

# Final Report on Implementation of the Independent Review of the Victoria RSPCA Inspectorate

1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019

On 6 October 2016, RSPCA Victoria's Board released the full report from the Independent Review of the RSPCA Victoria Inspectorate (IRRVI) conducted by former Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police Neil Comrie AO APM, along with the organisation's response to the report and recommendations.

RSPCA Victoria accepted, without reservation, the report and each of its findings and recommendations. We committed to immediately begin the full implementation of every finding and recommendation that is directly within our power to implement and begin discussions with other agencies to negotiate implementation of the remainder.

Actions that relate directly to the welfare and safety of our Inspectors in the field were identified as the first priority for implementation.

RSPCA Victoria's Head of Inspectorate has been accountable for the implementation of all recommendations in the report, and the Board's Audit Risk and Finance Committee has overseen its implementation.

The RSPCA Victoria has completed all of the recommendations within our control. The purchase of a new case management and intelligence system (Finding 1) has been incorporated into the wider Business Support Plan, anticipated to be delivered over the next 2-3 years. In addition, the organisation will continue to actively pursue solutions to the longer-term recommendations as part of business as usual (BAU) activity.

The following pages are our third and final implementation progress report, covering the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.

*\*Items in italics have been refined or updated since the Response to RSPCA Victoria's Inspectorate Report was released and implementation began in October 2016.*

Detail		Actions	Status	% Complete	Implementation finish
Finding 1	<p>That the RSPCA Victoria Board has authorised the CEO to:</p> <p>a. commence the necessary processes to acquire a case management/intelligence software platform for the Inspectorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Acquire and implement case management/intelligence software</i></li> <li>• <i>Incorporate requirements into broader organisational information systems review</i></li> <li>• <i>Solution is embedded in IS Business Support Plan Project</i></li> </ul>	In progress	70%	Implemented by 2022
	<p>b. secure the secondment of a Victoria Police intelligence analyst to the Inspectorate for a twelve-month pilot period.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Second an RSPCA Victoria funded Victoria Police intelligence analyst for 12 months</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Finding 2	<p>The RSPCA Victoria Board has authorised the CEO to take all steps necessary to secure the location of a specialist POCTAA prosecutor within the Police Prosecutions Unit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Establish a model of qualified internal legal resources</i></li> <li>• <i>Define roles for internal legal resources and commence recruitment of Prosecutions Lead</i></li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 1	<p>Following implementation of all recommendations in this Report, RSPCA Victoria reassess their budgetary position and the demand for Inspectorate services at that time and if warranted, take the necessary steps to develop a budget submission to the Victorian Government for an incremental increase to their recurrent budget allocation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review outcome of implementation of all other recommendations and regularly report progress to Victorian Government</li> <li>• Review resource and budget requirements once implementation of all other recommendations is complete</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 2	<p>That RSPCA Victoria takes all necessary action to improve the safety culture at the Inspectorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediately recruit Team Leader and Intelligence Analyst roles to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- maximise the support and supervision of Inspectors in the field and</li> <li>- improve triage and risk assessment of reports before they are assigned</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Conduct a training needs assessment and implement a full skills-based training program, and complete an equipment needs analysis for all roles</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 3	<p>That RSPCA Victoria implement measures to retain valuable staff in the Inspectorate, including establishing incremental salary levels that recognise experience and responsibility and adopt more contemporary, flexible working arrangements such as part-time employment and job sharing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the report's recommended organisational structure</li> <li>• Review Inspector remuneration levels</li> <li>• Investigate implementation of flexible working arrangements for Inspectors</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	

Detail		Actions	Status	% Complete	Implementation finish
Recommendation 4	That RSPCA Victoria consider all viable options for the efficient recruitment of Inspectors, including group assessments and the development of a priority list to be drawn upon when future vacancies occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research and implement best practice approaches to efficient recruitment of Inspectors</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 5	That the People and Culture Department of RSPCA Victoria in conjunction with the management of the Inspectorate, undertake a training needs analysis of the role of Inspector. A robust, skills based, accredited training program should then be developed to meet the specific needs of RSPCA Victoria Inspectors and successful completion of this program should be an obligatory component of the probationary period leading to authorisation of an Inspector under POCTAA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a training needs assessment for all Inspectorate positions</li> <li>Implement training program for recruits and refresher training for existing Inspectors</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 6	That, as far as possible, RSPCA Victoria remove peripheral and corporate administrative functions from the Inspectorate to allow it to focus on operational responsibilities, especially supervision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review internal arrangements and remove peripheral responsibilities from Inspectorate</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 7	That supervisory responsibility and accountability be strengthened in the Inspectorate by the creation of new roles of Team Leader and Senior Inspector within a regional service delivery model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following consultation with staff, implement the recommended regional service delivery model and structure for the unit, including the creation of Team Leader roles</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 8	That RSPCA Victoria provide the necessary structure, support functions, training and development to ensure that the Inspectorate Manager, Team Leaders and Senior Inspectors provide strong leadership as well as meeting their management obligations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement leadership training program for Team Leaders, Senior Inspectors and the Inspectorate Manager</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 9	That RSPCA Victoria introduce a new structure and operating model in accordance with the 19 components outlined on pages 45 and 46 of the IRRVI report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following consultation with staff, implement the recommended regional service delivery model and structure for the unit, including the creation of Team Leader roles</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 10	That RSPCA Victoria ensure that radio monitoring is the shared responsibility of Inspectorate administrative staff from 8am to 6pm each week day on a two-hourly rotational basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement two-hour rotational radio monitoring shifts</li> <li>Identify more suitable office space for radio monitoring</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	

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Recommendation 11	That the RSPCA review its existing memoranda of understanding, standard operating procedures and protocols with other organisations to ensure that these arrangements reflect the proposed operating environment of the Inspectorate, including the new approach to case management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiate new or renegotiate existing agreements, memoranda of understanding, standard operating procedures and protocols to align with new operating model</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 12	That the RSPCA take the action necessary to provide relevant policies, procedures and templates to Inspectors online.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update all policies, procedures and templates</li> <li>Identify and implement a technology solution to ensure that policies, procedures and templates are available to Inspectors in the field</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 13	That RSPCA Victoria undertake a review of the accommodation arrangements for the Inspectorate and take the necessary steps to provide accommodation that meets the operational needs of that group under the proposed operating model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify suitable accommodation to support a regional service delivery model</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 14	That RSPCA Victoria undertakes an equipment needs analysis to ensure that the equipment issued to Inspectors enables them to undertake their duties more safely and efficiently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Order body cams and equipment vests for all Inspectors</li> <li>Conduct an equipment needs analysis for all Inspectorate positions</li> <li>Procure, deploy and regularly audit all identified equipment</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 15	That RSPCA Victoria utilise specially selected and suitably trained and supported volunteers to assist with reports that are not the primary responsibility of the Inspectorate. This will involve direct contact with identified complainants to advise them of referrals or the actions taken by RSPCA Victoria or to offer other advice, information or educational material. This may include seeking additional advice from complainants where critical information may be missing from relevant reports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research, develop and implement volunteer support solution</li> <li><i>Make more information about finalised prosecutions publicly available through our website and media releases</i></li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	

Detail		Actions	Status	% Complete	Implementation finish
Recommendation 16	<p>That RSPCA Victoria:</p> <p>a. engage with Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) to identify strategies to reduce the workload related to Domestic Animals Act 1994 matters that is currently, by default, being directed to RSPCA Victoria;</p> <p>b. engage with local government to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the future focus for the Inspectorate on animal cruelty and that Domestic Animals Act 1994 matters directed to the Inspectorate will be referred to the relevant local government (and complainants advised accordingly); and</p> <p>c. develop and implement a communications strategy to better inform and educate the community that the future role of the Inspectorate is to be confined to prevention of cruelty to animals and that the Inspectorate will no longer respond to Domestic Animals Act 1994 reports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In collaboration with DEDJTR and local councils, review the application of investigation and enforcement resources to categories of welfare and cruelty reports</li> <li>• If necessary, negotiate memoranda of understanding with DEDJTR and local councils</li> <li>• Website amended to explain to members of the public the type of reports that will be actioned by RSPCA Vic and those lie fall outside our jurisdiction</li> <li>• <i>MOU with DJPR amended to clarify operational responsibilities</i></li> <li>• RSPCA Vic inspectors were given extended powers under the Domestic Animals Act (DAA) and have responsibilities to check compliance with PER.</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 17	<p>That RSPCA Victoria ensures that the prosecutor responsible for POCTAA prosecutions actively pursues the payment of court costs awarded to RSPCA Victoria.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Explore options for actively pursuing court costs</i></li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 18	<p>That RSPCA Victoria actively pursue with the State Government the authority to issue infringement notices:</p> <p>a. for lower level offences that are not to the requisite level of seriousness to warrant criminal prosecution; and</p> <p>b. for failing to meet the requirements of Notices to Comply issued under Section 36G of POCTAA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief the Minister for Agriculture on the recommendation</li> <li>• Explore mechanism with DJPR to administer and collect infringement system.</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 19	<p>That RSPCA Victoria engage with the State Government to seek an amendment to the POCTAA to allow for the fostering out and/or transfer of ownership of seized animals held for extended periods pending the resolution of court proceedings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief the Minister for Agriculture on the recommendation</li> <li>• Ongoing as part of animal welfare legal reform project</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	

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Recommendation 20	That RSPCA Victoria further explore with DEDJTR the viability of licensing the keeping of horses as an aid to better management of animal welfare and cruelty reports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brief the Minister for Agriculture on the recommendation</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 21	That RSPCA Victoria, while continuing its legitimate advocacy role, discontinue its public activist campaigning against the existing laws of this State.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on achieving improvements in animal welfare by using trust-based advocacy approaches</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	
Recommendation 22	<p>To ensure that effective governance and accountability arrangements are in place regarding the implementation of the recommendations in this report, RSPCA Victoria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that one senior executive in the organisation is the accountable officer for the delivery of these recommendations;</li> <li>make that officer responsible for the preparation of the implementation plan for consideration of approval by the Board;</li> <li>task a Board committee to oversight regular reports on progress against the implementation plan; and</li> <li>publish progress on implementation of these recommendations in RSPCA Victoria annual reports for the next three years.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrust accountability for implementation of all recommendations to the Head of Inspectorate</li> <li>Entrust oversight of the implementation of all recommendations to the Audit Risk and Finance Committee of the Board</li> <li>Report on implementation progress in the 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 annual reports</li> </ul>		<b>Complete</b>	



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