

Australians and their Pets **The FACTs**



Australia's Pet Owning Population

- More than 63% of Australian households own a pet, of these:¹
 - 40% own dogs
 - 26% own cats
 - 53% own a dog and/or a cat
- At 63%, Australia has similar pet ownership as the USA², while only 43% of UK homes own a pet.¹
- In about two-thirds of cases a woman is the main carer and decision-maker in relation to the family pet(s).³
- 91% of pet owners report feeling 'very close' to their pet, reinforcing that pets are an integral member of the family unit, however constituted.¹
- More than 83% of Australians have had a pet at some time in their lives.¹
- Of the people who do not currently own a pet, 53% would like to own one in the future.¹
- In total, 44,700 Australians are employed in the pet care industry.⁴

Australia's Pet Population

Pet Type	Millions [^]
Dogs	3.7
Cats	2.2
Birds	7.8
Fish	20.5
Other pets*	2.9



[^] Source: TNS, ABS and BIS Shrapnel estimates 2007

* Other pets include pleasure horses, rabbits, guinea pigs, chickens etc

Australia's Pet Population

Estimated Australian pet population in 2007 ('000)

State	Dogs	Cats	Birds	Fish	Other*	Total pets
NSW/ACT	1,209	730	2,550	7,900	1,050	13,439
VIC	906	581	1,800	4,900	750	8,937
QLD	794	386	1,500	3,500	500	6,680
SA/NT	357	251	1,000	2,000	300	3,908
WA	321	217	700	1,700	200	3,138
TAS	105	78	250	500	75	1,008
Total	3,692	2,243	7,800	20,500	2,875	37,110

*Other pets includes pleasure horses, rabbits, guinea pigs etc...

Source: TNS and BIS Shrapnel estimates

Australia's Pet Population

Number of pets per 100 head of population, by state 2007

State	Population ('000)	Dogs/100 people	Cats/100 people
NSW/ACT	7,268	17	10
VIC	5,246	17	11
QLD	4,228	19	9
SA/NT	1,810	20	14
WA	2,019	16	11
TAS	496	21	16
2007	Total 21,067	Nat.Average 18	Nat.Average 11
2005	Total 20,385	Nat.Average 18	Nat.Average 12
2002	Total 19,705	Nat.Average 20	Nat.Average 13
1998	Total 18,748	Nat.Average 20	Nat.Average 13

Source: TNS, ABS and BIS Shrapnel estimates

Health Benefits of Pets to Australians

Compared with non-pet owners:

- People who own pets typically visit the doctor less often and use less medication⁵
- Pet owners, on average have lower cholesterol and lower blood pressure⁶
- Pet owners recover more quickly from illness and surgery⁷
- Pet owners deal better with stressful situations¹
- Pet owners show lower levels of risk factors associated with heart disease¹
- Elderly pet owners report an increased quality of life and companionship⁸
- Pet owners are less likely to report feeling lonely⁹



The Economic Benefits of Pets

- The pet care industry is one of the largest in Australia
- It contributes around \$4.74 billion to the economy annually and employs over 44,700 people
- In comparison, the poultry industry and poultry products industry turns over \$3.5 billion per annum
- Of the total expenditure on pets 58% is spent on dogs, 28% on cats and 14% on other pets
- The annual national health cost saving resulting from pet owners visiting the doctor less often is estimated to be up to \$2.227 billion¹⁰



The Economic Benefits of Pets

Summary of Australian expenditure on pet care by state, 2007 (\$ million)

State	Dogs	Cats	Other pets	Total	% Total
NSW/ACT	902	425	249	1,576	33.3
VIC	676	339	161	1,176	24.8
QLD	592	225	119	936	19.8
SA/NT	266	146	71	484	10.2
WA	240	126	56	422	8.9
Tasmania	78	45	18	142	3.0
Total	2,755	1,307	674	4,736	100.0

Source: BIS Shrapnel estimates

The Economic Benefits of Pets

Consumer Expenditure

Market Segment	Consumer Expenditure (\$m)
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Pet food	\$2,020
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Veterinary services and products	\$1,155
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Other services, products, equipment	\$1,561
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TOTAL	\$4,736
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Source: TNS, ABS and BIS Shrapnel estimates

The Australian Companion Animal Council (ACAC) is the peak body representing the pet care industry in Australia. The council is a non-profit organisation committed to the promotion of socially responsible pet ownership.

ACAC represents the following organisations:

Animal Health Alliance (Australia)

Animal Welfare League

Association of Pet Dog Trainers Australia

Australian Veterinary Association

Australian Small Animal Veterinary Association

Australian National Kennel Council

Pet Food Industry Association of Australia

Pet Industry Association of Australia

Petcare Information and Advisory Service

Veterinary Manufacturers and Distributors Association

Veterinary Nurses Council of Australia

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AUSTRALIAN
**COMPANION
ANIMAL**
COUNCIL

Australian Companion Animal Council Inc

Unit 40, 6 Herbert Street, St Leonards NSW 2065
Telephone (02) 9431 5000 Facsimilie (02) 9437 9068

Web: www.acac.org.au

ABN 34 412 308 181

This publication has been proudly supported by the
Animal Health Alliance of Australia (AHAA)



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