

ANNUAL OUTCOMES REPORT

2020/2021



If the past year has taught us anything, it's that we must be resilient and adaptable in the face of adversity.

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FACING ADVERSITY AND OVERCOMING CHALLENGES YIELDS GREAT OUTCOMES

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

If the past year has taught us anything, it's that we must be resilient and adaptable in the face of adversity. We are immensely proud of the tenacity of our staff, volunteers, donors, supporters and our RSPCA ACT community.

We are grateful for the continued stakeholder support we received and the commitment shown to work together with us to improve animal welfare outcomes in the ACT, regardless of the challenges and obstacles around us. RSPCA ACT is a trusted voice in advocating for better animal welfare in Canberra. We welcome answering questions or addressing issues posed by government, media and members of the community who come to us seeking our comment.

We would like to thank:

- 🌱 stakeholders for being so engaged with us and for affording us the opportunity to promote best animal practice and standards in such a collaborative way,
- 🌱 our visitors, adopters and public vet clients for their patience and understanding, as we continued to navigate a Covid 'ever-changing' landscape.

In April 2021, we suffered a break-in at Tangos (our public cat boarding facility), which left our staff, volunteers and support community in shock as we feared for the missing cats Luna and Beau. We are so pleased that both Luna and Beau were eventually reunited with their family. We thank everyone involved for the support and kindness shown. We thank Beau and Luna's family in particular for being so gracious during their time of incredible sadness, and for working so closely with us throughout it all.

Without our community's tangible and ongoing love and support, we would not be able to account the great outcomes for animal welfare in this 2021 financial year outcomes report.

In line with our mission and purpose, we seek to achieve high animal welfare outcomes. This includes:

- 🌱 best practice sheltering and care for homeless, at risk animals;
- 🌱 creating awareness and educating on how to properly care for animals;

- 🌱 grassroots early intervention, strong advocacy and enforcing animal welfare law;
- 🌱 and of course, matchmaking to find furever after homes.

We invite you to consider our Annual Outcomes Report, which includes quick read stories and graphs that demonstrate our animal welfare outcomes. These great outcomes and achievements are the result of collaboration between our volunteers, staff, donors and community.

Last financial year, 2,897 animals came into our care. Whilst this is an incredibly important part of our work, we are not *just* a shelter that rehomes animals.

We are proud of the results and outcomes of our **prevention and education** work. We gained favourable results in our schools programs, dog training school, and workplace events and by responding to animal cruelty reports and investigations. We answered a staggering **41 calls per day** from members of the public in our pet adoption centre, had **35,661 visitors**, performed **1,550 desexing surgeries** and dealt with **1,031 animal cruelty reports**.

Our **education** messages this year aimed to delve deeper under the surface of what exactly it means to be a pet owner. It involves promoting the benefits of pet ownership, how they improve our lives, how they're good for our mental and physical health and how enriching the bond between human and animal can be. It means teaching how to properly care for your pet. Not only making sure that all their basic needs are met but getting to know them and their personality. We are most appreciative of our media support and the interest they show in promoting animal welfare. We are pleased to report **559 media stories and 79 one-on-one CEO interviews** during the 2021 financial year.

RSPCA ACT has been serving the ACT for 65 years. We seek to understand changing animal welfare requirements and come up with solutions. One such program is our Emergency Boarding program. This service is for people who may be facing housing crises, domestic violence or medical emergencies. We offer temporary, safe shelter for their pets until they're able to be reunited with their owners. **In 2020/2021 we helped 155 animals whose owners were in crisis. This is an 81.8% increase from the previous financial year.**

More than ever before, there is much uncertainty about the future. This can

be daunting for an organisation such as ours that relies primarily on donations and receives limited government funding. However, due to generous gifts in wills, an increased focus on growing regular giving and extremely prudent expense management, we report another year of surplus. With highly variable and unsecured income streams, **it has been our strategic focus to secure an adequate base of reserves, to ensure sustainability of RSPCA ACT and to provide its much-needed services and mission related work into the future.**

RSPCA ACT adheres to high standards of governance. We are a unique animal welfare and rescue organisation who can boast an independent, professional and skilled Board of Directors. We express our thanks to our volunteer Directors for discharging their governance duties in such a diligent and committed way and for continuing to support our efforts towards longer term and continuous sustainability.

We thank our dedicated staff and volunteers who so lovingly care for our animals, often in very difficult circumstances.

We honour with much gratitude those who left us a gift in their Will. We pledge to keep their legacy alive by caring for vulnerable animals in need. Donations and gifts are vital to our sustainability and every dollar contributed goes directly into animal welfare and care.

In conclusion, there is still much to do, but we are confident that together we will continue to make a difference and improve the lives of animals. We are excited about the future and all its possibilities.

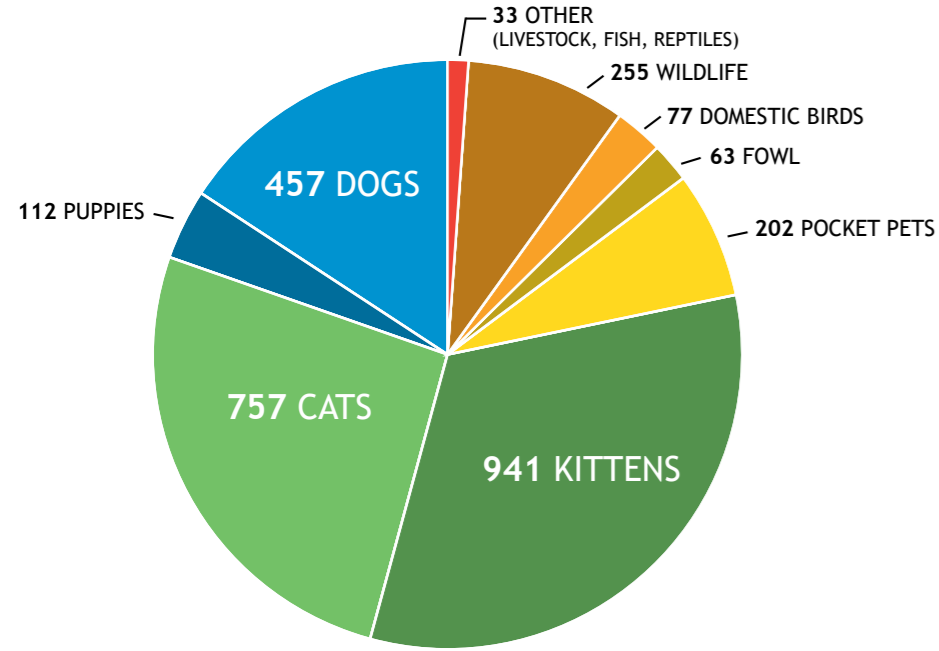
The news from the ACT government including us in the Budget means that the planning work will progress in the next 18 months, bringing us one step closer to our long awaited and much needed fit for purpose new shelter. Whilst this is still some time away, our Board is very engaged in thinking about how we can use these new facilities to further and strengthen our mission and continue to ensure great outcomes for animal welfare in the ACT.


Alexandra Wedutenko
RSPCA ACT President

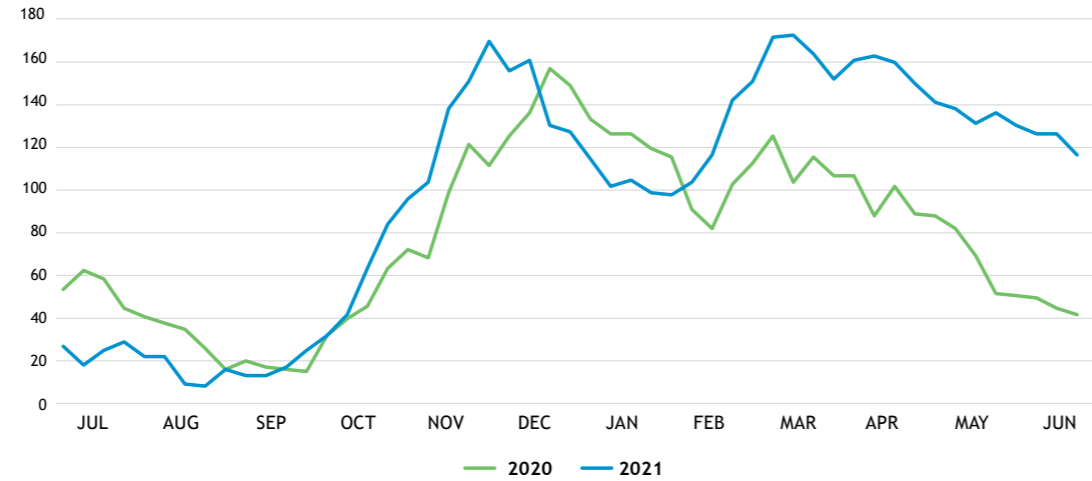

Michelle Robertson
RSPCA ACT CEO

SHELTERING OUTCOMES

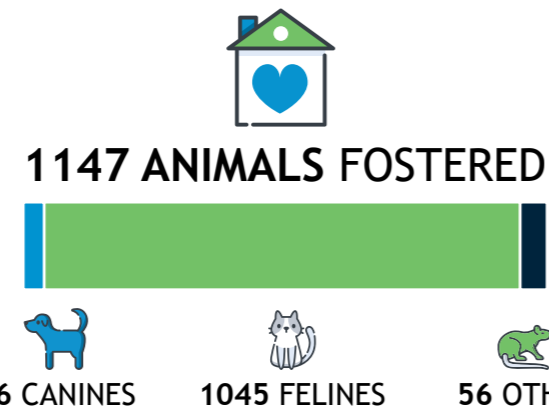
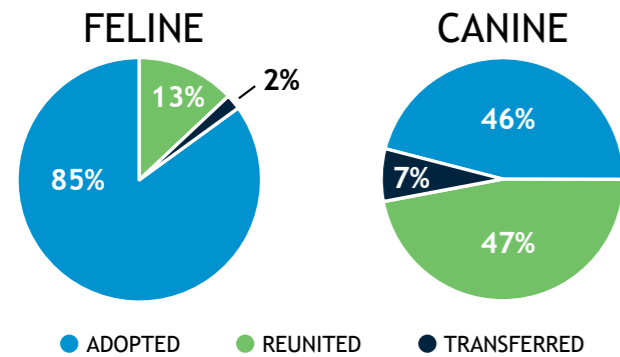
2897 ANIMALS CAME INTO OUR CARE



KITTENS INCOMING



HOMING BREAKDOWN



VETERINARY CARE, MEDICAL PREVENTION AND REHABILITATION



3626 CONSULTATIONS



3350 VACCINATIONS



359 DENTALS



2164 SURGERIES



1550 DESEXINGS

INCLUDING 24 LAST LITTER PROGRAM DESEXINGS

Hugo and his siblings entered our care at 4 weeks old through the Last Litter Program. Unfortunately the entire litter required treatment for ringworm. For the next 6 weeks Hugo had a different life to most puppies, having to isolate from his siblings and have regular, medicated baths. Once recovered from their ailments they were desexed and quickly adopted into loving homes.



PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

1031
CRUELTY REPORTS

41 CALLS
PER DAY IN OUR
PET ADOPTION
CENTRE

562
DOG TRAINING SCHOOL
ATTENDEES

5 CATS
PER DAY
IN TANGO'S
PLACE

35,661 VISITORS
TO OUR PET
ADOPTION CENTRE

230
KIDS N' KRITTERS
ATTENDEES

11
SCHOOL VISITS

8
COMMUNITY VISITS

OVER 45,600
SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS

895,858
WEBSITE VIEWS

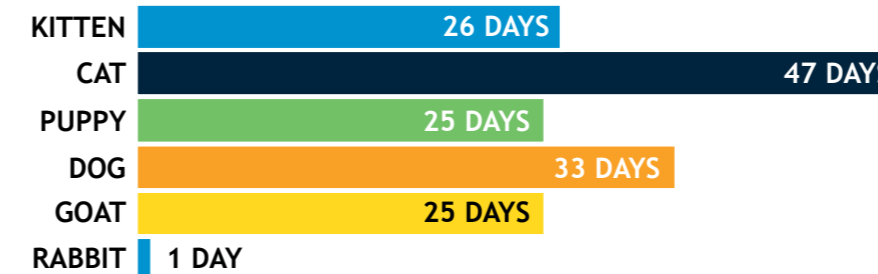
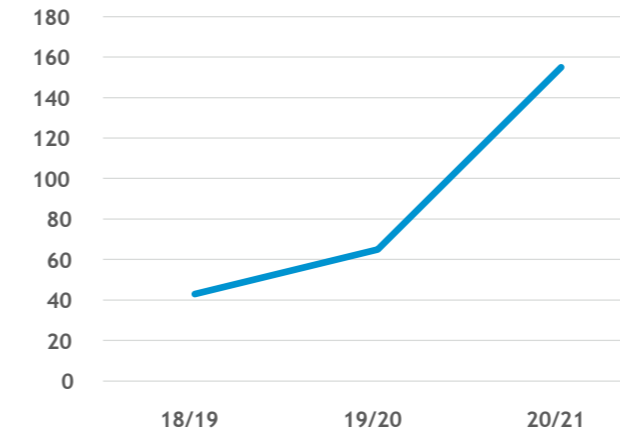
79
CEO INTERVIEWS

559
MEDIA STORIES

3054
DAYS

IN EMERGENCY BOARDING

NUMBER OF ANIMALS
REQUIRING EMERGENCY BOARDING



AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY
FOR PROJECT SAFE ANIMALS

EMERGENCY BOARDING

RSPCA ACT is so much more than a shelter that adopts out animals: We are *also* a veterinary hospital, performing hundreds of lifesaving and changing surgeries each month. We are *also* on the front lines investigating animal cruelty with our inspectorate. We are *also* a rehabilitation centre, nurturing animals who have been through traumatic experiences. We are *also* educators teaching responsible pet ownership to children as well as adults in our dog training school. We *also* help families stay together with their beloved pets by offering food and providing veterinary options when times are tough. And when our community reaches out to us in times of struggle, we're also here to lend a helping hand.

Each animal we help has a story. Some are very much loved, but circumstances can become tough, and they need a paw to hold.

After being evicted from their family home at short notice, Maggie and Dolly needed emergency boarding while their owners scrambled to relocate. The easy-going dogs were obviously much-loved and became favourites of the team. The housing crisis in the ACT meant Maggie's owners leapt at an offer of new home. But there was a catch. Due to low fencing at the property Maggie had to be surrendered to the RSPCA ACT while Dolly went with the family.

Maggie's family weren't to blame, they wanted the best for her even if it was with a new family. Without our Project: SAFE program they would never have had the opportunity to reunite with Dolly or surrender Maggie safely. Our team searched for a perfect match that Maggie's previous owners would've approved of. Maggie found that perfect match and is settling into her new home.

KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

PROJECT: SAFE

Animal Medicines Australia conducted a survey which showed 97% of pet owners say their pets have a very positive impact on their lives. The key benefits the study identified were love, affection, and companionship.

The perceived downside of owning a pet was organising away care. This point has broader implications as it shows not everyone has a support system in place to help care for their pets should something happen that prevents or hinders them from looking after their pets.

Our emergency boarding program is designed to help pet owners in crisis situations. Sadly, we have seen a significant increase in demand for the service from the previous financial year. In 2020/2021 we helped a total of 155 animals, which is an 81.8% increase from the previous year where we helped 65 animals. **54% of pets were in emergency boarding because of owner hospitalisation, followed by domestic violence 17%, owner homelessness 14% and mental health 9%.**

While these community challenges and issues continue to grow, we have worked hard over the past two years to build extra capacity in helping care for animals whose owners are in crisis. We commenced a program to extend our kennelling capacity in the 2021 financial year and completed an upgrade in our cattery in the 2020 financial year. This continued effort to improve capacity means that we can provide the necessary help for people and their pets facing a crisis.

Accessing safe shelter, fleeing domestic violence, or recovering in hospital should not mean having to abandon your pet.

We appreciate the generous contributions to this important project. Your donation means we can help keep even more animals safe.

Together we can prevent more families being torn apart due to having unnecessarily give up their pet, who we know are so much more, our pets are valued members of the family.

155
ANIMALS IN
EMERGENCY
BOARDING

81.8%
INCREASE IN
DEMAND



DEDICATED TO A LOVE OF ANIMALS

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

The animals at RSPCA ACT depend on our team for food, exercise, enrichment, medical care and of course love and attention. Our volunteers greatly contribute in meeting these needs.

Covid has resulted in many changes and challenges, and there were periods of time when many of our volunteers unfortunately had to remain at home and could not come to the shelter. Operating the shelter without a full complement of our volunteers provided a tangible reminder of the value they add on a daily basis.

Our RSPCA ACT volunteers showed remarkable resilience over the last year and we are grateful for their flexibility, adaptability, and most of all their continued loyalty and commitment to help animals who completely rely on us.

We are proud that we were able to grow our volunteer corps, and that we **welcomed an additional 64 shelter-based volunteers and 29 foster carers to our active volunteer list during the 2020/21 financial year.**

In the last financial year, **volunteers contributed 13,475 hours of their time** equating to an average wage value of \$309,925.

Along with our staff team, volunteers help lost, hurt, neglected and abandoned animals cope with shelter life and prepare them for forever homes.

Almost 5,000 hours were spent exercising dogs and 2,300 hours were spent cleaning the cattery ensuring our felines were comfortable and happy.

We could not achieve our great outcomes without our incredible volunteers' help.

286
VOLUNTEERS

295
VOLUNTEER
HOURS PER
WEEK



HAPPY TALES

Undoubtedly our favourite part of the job is receiving messages and photos from families who have adopted animals from the shelter. We love to see how each animal has blossomed, enriching their new families lives and is enjoying themselves in their new home.



SADIE

Sadie was born here at the shelter. Her mother River came to us just 1 year old and heavily pregnant. After just 11 days in care River gave birth to Sadie and her 6 siblings. The pups stayed with their mother until they were big enough to be desexed and ready to be adopted themselves.

Watching her development though, the shelter staff noticed that Sadie was potentially born deaf. That didn't stop a lucky family meeting and falling in love with her though and it certainly hasn't held her back in life! Sadie's mum and dad said: "she is happy, fun-loving, kind girl who loves a swim, giving cow kisses, having the wind in her ears on adventures and her morning bike rides."

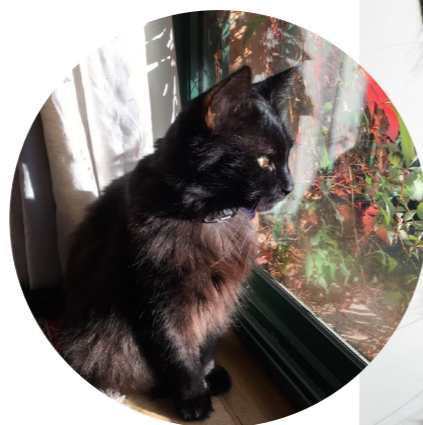


BAGHEERA

Bagheera came to the shelter twice. Once as a stray and another time as a surrender. It was looking as though luck was not on this handsome cat's side.

That was until he met one of our volunteers, Martin, who became enamoured with Bagheera on first sight "The Black Panther of Farrer found a home with me. I am so grateful to the amazing staff at the RSPCA ACT for giving me the opportunity to have this big, gentle, extremely affectionate, playful and even tempered beautiful boy in my life."

"Bagheera now enjoys snuggling and sprawling next me on the lounge, attacking pipe cleaners, playing chase up and down the hallway, and sleeping by my side every night. We are inseparable."



SHEPHERD AND SLOANE

These two bubble buddies were brought to us after being found in a shoebox. They were desperate for an owner who would properly care and love them. Fortunately, we were able to match these two with a perfect owner who loves to watch them swim around and play with each other.



BOWIE

The images of an emaciated Bowie carrying his food bowl toward our inspectors as they came to rescue him are haunting. Dangerously thin with a body score of just 1 out of 9 Bowie would take months of care at our shelter to restore his physical and mental wellbeing.

After all this, watching him go with a family to a home that would love and care for him was an achievement the entire team could be proud of. Bowie is so happy and spoiled in his new home and this sweet dog is finally enjoying the life he deserves!



AZULA

Beautiful Indian ringneck Azula came into our care with a dislocated right wing. Our vet clinic treated her with a long-term wing wrap, almost the same as putting your arm in a sling! After four weeks Azula's wing was stabilized enough to remove it.

Azula now spends her days happily swinging about in her large enclosure with plenty of ladders, perches, and seed bells for snacking.

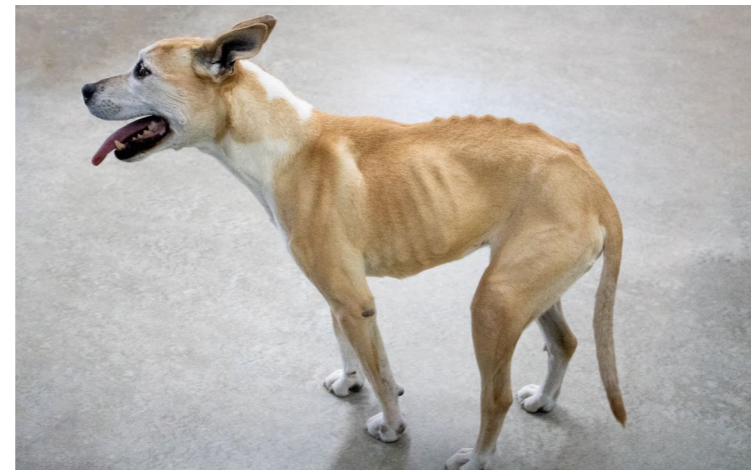
SAVED BY OUR INSPECTORATE

MOLLY WAS GIVEN A NEW LIFE

Our inspectorate team are on the front-line everyday investigating complaints of cruelty against animals. In the past financial year our team looked into 1,031 reports from members of the public.

Our inspectors approach every case individually. Depending on the situation our first preference is to try and educate owners with targeted animal welfare advice. We believe promoting best animal care practice can make a positive difference to the lives of pets as well as their owners.

We are seeing this approach work effectively, however, in some cases a clear swift intervention is needed.



Molly's body condition showed evidence of neglect. She would carry the physical and emotional scars for the rest of her life.

When our inspectors found Molly, they knew she needed to be rescued. Brought to the RSPCA ACT shelter, Molly was assessed by our vets where she was given a body score of just 2 out of 9. Evidence showed Molly had not been fed.

Starving, Molly was also in constant pain from a degenerative joint disease that had been left untreated. We provided Molly with the necessary medical treatment and high-quality diet which brought her back to health.

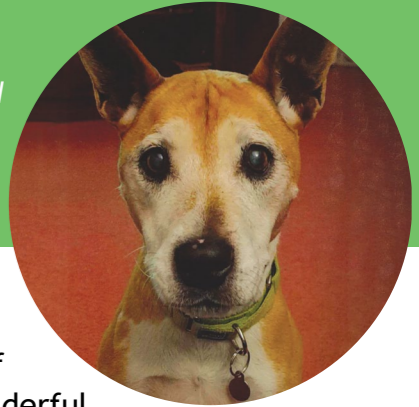


A high quality diet helped Molly regain her zest for life.



Molly truly loved her foster home, it was so heartwarming to see her flourish.

Molly loved to spend time with her foster carers around the house and in the garden.



Molly was placed into foster care, where she blossomed. Molly's health indicated that because of her past trauma, she didn't have long left. Her wonderful foster carers were so besotted with Molly and she was so happy with them, we decided the best course of action was for her to stay there. Molly eventually passed away earlier this year with loving hands and hearts holding her tight.

Molly deserved a better life. And that is why we will continue, with the help and support of Canberrans, to advocate for maximum penalty sentencing to be imposed for animal cruelty in accordance with our shared community expectations.

RIP beautiful Molly!

"We were best friends and she was my little shadow"
- Molly's foster mum



OUR SUPPORTERS

We would like to extend a huge thank you to our wonderful corporate supporters. Their generosity continues to help thousands of animals each year.

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The Palmer Family Memorial Fund
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OUR BOARD

RSPCA ACT Board of Directors have regard to the AICD and ACNC guidelines and recommendations in performing their governance duties.

PRESIDENT

Ms Alexandra Wedutenko

VICE PRESIDENT

Ms Victoria Press

OTHER MEMBERS

Mr Robert McMahon

Mr Chris Collins

Ms Michelle Bennetts

Ms Deborah Flood

Ms Thieu Hue Lam

Mr James Willson

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE AND ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Please see below the meeting and attendance register for the Board of Directors for The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ACT) Incorporated “the Association” for the financial year ended 30 June 2021.

	28-Jul-20	24-Aug-20	28-Sep-20	10-Nov-20	AGM	10-Dec-20	23-Feb-21	30-Mar-21	25-May-21	TOTAL
Michelle Bennetts	—	●	—	●	●	●	●	●	—	6
Chris Collins	●	●	●	●	●	—	●	—	●	7
Deborah Flood	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9
Thieu-Hue Lam	●	●	—	●	●	●	●	—	●	7
Robert McMahon	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9
Victoria Press	●	●	●	●	●	—	●	—	●	7
Alexandra Wedutenko	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9
James Willson	—	●	●	●	—	●	—	●	●	6
TOTAL	6	8	6	8	7	6	7	5	7	



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