

3rd July 2020

The Royal Society
for the Prevention of
Cruelty to Animals
New South Wales

ABN 87 000 001 641

Authority to Fundraise
No CFN11744

Administration

PO Box 34
Yagoona NSW 2199

P 02 9770 7555
F 02 9782 4445
E mail@rspcansw.org.au
W rspcansw.org.au

Shelters

Blue Mountains (Katoomba)
121-125 Mort Street
Katoomba NSW 2780
P 02 4782 2674

Broken Hill
South Road
Broken Hill NSW 2880
P 08 8087 7753

Central Coast (Somersby)
Lot 455 Reeves Road
Somersby NSW 2250
P 02 4372 2044

Coffs Harbour
Dowsett Drive
Coffs Harbour NSW 2450
P 02 6651 3311

Hunter Region (Rutherford)
6-10 Burlington Place
(cnr Racecourse Road)
Rutherford NSW 2320
P 02 4939 1555

Illawarra Region (Unanderra)
54 Industrial Road
Unanderra NSW 2526
P 02 4271 3410

Orange
71 William Street
Orange NSW 2800
P 02 6362 6171

Port Macquarie
10 Karungi Crescent
Port Macquarie NSW 2444
P 02 6581 0380

Shoalhaven (Nowra)
114 Flatrock Road
Munamia NSW 2541
P 02 4429 3410

Sydney (Yagoona)
201 Rookwood Road
Yagoona NSW 2199
P 02 9770 7555

Safe Families – pet inclusive refuge framework

RSPCA NSW Safe Families proposal to The Salvation Army - Carinya Cottage

Background

In 2004, the RSPCA NSW Community Domestic Violence (DV) program (formerly known as Safe Beds for Pets) was launched to offer temporary housing for pets of people who are seeking refuge from domestic and family violence and helps to address the link between animal and human abuse and child protection.

A recent Australian study has shown that approximately 50% of women in violent relationships report that their violent partner had hurt or killed one of their pets¹ This violence is both indicative of a person's likelihood to harm people, as well as an abusive tactic to control and threaten their human victims. It is common practice for the perpetrator of domestic violence to lure family members back home, or prevent them from leaving, by threatening to harm the pet.

Pets may also be victims of DFV or used as leverage by the abuser. For the human victim, a pet may be the only source of companionship, affection or love to a person who has been isolated from their support system by their abusers. Therefore a fear of separation from pets is not uncommon, which may be an added stress to families and pets, and create a resistance to being split up even when the separation is a means of escaping violence. The above study showed that 33.3% of Australian women participating, each living in some form of crisis accommodation at the time of interview, reported that they had delayed leaving their violent relationship because of concerns for their pet's welfare.

Clients come to RSPCA by their own initiative and through referrals from refuges, police and various social services. Thousands of animals and humans have been helped through Community DV program, but the need is still great. Between July 2019 - June 2020, 117 human victims and 171 animals have been assisted under the Community DV program, but we do not have the capacity and resources to aid them all, and some still turn down offers for assistance from Community DV program as they refuse to be separated from pets, therefore choosing to remain in violent situations.

With no other options for these victims, RSPCA NSW has committed to designing and implementing an effective and efficient option for refuges, and supporting them as they provide pet-inclusive accommodation for their clients.

Evidence

This need is critical and has been identified by numerous sources. Veterinary Forensic Pathologist Dr Lydia Tong states that approximately 70% of DFV victims have pets. It is common for abusers to threaten or commit violence against pets in order to terrorize and control their

¹ A Volant, J Johnson, E Gullone, G Coleman(2008)- The Relationship Between Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse. An Australian Study- Journal of Interpersonal Violence- Sage Publications

victims, with a 1997 study (Ascione, Weber, & Wood²) reported that 71-85% of women entering DV shelters reported that their partner had threatened, injured or killed the family pet.

The human-animal bond is incredibly powerful, providing stress relief, emotional support and unconditional love, and for those who have survived traumatic situations, this relationship is vital. When left with few options, victims may be forced to give up this source of love or stay in an abusive relationship. Twelve independent studies report that between 18% and 48% of women (33% of women in Australia according to (a 2008 study³) have delayed leaving, or have returned to, their abuser out of fear for the welfare of their pets or livestock (Ascione, 2007⁴).

Currently, only three, Sydney based, domestic and family violence refuges in NSW allow pets, and short-term housing like motels and hotels often don't accept animals. For many years RSPCA NSW has provided safe, temporary accommodation for the animals of DFV victims. However, this is not the best outcome for humans or animal, when any separation can increase the emotional distress felt during crisis.

The Safe Families framework

RSPCA NSW continue our commitment in helping those experiencing domestic and family violence through a first-of-its-kind, pet inclusive framework, targeting temporary accommodation services providers to adopt this model, providing a more holistic approach to domestic and family violence services.

The Safe Families framework offers:

- 6 months consultancy period with RSPCA NSW to adopt and integrate framework
- Assessment of refuge site to establish pet enclosure set up requirements
- Assistance in organising pet enclosure set up and other equipment required to house pets
- Refuge procedure establishment with residents with pets
- Refuge forms (intake, boarding contracts, etc) establishment
- Pet care training delivered to refuge staff
- Pet care manual for staff post training and residents
- Facilitate development of local partnerships to service residents with pets, i.e. veterinary practices, animal welfare agencies, etc
- Evaluation material

Pet enclosure set-up

Assessment of the Carinya Cottage refuge indicates that 1 dog enclosures and 2 cat enclosures could be established in the outdoor backyard areas of the refuge site. A supply of pet crates can also be provided to accommodate other small animals such as rabbits, guinea pigs, etc.

All enclosures will all be lockable with only the pet owner and Carinya Cottage staff having access to the pet enclosures.

The Royal Society
for the Prevention of
Cruelty to Animals
New South Wales

ABN 87 000 001 641

Authority to Fundraise
No CFN11744

Administration

PO Box 34
Yagoona NSW 2199

P 02 9770 7555
F 02 9782 4445
E mail@rspcansw.org.au
W rspcansw.org.au

Shelters

Blue Mountains (Katoomba)
121-125 Mort Street
Katoomba NSW 2780
P 02 4782 2674

Broken Hill
South Road
Broken Hill NSW 2880
P 08 0807 7753

Central Coast (Somersby)
Lot 455 Reeves Road
Somersby NSW 2250
P 02 4372 2044

Coffs Harbour
Dowsett Drive
Coffs Harbour NSW 2450
P 02 6651 3311

Hunter Region (Rutherford)
6-10 Burlington Place
(cnr Racecourse Road)
Rutherford NSW 2320
P 02 4939 1555

Illawarra Region (Unanderra)
54 Industrial Road
Unanderra NSW 2526
P 02 4271 3410

Orange
71 William Street
Orange NSW 2800
P 02 6362 6171

Port Macquarie
10 Karungi Crescent
Port Macquarie NSW 2444
P 02 6581 0380

Shoalhaven (Nowra)
114 Flatrock Road
Munamia NSW 2541
P 02 4429 3410

Sydney (Yagoona)
201 Rookwood Road
Yagoona NSW 2199
P 02 9770 7555

² FR Ascione, CV Weber, DS Wood (1997)- The abuse of animals and domestic violence: A national survey of shelters for women who are battered- Society and Animals 5(3)

³ A Volant, J Johnson, E Gullone, G Coleman (2008)- The Relationship Between Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse. An Australian Study- Journal of Interpersonal Violence- Sage Publications

⁴ FR Ascione (2007). Emerging research on animal risk as a risk factor for intimate partner violence- Intimate Partner Violence, Civic Research Institute



Examples of proposed dog enclosure

Procedures, intakes and contracts

RSPCA NSW will work with Carinya Cottage staff to tailor procedures and protocols for accepting pets onsite. In developing these, the safety of residents, staff and pets will be held front of mind throughout as well as organisational protection.

Training

RSPCA NSW training team will provide training to all Carinya Cottage staff members prior to animals being accepted onsite. The online course provided will include information on dogs, cats, birds, rabbits and guinea pigs on the following components:

- Nutrition
- Behaviour
- Signs of stress
- Signs of illness
- Interacting with children
- Basic handling
- Basic training

Following this a basic pet care manual summarising the training course topics will be provided to staff members and can also be shared with residents.

Local partnerships

To ensure the health and wellbeing of animals residing at the refuge, local partnerships with veterinary practices need to be established. RSPCA NSW will assist with liaising with local services on the refuge's behalf to secure support. A number of local veterinary services will be enlisted allowing for a spread of demand to these services as well as to ensure the safety of residents are maintained.

RSPCA NSW Illawarra shelter is the most local animal welfare agency which can assist supporting Carinya Cottage refuge in the instances where there is potentially animals that are unsuitable to reside at the refuge site or potentially abandoned at the site.

Evaluation

Evaluation material, in the form of surveys, have been developed if Carinya Cottage wishes to undertake an independent assessment of the program. The material developed allows for residents with pets as well as those without pets to be surveyed on their views.

The Royal Society
for the Prevention of
Cruelty to Animals
New South Wales

ABN 87 000 001 641

Authority to Fundraise
No CFN11744

Administration

PO Box 34
Yagoona NSW 2199

P 02 9770 7555
F 02 9782 4445
E mail@rspcansw.org.au
W rspcansw.org.au

Shelters

Blue Mountains (Katoomba)
121-125 Mort Street
Katoomba NSW 2780
P 02 4782 2674

Broken Hill
South Road
Broken Hill NSW 2880
P 08 8087 7753

Central Coast (Somersby)
Lot 455 Reeves Road
Somersby NSW 2250
P 02 4372 2044

Coffs Harbour
Dowsett Drive
Coffs Harbour NSW 2450
P 02 6651 3311

Hunter Region (Rutherford)
6-10 Burlington Place
(cnr Racecourse Road)
Rutherford NSW 2320
P 02 4939 1555

Illawarra Region (Unanderra)
54 Industrial Road
Unanderra NSW 2526
P 02 4271 3410

Orange
71 William Street
Orange NSW 2800
P 02 6362 6171

Port Macquarie
10 Karungi Crescent
Port Macquarie NSW 2444
P 02 6581 0380

Shoalhaven (Nowra)
114 Flatrock Road
Munamia NSW 2541
P 02 4429 3410

Sydney (Yagoona)
201 Rookwood Road
Yagoona NSW 2199
P 02 9770 7555

Reporting

RSPCA NSW will require half yearly reports on the number and types of animals accommodated at refuge site. No personal/confidential information will be required.

Following the initial 6 months consultancy period, the framework allows for the refuge to continue independently managing a pet-inclusive site with local services engaged to assist. The RSPCA NSW will continue being a source of advice and support where required.

Funding and Costs

The Salvation Army Carinya Cottage will be required to support the full cost of the infrastructure and materials required to house animals on-site. RSPCA NSW may be in a position to also donate some pet care equipment.

RSPCA NSW asks for a contribution from The Salvation Army Carinya Cottage for the consultancy and training provided in the development and implementation of the Safe Families initiative.

Kind regards

Sandra Ma

RSPCA NSW Community Programs Senior Manager

(M) 0418 657 377

(E) sma@rspcansw.org.au

The Royal Society
for the Prevention of
Cruelty to Animals
New South Wales

ABN 87 000 001 641

Authority to Fundraise
No CFN11744

Administration

PO Box 34
Yagoona NSW 2199

P 02 9770 7555
F 02 9782 4445
E mail@rspcansw.org.au
W rspcansw.org.au

Shelters

Blue Mountains (Katoomba)
121-125 Mort Street
Katoomba NSW 2780
P 02 4782 2674

Broken Hill
South Road
Broken Hill NSW 2880
P 08 8087 7753

Central Coast (Somersby)
Lot 455 Reeves Road
Somersby NSW 2250
P 02 4372 2044

Coffs Harbour
Dowsett Drive
Coffs Harbour NSW 2450
P 02 6651 3311

Hunter Region (Rutherford)
6-10 Burlington Place
(cnr Racecourse Road)
Rutherford NSW 2320
P 02 4939 1555

Illawarra Region (Unanderra)
54 Industrial Road
Unanderra NSW 2526
P 02 4271 3410

Orange
71 William Street
Orange NSW 2800
P 02 6362 6171

Port Macquarie
10 Karungi Crescent
Port Macquarie NSW 2444
P 02 6581 0380

Shoalhaven (Nowra)
114 Flatrock Road
Munamia NSW 2541
P 02 4429 3410

Sydney (Yagoona)
201 Rookwood Road
Yagoona NSW 2199
P 02 9770 7555

Project timeline

The Royal Society
for the Prevention of
Cruelty to Animals
New South Wales

ABN 87 000 001 641

Authority to Fundraise
No CFN11744

Administration

PO Box 34
Yagoona NSW 2199

P 02 9770 7555
F 02 9782 4445
E mail@rspcansw.org.au
W rspcansw.org.au

Shelters

Blue Mountains (Katoomba)
121-125 Mort Street
Katoomba NSW 2780
P 02 4782 2674

Broken Hill
South Road
Broken Hill NSW 2880
P 08 8087 7753

Central Coast (Somersby)
Lot 455 Reeves Road
Somersby NSW 2250
P 02 4372 2044

Coffs Harbour
Dowsett Drive
Coffs Harbour NSW 2450
P 02 6651 3311

Hunter Region (Rutherford)
6-10 Burlington Place
(cnr Racecourse Road)
Rutherford NSW 2320
P 02 4939 1555

Illawarra Region (Unanderra)
54 Industrial Road
Unanderra NSW 2526
P 02 4271 3410

Orange
71 William Street
Orange NSW 2800
P 02 6362 6171

Port Macquarie
10 Karungi Crescent
Port Macquarie NSW 2444
P 02 6581 0380

Shoalhaven (Nowra)
114 Flatrock Road
Munamia NSW 2541
P 02 4429 3410

Sydney (Yagoona)
201 Rookwood Road
Yagoona NSW 2199
P 02 9770 7555

Project Milestone	Activity	Who	Timeline
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment of refuge to establish pet enclosure set up required	<input type="checkbox"/> Determine what areas refuge will allow pets <input type="checkbox"/> Determine types of animals refuge will allow <input type="checkbox"/> Determine if any maintenance to the property is required to ensure safety and containment of pets <input type="checkbox"/> Determine type and size of pet enclosures, equipment required	RSPCA project manager & Carinya Cottage support worker	Within 2 weeks of project launch
<input type="checkbox"/> Purchase pet enclosures, equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> Order pet enclosures and supplies	RSPCA Project manager	Within 6 weeks of project launch
<input type="checkbox"/> Refuge procedures established for residents with pets	<input type="checkbox"/> Check what procedures are already in place for refuge residents <input type="checkbox"/> Liaise with refuge employees regarding what procedures they require for residents and staff <input type="checkbox"/> Establish procedures regarding medical treatment/requirements for animals that will be housed on site <input type="checkbox"/> Establish procedures that residents with pets and residents without need to adhere to <input type="checkbox"/> Develop intake procedures to determine if animal is suitable to be housed onsite or if will need to be referred to RSPCA	RSPCA Project manager & Carinya Cottage support worker	Within 3 months of project launch
<input type="checkbox"/> Refuge forms (intake, boarding agreement, etc) established	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop animal intake form in conjunction with refuge <input type="checkbox"/> Develop agreements between resident and refuge	RSPCA Project manager & Carinya Cottage support worker	Within 3 months of project launch
<input type="checkbox"/> Installation of pet enclosures	<input type="checkbox"/> Pet enclosures and pet supplies delivered to refuge <input type="checkbox"/> Enclosures set up	Carinya Cottage support worker	2-3 months into project
<input type="checkbox"/> Pet care training delivered to refuge employees	<input type="checkbox"/> RSPCA develops training package <input type="checkbox"/> RSPCA delivers training to refuge staff on animal handling, animal care and animal behaviour	RSPCA & RSPCA Project manager	4-5 months into project (close to when animals will commence)

			being accepted)
<input type="checkbox"/> Local vet practices on board to assist	<input type="checkbox"/> RSPCA to liaise with local vets, explain the need for support	RSPCA Project manager, RSPCA vet & Carinya Cottage support worker	3-4 months into project
<input type="checkbox"/> Accepting first resident with pet into refuge	<input type="checkbox"/> Refuge assesses suitability of pet to be housed onsite <input type="checkbox"/> Resident with pet accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Resident completes all required forms and procedure for resident outlined	RSPCA Project manage, Carinya Cottage support worker	4-6 months into project
<input type="checkbox"/> Conclusion of RSPCA consultancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Carinya Cottage continues to independently maintain program <input type="checkbox"/> RSPCA continues to be source of advice and support where needed	Carinya Cottage support worker	6 months into project

The Royal Society
for the Prevention of
Cruelty to Animals
New South Wales

ABN 87 000 001 641

Authority to Fundraise
No CFN11744

Administration
PO Box 34
Yagoona NSW 2199

P 02 9770 7555
F 02 9782 4445
E mail@rspcansw.org.au
W rspcansw.org.au

Shelters

Blue Mountains (Katoomba)
121-125 Mort Street
Katoomba NSW 2780
P 02 4782 2674

Broken Hill
South Road
Broken Hill NSW 2880
P 08 8087 7753

Central Coast (Somersby)
Lot 455 Reeves Road
Somersby NSW 2250
P 02 4372 2044

Coffs Harbour
Dowsett Drive
Coffs Harbour NSW 2450
P 02 6651 3311

Hunter Region (Rutherford)
6-10 Burlington Place
(cnr Racecourse Road)
Rutherford NSW 2320
P 02 4939 1555

Illawarra Region (Unanderra)
54 Industrial Road
Unanderra NSW 2526
P 02 4271 3410

Orange
71 William Street
Orange NSW 2800
P 02 6362 6171

Port Macquarie
10 Karungi Crescent
Port Macquarie NSW 2444
P 02 6581 0380

Shoalhaven (Nowra)
114 Flatrock Road
Munamia NSW 2541
P 02 4429 3410

Sydney (Yagoona)
201 Rookwood Road
Yagoona NSW 2199
P 02 9770 7555