From the President’s desk

It’s been a very busy first half of the year with some major animal welfare stories making local, national and international headlines. I am pleased that the RSPCA has been at the forefront, fighting hard to put animal welfare firmly on the public and political agenda.

To this end, I have had some successful meetings with key supporters and community leaders, including the visit of the Governor of Western Australia, His Excellency Malcolm McCusker AC CVO QC, and former WA Treasurer, now Federal candidate for Pearce, the Hon Christian Porter, to our Malaga site.

Recently, we had a positive and productive meeting with the new Minister for Agriculture, Hon Ken Baston MLA, where we discussed the state of animal welfare in Western Australia, and, in particular, the community’s great expectations for higher welfare in the livestock sector. Having learned of the Minister’s farming background and of his interest in animal welfare, we are confident of building a strong relationship with the Minister and his staff.

Locally, there have been some horrific incidents, such as the recent spate of animal shootings widely featured in the media. In just over a month, we saw five animals shot with a variety of weapons ranging from a horse shot with a shotgun, and a dog, a kangaroo and, most recently, two pelicans shot with arrows. Most of these animals were able to be saved, but unfortunately, some succumbed to their wounds.

RSPCA Inspectors, working with government departments, councils and police, are using their powers of investigation to bring the perpetrators to justice. While these vile acts are sickening and make all of us involved with the RSPCA extremely angry, it also steels our resolve to keep fighting for the most vulnerable in our community. If we don’t speak up and defend them, who will?

I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that, with a Federal election coming up, now is the time to stand up and be heard. Whether you want to see live exports transitioned to a meat-only trade or for puppy farms to become a thing of the past, or are concerned about where your food comes from and want truth in food labelling, please take the time tell your federal MP about the election issues that matter to you.

To this end, RSPCA’s national office, based in Canberra, will be running the Political Animal campaign once again, providing an opportunity for you to stand up and be heard.

I would like to personally thank all staff and volunteers for their hard work, and last but not least, you for your continued support, not only in helping us help the animals in our care, but also for being their voice when it matters.

For all creatures great and small

Lyneen Bradshaw National and State President

The new cat laws and you

What is the Cat Act 2011?

As well as encouraging responsible pet ownership, WA’s new cat laws aim to reduce the number of unwanted cats in our community.

Microchipping and registration also helps lost cats be returned to their loving families.

What do I need to do?

From 1 November 2013, all cats that have reached six months of age have to be microchipped and sterilised, and registered with your local council.

Your cat will need to wear a collar and registration tag so it can be easily identified and returned to you if lost.

There are government subsidies for sterilising cats owned by pensioners and people on low incomes, and pensioners can receive a discount on registration fees.

Even old cats will need to be sterilised, although your vet can issue an exemption if sterilisation is likely to harm your cat’s health and welfare.

What about cat breeders?

If you wish to breed cats, even just one litter from your own cat, you need to apply to your local government for a permit. A seller must microchip and sterilise all cats before they are sold. If the cat is too young to be sterilised, the seller must issue a prepaid sterilisation voucher to the new owner.

How many cats can I have?

Contact your local government to find out if there will be a limit to the number of cats an individual or household can own in your area.

If your local government does introduce a local law limiting cat numbers, it will not apply to currently-owned cats.

Responsible cat owners’ checklist:

• cat is easily identifiable with collar and name tag
• cat is microchipped
• cat is sterilised
• cat is registered with local council.

Even if your cat is an indoor or contained cat, it must still be registered, microchipped and sterilised.

Find out more

For more information about the Cat Act 2011 visit www.dlg.wa.gov.au or contact your local government.

CEO’s Update

RSPCA WA has just held our 18th Million Paws Walk and the event was a fabulous success. Read all about the day on pages 8 to 10, along with pictures from many of our 21 Walks across the state.

It’s been a tough first half to 2013, with RSPCA’s Malaga shelter over-capacity. As our feature on page 6 shows, our normal capacity is around 170 animals, but due to several recent, large-scale RSPCA Inspectorate operations, we have had to take in over 350 animals.

I’d like to pay particular tribute to the great work of our Inspectors, especially those in regional WA. They face challenges and, sometimes tragedies, in the course of their work. However, they are able to rise to the challenge largely due to the support of their local communities, vets, Police, Rangers, and volunteers, and people throughout the companion animal and agricultural sectors including farmers.

I also need to thank our corporate sponsors and partners, without whom events like Million Paws Walk just would not happen. You can read about some of these wonderful relationships on pages 10, 12 and 13.

A personal thank you also to all of my staff and volunteers who have not only persevered, but have gone above and beyond the call of duty during this crisis period while awaiting court outcomes. Many staff have moved out of their offices to accommodate the additional animals.

Currently, we are likely to progress 45 prosecutions, which is, unfortunately, a very high number. We will continue to be forever vigilant in our work protecting animals from cruelty.

For all creatures great and small

David van Ooran
Chief Executive Officer
Is it okay to keep a cat confined to your property?

Your cat can live very happily contained within your property.

In fact, contained cats generally:

- are more likely to spend time with you
- are less likely to become lost or injured
- have fewer ‘cat-fight’ injuries
- are less likely to catch diseases
- have less chance to hunt native wildlife
- are less likely to disturb neighbours.

However, if you decide to contain your cat, you do need to ensure that she gets enough exercise and mental stimulation. You cat doesn’t have to live totally indoors—there are a range of specialised outdoor enclosures available for cats.

Despite keeping your cat confined to your property, you still need to have her microchipped, desexed and registered with your council—if she does slip out and becomes lost, she can be returned to you.

Indoor living tips

- Make your home a feline-friendly, stimulating environment where your cat won’t get bored. Provide vertical climbing space, horizontal space and hiding spots. There are lots of products available, such as cat ladders and window hammocks.
- Each cat should have access to more than one individual litter tray, well away from eating and sleeping areas, and access to fresh water.
- Provide plenty of toys to keep your cat amused—and vary them. Cardboard boxes with holes are great for hide and seek games. Make sure all toys are safe for cats—avoid string toys as these can cause an intestinal obstruction.
- Play with your cat daily, and give her plenty of attention and company—playing enables her to use her instinctive pouncing behaviour and release pent up energy.
- Make sure your cat has several scratching post to keep her nails in good condition (and to save your furniture).
- Ensure your plants are safe for cats—some common plants, such as lilies, are fatally toxic to cats (check out www.kb.rspca.org.au for information).
- Cats love to bask in the sun—make sure your cat has a nice sunny spot to lie in, and access to a window where she can keep an eye on the outside world.
- Access to an enclosed outdoor escape-proof enclosure or run (non-electrified) is great so your cat has safe outdoor access but is still confined to your property. Alternatively, there are special fences which keep your cat confined to the backyard.
- Many cats are social animals—consider having two compatible cats to keep each other company while you are out, preventing loneliness and boredom.
- Your cat still needs to be vaccinated even if she does not interact with other cats or go outside. Speak to your vet about vaccination.

A more detailed version of this information is available at www.kb.rspca.org.au.

School holiday program

RSPCA WA’s school holiday programs continue to gain in popularity, with school-aged children, parents and teachers.

Our April school holiday program saw 413 children come through our doors, with 26 different sessions for toddlers and children, including a special Easter session and a full-day RSPCA WA Big Day Out.

Our Community Education Unit also offered animal welfare themed ‘edutainment’ sessions, on and off site, to seven community groups.

In July, Radical Reptiles return, and two new holiday sessions promise to offer something different—a sleep-over In the Dog House, and Friends, Food and Fundraising with our new mascot, Inspector Izzy.

Details of our July holiday program and early bird enrolment for junior/youth members are now at www.rspcawa.asn.au.
We never run out of compassion

Inspectors

RSPCA Inspectors find out about animal welfare cases in several ways, mainly through investigating cruelty complaints from the public. We also carry out spot inspections and work closely with agencies such as local council rangers, WA Police and the Department of Agriculture and Food.

At one of our recent seizures, our Inspectors seized 108 animals, including 20 goats, which have since been brought back to full health and are now looking for new, ‘forever’ homes.

In two additional cases this summer, our Inspectors had to bring in a number of other animals. At one stage, we were at ‘breaking point’ with more than 400 animals—the Malaga Animal Care Centre’s normal capacity is 170 animals.

And it doesn’t end there—every case, and every animal, involves a lot of time, and, if there is a prosecution, many additional hours of work preparing the case.

You, our supporters

This year’s unprecedented seizures and surrenders are having a substantial impact on the organisation’s resources.

When possible, we are placing animals in foster care, and as soon as any animal is deemed ready for adoption by our vets and behavioural staff, we place its details on our Adopt-a-Pet website (www.adopapet.com.au).

The RSPCA is a community-based organisation with 94 per cent of our funding coming directly from people like you. We are committed to doing what we can to continue looking after the welfare of animals in Western Australia, so we are asking all animals lovers to dig deep to help us through this crisis and to support your RSPCA.

You can donate by calling 1300 777 221, by mail, or online at www.rspcawa.asn.au.

Vets and care staff

The Inspectors let us know when a possible seizure is imminent, so we can prepare for a large intake of animals. This can be at very short notice, sometimes less than 24 hours, and each seizure can include several different kinds of animal.

On the day, as they arrive, every single animal is checked by the vet team, remaining in vet care if there are any health concerns.

The staff settle the animals into their new homes, often working late into the night making sure every animal is safe and comfortable.

This summer, we had to quickly build new enclosures for dozens of incoming animals, as well as change the use of some existing buildings and paddocks. This included providing access to water, electricity, and, with this summer’s record breaking heat, shade or air-conditioning, as well as secure quarantine facilities for animals that may carry infectious diseases.

Currently, the demand on the shelter is huge, and is likely to remain so for some time. We need extra bedding and toys and additional veterinary care and equipment, staff and volunteers.

In addition, we still need to maintain the routine care of animals already in the shelter. We are working hard to prepare as many animals for adoption as soon as possible, but the welfare of each and every animal is always paramount.

Much of RSPCA WA’s work is funded by animal lovers remembering us in their Wills, and we couldn’t function without the generosity of these loyal supporters.

It costs a huge amount for RSPCA WA to keep doing the vital work we do. Last year, over a quarter of this came from bequests, so you can imagine how important these gifts are to us and the difference they make to our lifesaving work.

Leaving a gift to us through your Will is an amazing thing to do, as your legacy will live on long after you’ve gone, giving a second chance to so many animals in need.

A valid Will ensures your estate is distributed the way you want it to be, and that the people and animals you care about are provided for. Everyone over 18 should have a Will.

All kinds of people leave gifts to RSPCA WA. You certainly don’t have to be wealthy to leave a bequest. One small amount, when combined with others, can make a huge impact on our work.

Bequest animals

RSPCA WA can also help look after your animals when you are no longer able to care for them.

The RSPCA WA Pet Bequest Program gives you the peace of mind of knowing that your pets will receive the best possible care in their future years.

Want to know more?

Before you finalise your Will, including Pet Bequests, we suggest you call Carol, our Bequests Officer, on 9209 9332. Carol can explain the various ways of making a lifetime gift, and the best ways to ensure we can meet your wishes.

Leaving a gift to us through your Will after taking care of family and friends, as they know what a wonderful difference even a small bequest could make to the lives of neglected and injured animals in Western Australia.

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Thousands of Western Australians and their dogs showed their support in the fight against animal cruelty by attending the RSPCA’s biggest event of the year, the Million Paws Walk. This represents a 67 per cent increase in donations at time of print.

This year, RSPCA WA held a record 21 walks right across the state, including our flagship walk at Sir James Mitchell Park in South Perth, raising vital funds towards our lifesaving work.

Thank you to everyone who attended this year’s Million Paws Walks in Albany, Brunswick Junction, Busselton, Cuballing, Denmark, Dongara, Esperance, Exmouth, Geraldton, Harvey, Kalgoorlie, Kondinin, Kununurra, Margaret River, Mundaring, Narrogin, Rockingham, Shark Bay, South Perth, Wandering and York. The feedback from all who attended was overwhelmingly positive, many saying they will come again next year—a great result which cements Million Paws Walk as Western Australia’s premiere pet event.
Million Paws Walk 2013

We certainly could not have held the Walk without our volunteers, including staff, who not only helped on the day, but were pivotal before and after the event.

RSPCA WA is grateful for the support of our sponsors at this year’s Million Paws Walk. Our partners share our values and help us achieve a better outcome for all creatures, great and small.

This year, our National Sponsor was Hill’s Pet Nutrition, who have sponsored Million Paws Walk since 1998. Hill’s also provide all the food for the cats and dogs in our care.

Other key sponsors include Houndstooth Studios, BHP Billiton, P&N Bank, City of South Perth and Town of Victoria Park, City Farmers Dogwash, KoolKreative, Picton Press, and our media partners Channel 10, 96FM/6PR, and The Sunday Times.

Thank you to Crown Relocations for transporting 5000 show-bags and the other corporate volunteering companies that helped stuff the bags.

We are also grateful to Coles, MMM eggs and Mount Barker for donations and discounts of food supplies.

City Farmers Dog Wash smashed all previous records by raising more than $6000 for RSPCA WA, $1000 more than in 2012.

Swan Marquees & Party Hire, Newicks Electrical, Tanks For Hire, Complete Portables, Stage & Studio Productions, and Container Refrigeration also provided on-site assistance.

We appreciate the support of the stall holders who attended the event, including Great Temptations who provided delicious cupcakes for sampling.

Last, but not least, a huge thank you to our corporate teams, who raised over $15,000, and added healthy competition between teams to raise the most funds, and colour to the event with their corporate t-shirts.

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Friends in need - our sponsors and partners

While we couldn’t survive without donations from our members, the community and supporters, we also rely heavily on the generosity of corporate sponsors and partners. In this edition of *Today*, we’d like to highlight some of the wonderful organisations that help make our work possible.

**Old partner—new name!**

RSPCA WA’s great working relationship with Skywest is continuing under the airline’s new name—Virgin Australia.

With a third of the country to cover, our four regional Inspectors, based in Geraldton, Bunbury, Albany and Kalgoorlie, certainly couldn’t continue to rescue and rehome thousands of neglected and abused animals without the support of Virgin Australia’s wonderful staff.

When RSPCA WA and the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder approved funding for an Inspector in the Goldfields region, Skywest was more than happy to fly the new Inspector to Perth for her training.

Skywest played an important role in helping to prosecute a cruelty case in Katanning by flying our Inspectors between regional locations and Perth to liaise with lawyers and appear in court cases.

This meant that RSPCA WA was able to secure a successful prosecution for animal cruelty while allowing our regional Inspectors to spend minimal time away from their local communities.

Without the help of Virgin Australia, our Inspectors could not continue to cover the large areas they need to save animals in desperate need of our help and care.

**Houndstooth Studios**

Ever wondered who takes the beautiful photographs, like this adorable kitten, that often feature in our campaigns, publications and website?

RSPCA WA is lucky enough to have, as our official photographer, Alex Cearns of Houndstooth Studios.

Alex, an award winning photographer, has been taking photos for us, at no cost, for many years. She always attends Million Paws Walk, and fits us into her amazingly busy schedule when we need her to take pictures of some of the more unusual animals that arrive at the RSPCA Animal Care Centre.

Alex’s love of animals is demonstrated by the array of animal charities she supports on top of RSPCA WA, including the Bali Animal Welfare Association and Free the Bears.

RSPCA WA is delighted to announce our partnership with one of Australia’s premiere creative advertising agencies, Adcorp.

With their motto, *Starting Conversations*, we believe Adcorp is the right agency to support RSPCA WA, on a pro bono basis, to help us better tackle some of the difficult and challenging animal welfare issues we face on a daily basis.

At an initial meeting with the group, we were immediately impressed with their enthusiasm, understanding and support of the RSPCA’s work in fighting animal cruelty and neglect, and educating the community about why animal welfare matters.

Adcorp have already cemented themselves through successful advertising campaigns such as the *Mole Patrol*, which uses a different approach to raising awareness of the dangers of skin cancer for young people.

All of us here at RSPCA WA are looking forward to working with Adcorp on some exciting new initiatives in the near future, including a total revamp of the *Today* magazine.

**Multi Direct**

RSPCA WA is proud to have been Multi Direct’s first client. Over the past 20 years, Multi Direct has raised around $2.5 million for us, marketing a range of gift items by phone. In addition, Multi Direct have supported us over recent years by contributing significantly towards our *Today* magazine.

In fact, without their generosity, you would probably not be reading this now!

RSPCA WA was delighted to present Michael with a Certificate of Appreciation for his role in helping so many animals in need at our 120th Gala Birthday Dinner.

**Old partner—new name!**

One key person who has been supporting RSPCA WA for nearly a decade is popular Channel TEN weatherman, Michael Schultz.

Michael has regularly featured a homeless animal during live crosses from the RSPCA Animal Care Centre in Malaga during his weather slot in TEN’s evening news.

Michael has helped rehome hundreds of animals since his first live broadcast from RSPCA WA—if the animals could thank you, Michael, they would!

Michael never misses our annual Million Paws Walk, and makes time to attend other RSPCA WA events such as Happy Tails Day. RSPCA WA was proud to present Michael with a Certificate of Appreciation for his role in helping so many animals in need at our 120th Gala Birthday Dinner.
Auxiliary and Volunteer Update

Volunteering at the RSPCA
There are a number of ways you can donate your time to us:

- in our Society Stores at Bibra Lake, Mirrabooka, Port Kennedy and Palmyra (contact Stores Manager, Joy Ball, on (08) 9319 1985)
- help out at the Malaga Animal Care Centre with a range of jobs including washing bedding, dog walking or administration tasks. You need to attend a brief Introduction Session. These are held every 8 weeks and are posted on the website.
- event support such as the Million Paws Walk and our next major event, Happy Tails Day, on Friday 4 October 2013
- assist our Regional Auxiliaries in Albany, Broome, Bunbury, Busselton, Esperance, Geraldton, Harvey, Kalgoorlie, Perth, and York. RSPCA WA’s website lists contacts for the various auxiliaries, and ways you can help, including volunteering at regional Million Paws Walks.

RSPCA WA has recently launched a new Corporate Volunteering Program. Think about how your organisation could benefit from sharing your staff's time and skills with RSPCA WA!

All volunteers at RSPCA WA need to be at least 18 years old. You will also need to agree to us carrying out a Police Clearance check, except in the case of some event support roles.

You can find out more about Volunteering at RSPCA WA through our website, or by contacting the Volunteer Coordinator on (08) 9209 9321 or volunteer@rspcawa.asn.au.

RSPCA’s Auxiliaries
The Perth Auxiliary recently raising $1,300 at a sausage sizzle at Malaga Bunnings. They are urgently looking for new volunteers, including committee members—to volunteer or for information, call 0403 009 300 or email rspcapeth@gmail.com.

Pictured below are Gavin, Judyth, Carole and Joan (President) of the York Auxiliary, who presented RSPCA WA with a cheque for $5000 to help fund our work caring for and protecting animals. York Auxiliary also hosted the York Million Paws Walk.

We had to share this lovely tale from our friends in Exmouth. “When unpacking the box that Hill’s sent up for our Million Paws Walk, our foster joey jumped straight into one of the show-bags. He seemed more keen on it than his pillow-case pouches.”

RSPCA Today is the official quarterly magazine of RSPCA WA (Inc.)

The last edition of this magazine carried two inaccuracies in the story ‘Backyard Breeder convicted’. The story indicated that the RSPCA had executed a search warrant on two properties in October 2010 when, in fact, the Department of Commerce had done so. In addition, it was implied that the cover image of two dogs was taken during this visit—the photograph was actually taken by an RSPCA WA Inspector during an earlier visit to a property associated with the convicted person.

Please send queries and contributions to the editor, cchamberlain@rspcawa.asn.au.

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Help us save printing and postage costs... Email your name and address, telling us that you are happy to receive RSPCA Today by email.

RSPCA Calendar

- Cupcake Day for RSPCA
  www.RSPCACupcakeDay.com.au
- Happy Tails Day
  www.HappyTailsDay.com.au
- RSPCA WA Annual General Meeting
  OCT 25

This year, Cupcake Day is on Monday 19 August.

However, you can host a Cupcake Day event any time in August to help fund our work caring for and protecting animals.

Find out more and register online today: www.rspcacupcakeday.com.au

As the official nutritional partner of the RSPCA, Hill’s Pet Nutrition has provided Hill’s “Science Diet” to shelter animals awaiting adoption for over 12 years.
Host a Cupcake Day event any time in August to help raise funds for animals in our care.

REGISTER ONLINE NOW
www.rspcaacupcakeday.com.au