



Companion
Animal Network
Australia CAN

Impact Report 2024-25

A national voice to
improve the lives of
companion animals
and people



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Acknowledgement of Country

Companion Animal Network Australia acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past, present and emerging.



Who we are

Companion Animal Network Australia (CANA) is Australia's peak body for companion animals.

We are a national not-for-profit organisation and a registered charity that represents the companion animal welfare work of our member network.

Our members provide rescue, shelter, re-homing, fostering, health care and enrichment services to more than 50,000 animals a year.

What we do

Through national campaigns, partnerships and initiatives, CANA advocates for the human–animal bond and responsible pet ownership.

With the help of our members, industry partners and the public, we compile real data to share and inform. We lobby government and industry to drive positive change for companion animals and the people who care for them.



Why it matters

Our movement fights at a national level for a society that recognises the positive impact pets have on people and a world where every pet is in a loving home.

We work to address the causes of abandonment and surrender, striving for a pet friendly Australia that supports keeping pets with their people.

Getting to Zero

Every CANA member aligns with G2Z, ensuring humane, sustainable practices are foundational to all member activities.



Our member network

Adoptions and fostering are the core activities of our members.

Our network has found homes for millions of animals that have been surrendered and neglected, but we always have thousands more awaiting adoption.

Each month an average of 60% of our rescues are either re-united with their families or rehomed.



July 2024–June 2025

Consolidated Data

Canine

Surrenders	Incoming	Outgoing
2,958	10,290	10,141

Feline

Surrenders	Incoming	Outgoing
2,068	9,707	10,144

Dogs adopted

Cats adopted

Other animals adopted

4434 (35%)

7546 (59%)

780 (6%)

Benchmarks

Total animals incoming decreased by **13%** from last year, but canine and feline surrenders remained largely unchanged

Adoptions decreased by **17%** from last year

Surrenders comprise **25%** of incoming animals with the balance made up of strays and inpounds.

Adoptions 12,943

Reasons for Surrender	Dogs	Cats	Total
No longer wanted	631	682	1,313
Renting issues	398	263	661
Behaviour problems	359	51	410
Unspecified	307	325	632
Owner unable to cope	294	118	412
Change in circumstance	250	132	382
Owner - Medical issues	175	120	295
Bad match	175	86	261
Financial	152	107	259
Legal intervention	105	71	176
Age-Care/Elderly	75	37	112
Animal - Medical issues	37	76	113
TOTAL	2,958	2,068	5,026

Key insights:

Dogs and cats enter shelters at almost identical rates, however cats dominate adoptions (**60%**)

Stray dogs represent **61%** of all intakes

Over half of incoming cats are under 6 months old, suggesting significant kitten season impacts

Dogs are more likely to return home: **3,782 dogs** returned to owners but only **526 cats**, showing dogs are more likely to be reunited with families.

CANA works to reduce and eliminate the abandonment and surrendering of pets through advocating around these causes:



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Policy

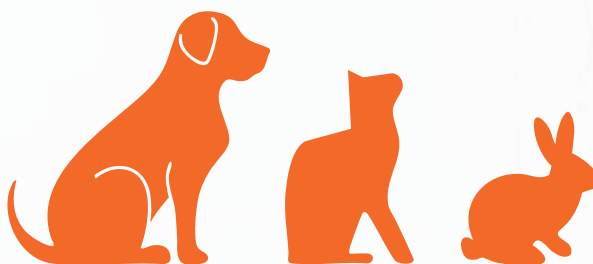
- Renting issues
- Aged care/elderly
- Animal medical issues
- Owner medical issues
- Financial

Education

- Bad match
- Behaviour problems
- Puppies/kittens (de-sexing)

Situation

- Owner unable to cope
- Legal intervention
- No longer wanted
- Change in circumstance
- Owner unable to cope
- Other



CANA members work with abandoned and surrendered pets to provide health care, foster care and find loving homes



Message from the CEO

The 2024–25 CANA impact report is a chance to take a breath and review our progress. Pleasingly, CANA was again able to use its influence on multiple fronts to campaign on behalf of pets and their owners.

Leading these efforts was our advocacy for fairer rental laws. Happily, most states and territories have now adopted measures that allow families to keep their pets when renting, ending the needless separation of companion animals from their owners.

CANA proudly contributed its voice to improved protections for families enduring domestic violence, with changes to the Family Law Act set to elevate the safety of companion animals. We also designed and distributed our Pets in Business toolkit to help workplaces effectively integrate pets for the benefit of all employees.

We were particularly active around aged care, where the physical and emotional value of keeping pets and owners together is profound. Distribution of our Pet Friendly Aged Care Kit, the launch of a new survey to monitor sentiment and obstacles in this area, and the inclusion of companion animals written into the Aged Care Act.

As always, our work at the national level is complemented by the localised efforts of our member network, each of which acts tirelessly on behalf of pets in need.

This essential work maximises the quality of outcomes for pets that are abandoned, surrendered or require urgent healthcare.

To our generous donors, supporters and workplace giving partners, I offer my continued thanks. Your support allows us to advocate on behalf of all companion animals and use our voice to influence lawmakers and educate the next generation of pet owners.

Looking to the future, we are working on initiatives that will broaden our footprint in the animal welfare space and grow our visibility and influence. We look forward to sharing these details before the end of the year.

With thanks,

Trish Ennis

Trish Ennis

CEO, Companion Animal Network Australia

‘We were particularly active around aged care, where the physical and emotional value of keeping pets and owners together is profound.’



Message from the President

As President of Companion Animal Network Australia (CANA), I am proud to reflect on the impact we have made together over the past 12 months. This year has been one of collaboration, advocacy and progress for companion animals across Australia.

Through the dedication of our staff, member organisations and partners, and the strength of our national network, we have advanced programs that improve the welfare of companion animals, supported innovative approaches to responsible pet ownership and given a united voice in policy and industry discussions that shape the future for people and their pets across the nation.

A special thanks to our state members and the directors of the CANA Board, whose leadership, commitment and tireless work have ensured meaningful impact for companion animals in every community. Their time, expertise and advocacy continue to drive our collective mission at CANA forward.

Our achievements this year would not have been possible without the efforts of our members, partners, volunteers and supporters. I extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your ongoing commitment and support for CANA, and for creating a better, kinder future for companion animals across Australia.

With thanks,

Melissa Penn

Melissa Penn
President, CANA

'Our achievements this year would not have been possible without the efforts of our members, partners, volunteers and supporters.'



68%



**of people believe
residents in aged care
should be able to
own a pet**

CANA Aged Care Survey Results 2025

**'She is my life,
my everything.'**

Suzanne C



2024–25 advocacy and policy impact

Pet ownership in Australia continues to increase, with nearly 70% of Australian households now home to 30 million pets.

Unfortunately, laws and regulations have not kept pace with this rate of growth and do not always reflect social change, meaning there is huge scope for improving the lives of companion animals and their owners. Here are the areas of need we tackled in the past 12 months.

- **Family Law Amendment Bill 2024**

CANA authored a joint submission with Lucy's Project and PetRescue which came into effect this year. The new framework changes how pets are treated in family law, recognising them as "companion animals" rather than mere property. This allows courts to consider a pet's welfare and emotional significance, factors like animal abuse or cruelty within a domestic violence context, and other factors related to the pet's care and the relationship with their people.

- **Residential tenancies law across Australia**

Most states have now made it easier for renters to keep pets, and CANA has proudly been a leader in the push for this fundamentally fair change to residential tenancy laws. In Tasmania, where CANA is advising to the government, **the Residential Tenancy Amendment Bill 2024** proposes to allow tenants to keep one or more pets on rental premises after notifying the landlord of their intention. It is a significant shift in tenancy law for Tasmanians.

- **Aged Care Act 2025**

The significant reforms in the new Aged Care Act are centred around a rights based and consumer-focused system. As part of the new act, CANA has achieved legislative recognition for the individual to remain connected to the natural environment, and animals and pets. **The new laws commence on 1 November 2025. This makes it more feasible for aged care to accommodate residents' requests for pet companionship.**

- **Review of philanthropy**

CANA has been an interested party to the Productivity Commission's Philanthropy Review. Its recently released final report has found Australia's Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) system to be poorly designed, with many charities that offer community benefit being excluded. **CANA is strongly arguing for DGR status to include advocacy charities, which will significantly improve support for CANA's vital work.**

2024–25 advocacy and policy impact

In January 2025, CANA authored a substantial pre-budget submission in support of several animal welfare activities:

- Inclusion of pet support in Home Care Packages (newly labelled Support at Home), which would allow pet care expenses to be an eligible use of funds.
- Changing the taxation status of companion animal charities to align with public benevolent institution and health promotion charities.
- Establishment of an independent statutory agency for animal welfare and increase funding for the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy.
- Relieve the cost burden of microchipping and desexing for people in financial distress with a national desexing and microchipping programme for companion animals.
- Increase funding for domestic and family violence crisis and support services to accommodate the pets of clients.



Pre-Budget Submission 2024–25

Other important activities this year have included our work recommending the establishment of an **Independent Office of Animal Welfare**, a review of the **Companion Animals Act 1995** in New South Wales, contributing to public consultations for the draft bill of a new **Animal Care and Protection Act** in Victoria, consulting to a New South Wales parliamentary inquiry into the management of cat populations and championing of the **Victorian Retirement Villages Amendment Bill 2024**, which passed both houses of parliament in May 2025.



Pet Friendly Aged Care

CANA has helped to advance the cause of older people and pets in 2024–25. Keeping older Australians and their pets together is a vital pursuit because it:

- prevents animals from being needlessly euthanised or surrendered to shelters
- maximises the physical and emotional health of our animal-loving older people
- promotes social benefits for communities who welcome pets.

More doors have opened in 2024–25 for people to enter residential aged care with their beloved pets thanks to sustained efforts on our part. Our work in conjunction with an Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) to create a comprehensive kit for residential care facilities has encouraged more facilities to successfully integrate pets. These easy-to-follow policies and programmes have been a gamechanger for pets in aged care.

We have also done further work to remove barriers to older people keeping their pets at home. CANA was a leading voice that helped secure the right for people using Home Care Packages to have a companion animal being written into law.

The most compelling challenge for the companion animal sector is to see pet support added as a claimable item in Home Care Packages, and we continue to lobby the federal government for this sensible change.



**Pet Friendly
Aged Care**

Companion Animal Network
Australia CAN

'They bring joy and daily exercise. Responsibility and caring for another only serves to make me a better person.'

Annie W

Rent With Pets

CANA is thrilled to announce that most states and territories have now made vital changes to their residential tenancy laws to make them fairer for families, couples and individuals with pets.

In 2024–25, we worked closely with the Tasmanian government to influence an amendment to the state's tenancy legislation that will **benefit pet-loving renters**. This significant shift will bring Tasmania into line with other states and territories that have previously written into law the right for a tenant to have a pet in their rental home.

With just 10% of Australian properties advertised as being pet friendly, there is much more work to do in this space, to ensure pet ownership is accessible for the whole community, and the importance of maintaining pet ownership as accessible for the whole community, not just property owners.



**'Looking after people;
looking out for pets.'**



Rent with Pets

Companion Animal Network
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Pets In Business

As many Australians continue to work a combination of days at home and in the office, the impact on the human–animal bond has come into deeper focus. Research shows that having pets in the workplace improves productivity and collaboration, and it alleviates stress.

Here at CANA, we believe there are ways for companies to integrate the needs of all employees in the workplace, including those of us who prefer the company of our furry friends.

It was this core idea that was the inspiration behind **CANA's Pets in Business toolkit**. Apart from sharing data that supports the value of inclusive workplaces, the toolkit helps business owners navigate the various demands of pet and non-pet owning employees.

In addition to distributing the personalised toolkit throughout 2024–25, CANA has added several more inspiring stories of pets in the workplace to our website. **It is our hope that pets in the workplace becomes normalised in the years to come.**

A photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a grey turtleneck sweater, sitting at a desk. He is smiling and holding a small, fluffy white dog in his arms. His hands are resting on a keyboard. The background is slightly blurred, showing an indoor office or home workspace with some plants.

'As pet lovers, we need to make sure there is harmony in the workplace by ensuring non-pet owners also thrive in pet-friendly environments.'

Pets in Business survey comment



Pets in Business

Companion Animal Network
Australia CAN

87%

of people believe pets positively affect mental and physical health

CANA Aged Care Survey Results 2025



'They are the reason that I get up in the morning. Most times they are my only company. They give me unconditional love. I have no human family.'

Helen F

Partners and donors

Companion Animal Network Foundation (CANF)

Anyone can support the direct-care work of our member agencies on behalf of companion animals with a tax-deductible donation administered through the Give Now platform. CANA receives a 25% facilitation fee from every Give Now donation to support our work at the national level. Donations received through the Foundation are distributed evenly to CANA members monthly, after which CANA receives its fee.

Donors and supporters

CANA was absolutely thrilled to receive an outsized donation from the **Lin Huddleston Charitable Foundation** in 2024–25. It is with deep gratitude that we continue to enjoy the support of this wonderful organisation.

Each member of the CANA network relies heavily on donations that support their day-to-day, on-the-ground operations. Legacies and bequests fund their missions to provide for companion animals in need. We extend our sincere thanks to all supporters of this work.



Partners and donors

Workplace giving

Workplace giving makes a valuable contribution to not-for-profit organisations like CANA.

Several platforms facilitate **workplace giving** which allows individuals to donate a small amount of their pre-tax salary and receive an instant tax benefit. CANA is working with **Benevity, Good Company, Good2Give and Workplace Giving Australia.**

Workplace giving offers employees the chance to support a cause like ours that might be close to their heart. They can do so via small, regular payments that are less burdensome than larger, one-off sums.

In 2024–25, we give special thanks to the following workplace giving partners, each of whom supports the involvement of their staff in providing CANA with vital funding:



We value the opportunities to share the CANA mission with our Workplace Giving Partners, including JB Hi-Fi at this team training day in Wollongong this year.

60%

**of people believe it's
important to maintain
the bond of an existing
pet and owner**

CANA Aged Care Survey Results 2025



**'My life would be empty
and lonely without my 2 cats.
I will definitely not want to
go into care anywhere
without taking them.'**

Marianne H

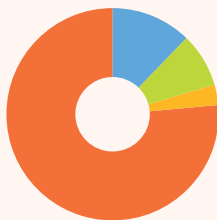


Summary of activities_2024-25

CANA Foundation Overview

Revenue

- JB Hi-Fi
- Starbucks
- Collins Foods
- Donations and Bequests

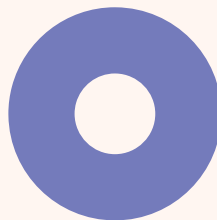


Revenue

Workplace Giving	\$726,305
Donations and Bequests	\$100,230
TOTAL	\$826,535

Expenses

- Administrative Expenses



Expenses

Administration	\$7,291
TOTAL	\$7,291

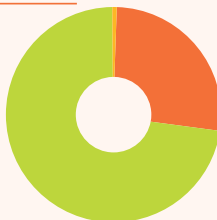
Donations received through the Foundation are distributed evenly to CANA members, after which CANA receives a 25% administration fee to support our advocacy work at the national level.

All revenue received by the Foundation is evenly distributed monthly to the members to support the animals once expenses have been paid.

Companion Animal Network Overview

Revenue

- Members' levies
- Other
- Membership and Facilitation Fees



Revenue

Membership & Facilitation Fees	\$218,157
Members levies	\$80,204
Other	\$1,764
TOTAL	\$300,125

Expenses

- Administration
- Employee expense (including wages, training, fundraising, travel)
- Brand and Marketing

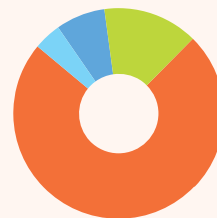


Expenses

Administration	\$45,452
Employee expense	\$162,011
Brand & Marketing	\$94,303
TOTAL	\$301,766

How funds are used

- Direct Animal Care
- Advocacy
- Brand & Marketing
- Education & Training



Media

CANA is active in a range of traditional and digital media, sharing news, research and information that supports our cause and generates positive discussion among our followers. This activity raises the profile of issues that affect companion animals and the people who love and care for them. Conversations started by media mentions help to open doors with policy makers that allow us to discuss meaningful change.





Peter brightens every workday



COMPANION ANIMAL NETWORK AUSTRALIA WELCOMES PET-FRIENDLY RENTAL REFORMS IN NSW

National animal welfare charity Companion Animal Network Australia (CANA) in Australia CANA welcomed the NSW Ministry of the Government's rental reforms, which include new rules to make it easier for tenants to keep pets in their rental homes.

Under the new legislation, which came into effect on 19 May 2023, tenants will be able to apply to keep a pet in their rental home, and landlords will only be able to refuse for specific reasons, such as the animal being at the property or being a company pet.

work together to find more animals can live in rental homes, leaving tenants happy," she says.

CANA also shares the concerns of local property owners, who are worried about the impact of the new rules on their rental income.

"We support the new rules as they will help to reduce the number of animals in shelters and help to keep dogs and cats out of the streets," she says. "We will continue to work with landlords and tenants to ensure the new rules are implemented smoothly."

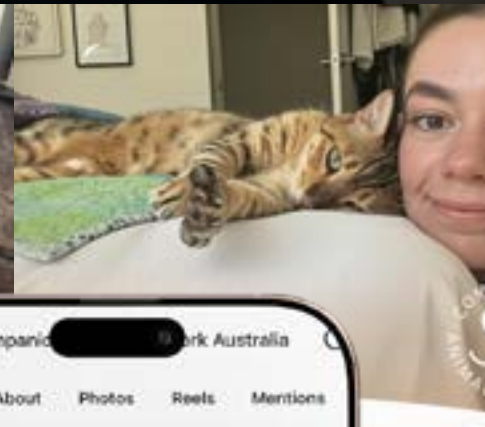
CANA is committed to ensuring that all animals have a safe and secure home, and will continue to work with landlords and tenants to ensure the new rules are implemented smoothly.



Rosie & Jan - two hearts, one home



Homeless, but not alone



CANA Ambassador Lara Shannon speaks to pets this National Pet Week



ACSAH is a lifeline for Jean & Bobo



CANA REPORT HIGHLIGHTS PET ADOPTIONS IN 2023-24

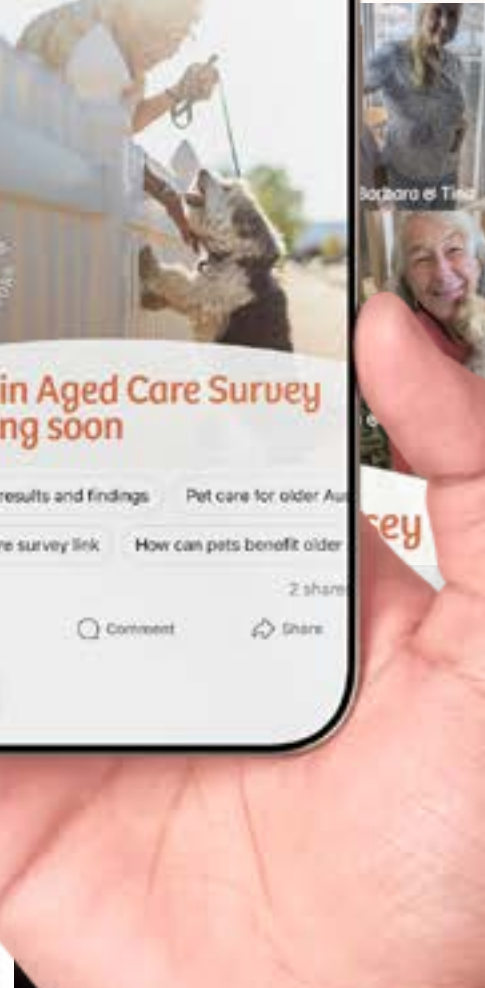
LEADING NATIONAL ANIMAL WELFARE CHARITY COMPANION ANIMAL NETWORK AUSTRALIA (CANA) HIGHLIGHTS THE COMPLEX REALITIES OF ANIMAL WELFARE IN AUSTRALIA

The report shows that CANA member agencies have made significant achievements, collectively rescuing 11,878 animals in the past year - nearly halving the gap between rescuing and rehoming pets compared to last year - and ensuring that thousands more animals found loving homes.

However, there were some challenges. Across the country, CANA member agencies continue to face a shortage of foster homes, which is making it difficult to find homes for the many animals in need.

The challenges facing pet owners are also a concern. The report shows that many pet owners are struggling to find homes for their pets, and that many animals are being rehomed multiple times.

Looking to the future, CANA is committed to continuing its work to improve animal welfare in Australia. The charity will continue to work with its member agencies to ensure that all animals have a safe and secure home.



Pets in Aged Care Survey closing soon

Survey results and findings Pet care for older Australians How to share survey link How can pets benefit older Australians

Like Comment Share

74%



**of people
believe pets offer
companionship**

CANA Aged Care Survey Results 2025

**'I have no family close,
my girl is my best friend,
with me 24/7.'**

Les H



A brief history of CANA

Animal Welfare League Australia (AWLA) was founded in 2007 to address crucial gaps in advocacy for companion animals. Its remit was more focused than that of the RSPCA, whose principal function was addressing cruelty and mistreatment.

Four member states were represented at the launch of AWLA, with the importance of a national identity driving efforts to recruit more state members. Subsequently, Tasmania and Western Australia joined, and AWLA was truly national.

In 2022, AWLA underwent a brand transition, incorporating a new name and logo. **Companion Animal Network Australia (CANA)** more accurately describes our representative role as a national body. **The logo combines a pet's nose, a heart and a smile to create a friendly and positive brand mark.**

The CANA brand **celebrates** the human-animal bond, **promotes** responsible pet ownership, **campaigns** for the humane treatment of all animals and **rallies** support for high welfare standards.

As the national voice for companion animals in Australia, CANA's role is to advocate and educate. CANA has directly influenced changes to residential tenancy laws, achieved new rights for pet-owning older people and encouraged employers to create space for pets in workplaces, all while raising the profile of companion animals the importance they play in the lives of Australians.

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