

# Data Quality Statement

## Summary information

<b>Data asset name:</b>	Animal Fate Data (Shelter and Pound Data)
<b>Date:</b>	27/10/2023
<b>Data asset owner:</b>	Animal fate data (Shelter and Pound Data) is not owned by the department. The data is self-reported and owned by registered shelters and pounds. Animal Welfare Victoria (AWV) within the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) is responsible for managing the data once received.
<b>Description of data asset:</b>	<p>Data submitted by Victoria's shelters and pounds, and published by AWV, will support a better understanding of how dogs and cats are managed and cared for in these facilities.</p> <p>To date, a complete, state-wide dataset has not been available to provide information on how many animals are cared for by shelters and pounds, the operational experiences of these facilities, and the range of outcomes they achieve for animal welfare.</p> <p>Compiling and publishing this data aims to fill this gap and provide a consistent and reliable source of information on animal management outcomes in shelters and pounds across Victoria.</p>
<b>Legislation and authority:</b>	<p>The Code of Practice for the Management of Dogs and Cats in Shelters and Pounds (the Code) is made under section 59 of the <i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i>. It sets the minimum standards for the care and management of dogs and cats in registered shelters and pounds and specifies the records that they must keep.</p> <p>In June 2022, the Victorian Government amended the Code to introduce additional data collection and reporting requirements for animal management. These requirements apply to all shelters and pounds regulated under the Code, improving our understanding of the management of dogs and cats cared for by these facilities.</p> <p>Shelters and pounds were required to commence data collection in line with the amended Code from 1 January 2023.</p>
<b>Scope and coverage:</b>	<p>Data is reported individually by each registered shelter and pound. For each reporting period, shelters and pounds are required to report data on the number of dogs and cats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in care at the facility, or in foster care, on the first day of the reporting period</li> <li>• physically presented at an establishment but not admitted (and the reason they were not admitted)</li> <li>• accepted for admission</li> <li>• admitted into foster care</li> <li>• that waited more than 14 days to access foster care</li> </ul>

- permanently transferred to other facilities or groups for rehoming
- reclaimed by their owner
- rehomed
- rehomed but returned (including the reason the animal was returned)
- euthanised (including the reason why euthanasia was the appropriate or necessary outcome)
- that died, in establishment or while in foster care, but were not euthanised.

**Reference period:** Shelters and pounds commenced data collection from 1 January 2023. The first dataset spans 1 January 2023 – 30 June 2023. All subsequent datasets will span from 1 January to 31 December, for the previous calendar year.

**Frequency and timing:** In 2023, AWW is piloting the reporting process to test and refine reporting activities. For the pilot, shelters and pounds will be required to report their data 6-monthly, for the periods:

- 1 January – 30 June 2023, reported by 31 August 2023 for publication in late 2023, and
- 1 July – 31 December, reported by 28 February 2024 for publication by mid-2024.

In April 2024, AWW will publish a single annual report for the 2023 calendar year. Ongoing from 2024, shelters and pounds are required to report annually by 28 February for the previous calendar year.

**Formats available:** Shelter and pound data will be published as an interactive digital dashboard on AWW's website, accessible to the public. Persons viewing the data will be able to see it in state-wide view, or tailor their view according to an individual establishment (i.e., pound or shelter), council municipality or council grouping.

An Excel spreadsheet with raw data will also be made available to download from the website.

**Other notes:** Shelters and pounds have the option of providing contextual information (i.e. explanatory comments) about their data, which users can review in the dashboards or the Excel document to aid their data interpretation.

In the dashboard and Excel spreadsheet, the municipality identified for a shelter or pound is the council area in which the facility is physically located. Dashboard data does not show which municipalities a facility provides services to. Therefore, when viewing data at the municipality level, please note that it may include animals that originated from outside of the municipality and/or from various other municipalities. Similar cautions apply when viewing data at the council grouping level, as when viewing it at the municipality level.

Further guidance on each data category is provided in the *Shelter and Pound data reporting: A guide for data interpretation*. This guidance should be consulted for information on individual data categories to assist data

---

users.

Enquiries about a specific shelter or pound's data should be directed to that organisation.

To obtain general information or ask questions about the reporting process for shelters and pounds, please contact [pet.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:pet.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au).

---

## Data quality description

### Accuracy

Data is collected and self-reported by shelters and pounds and submitted to AWV via an online reporting form. Once received, AWV will review shelter and pound data, remove any personal information to protect the privacy of individuals, and liaise with facilities to resolve any data quality issues prior to publication. Each shelter and pound is responsible for ensuring the data reported is accurate.

### Completeness

All shelters and pounds must report on the data categories prescribed under the Code. AWV will review the data reported by facilities and seek clarification on any components if required. The data set will not be published until AWV has received and reviewed data from all shelters and pounds.

### Representative

Data is generally reflective of the population of dogs and cats cared for in Victoria's shelters and pounds, and the range of animal welfare outcomes they experience.

### Timeliness/Currency

In 2023, AWV is piloting the reporting process to test and refine reporting activities. For the pilot, shelters and pounds will be required to report their data 6-monthly:

- 1 January – 30 June 2023, reported by 31 August 2023 for publication in late 2023, and
- 1 July – 31 December, reported by 28 February 2024 for publication by mid-2024.

By mid-2024, AWV will publish a single annual report for the 2023 calendar year. Ongoing from 2024, shelters and pounds are required to report annually by 28 February for the previous calendar year, with annual publication thereafter.

### Collection

Data is collected and self-reported by shelter and pound staff and submitted to AWV via an online reporting form. Collection of this data by shelters and pounds is mandatory under the Code.

### Consistency

This is the first time that this data has been collected and reported. During the pilot reporting period, one data set covering the 1 January – 30 June 2023 period will be published. From 2024 onwards, data will be published annually, for the previous calendar year.

### Fit for purpose

Shelter and pound data will have a range of uses to benefit Government, local councils, members of the community, and shelters and pounds.

Potential uses will include:

- informing policy, planning and program development
- community education on the role and work of shelters and pounds and responsible pet ownership
- showcasing shelter and pound reunification and rehoming work, as well as their partnerships with rescue groups and foster care networks
- addressing stigma or misunderstanding about animal fate outcomes in shelters and pounds
- identifying challenges and opportunities across Victoria’s shelter and pound facilities.

## Disclaimer

This data asset is provided “as is”, without warranty to the suitability of the data for unspecified use. The burden of assessment of fitness of the data lies completely upon the user.

## For further information

For further information regarding this data quality statement please contact Animal Welfare Victoria, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action at [pet.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:pet.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au).

## Document control

### Version history

Version	Date	Comments
1.0	27/10/2023	Final draft approved.