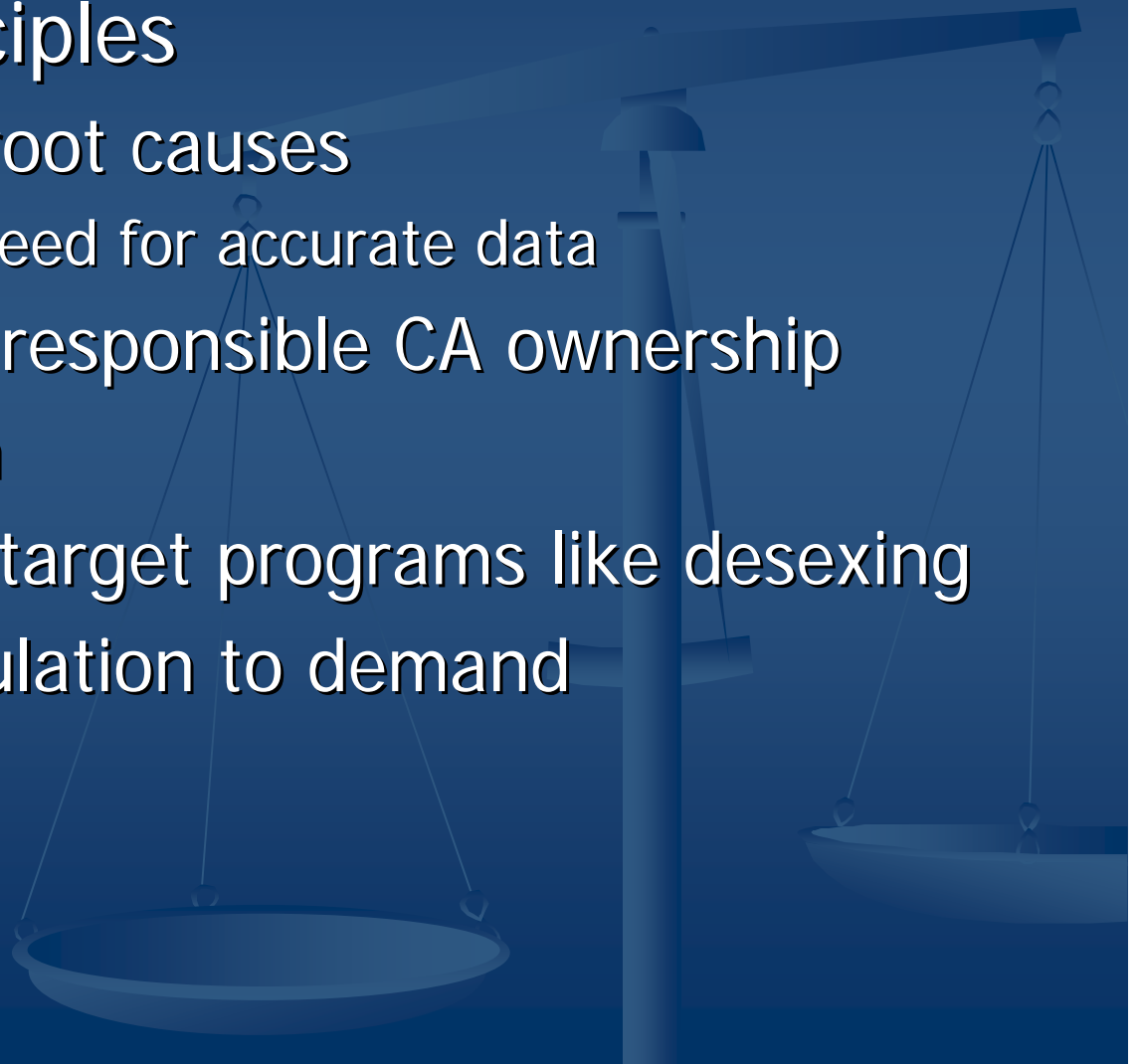


www.amrric.org.au
www.dogpeople.com.au



The issue of unwanted animals

- 5 strategic principles
 - 1. Understand root causes
 - Including the need for accurate data
 - 2. Education in responsible CA ownership
 - 3. Identification
 - 4. Strategically target programs like desexing
 - 5. Balance population to demand



The issue of unwanted animals

- Focal areas of research
 - 1. Declining CA ownership
 - 2. Early age desexing
 - 3. Desexing schemes + alternatives
 - 4. Causes of homelessness + relinquishment
 - 5. Effective strategies to reduce no. + % euth

The issue of unwanted animals

- Focal areas of research
 - 6. Behavioural issues-improving behaviour to reduce euthanasia
 - 7. Indigenous communities
 - 8. Animal hoarders
 - 9. Cat colonies



The way forward...

- celebrate our successes and positive impact we have had on welfare of animals
- continue to address the issues of UCA
- develop targeted programs based on stat. data and evidenced based research
- ensure don't negatively impact those who seek the joy of sharing life with pets





