

13th March 2023

Mr Phillip Lowe,
Reserve Bank of Australia Governor
Reserve Bank of Australia
GPO Box 3947
SYDNEY NSW 2001
E: rbainfo@rba.gov.au

RE: Consider animal welfare of pets

Dear Mr Lowe,

It is with great concern that we are contacting you today to request you give greater consideration to life – both people and their animals - than economics before pushing forward with further interest rate rises. Animal Care Australia acknowledges the need to reduce inflation and additionally we acknowledge the signs that your actions to date have had that desired effect.

As you are by now acutely aware the pressures being endured by constant interest rate rises are placing a great deal of pressure on society and our cost of living. What you may not be aware of is the potential cost of animals’ lives. By no means undermining the cost to human life that has already been brought to your attention by Suicide Prevention Australia, the rippling effects of cost of living expenses continually rising will also impact the animals we keep.

As you are aware, 46 per cent of people are reporting high levels of cost-of-living distress and one in six are reporting having suicidal thoughts.

This means people are now being forced to make decisions about how they live their lives, including needing to cut back on expenses. Prioritising expenses also comes down to not only being able to feed their children – but their pets.

Pets are an important aspect of the family. Routine pet expenses such as veterinary bills, worming, tick/flea prevention, grooming and even agistment for our larger pets are all expensive necessities – but ones that are sacrificed for more important items.

At the point where further sacrifices are needed the pets’ dietary needs are reduced to a more affordable and yet unhealthy level.

This all leads to major animal welfare concerns.

Pets are already being surrendered and abandoned because people are being forced out of their homes and into a near non-existent rental market. Where a rental property can be found it is highly unlikely their pets can stay with them. This loss of their family members adds further stress to an already extremely dire situation. Children and the elderly are more greatly affected as they rely heavily on their pets for their mental well -being. Children are the least likely to understand why their pets can no longer stay with them.

You are effectively breaking up families and placing lives at risk, and that is why Animal Care Australia is reaching out to you to request that you take this into consideration when making further determinations about future interest rate rises.

There is a breaking point and we believe it has been reached. Economists are warning of a depression should you continue to increase rates and this will bring a much higher animal welfare concern which will see more animals in ill-health and/or abandoned.

Again, Animal Care Australia is requesting that you consider the welfare of people's pets and animals when making further determinations about future interest rate rises.

Please do not hesitate to make contact if we can assist further.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Donnelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'M' and a long, trailing flourish at the end.

Michael Donnelly
President
0400 323 843

Animal Care Australia (ACA) is a national incorporated association established to consult with government in advocating for real animal welfare by those who keep, breed and care for animals. Our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care.