

Royal Adelaide Show 2010 & 2011 Research: Dog Owners

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details key findings from research analysis undertaken by the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute, University of South Australia (the Institute), on behalf of the Dog and Cat Management Board (the Board).

The aim of the research was to better understand dog owners – who they are, how they acquired their dog and their knowledge of dog management policies – and the characteristics and behaviours of their dogs.

The data was collected from people who attended the Dog & Cat Management Board stand within the dog exhibition pavilion at the Royal Adelaide Show in 2010 (n= 1,201) and 2011 (n= 2,020) and who attended the DogsSA Open Day in 2011 (n= 98). However, we do not differentiate between the two samples collected in 2011; we simply report findings for the total 2,118 dog owners. A survey was also conducted in 2009 (n=2,485); comparisons are also made to this data, where appropriate

The surveys distributed across the three consecutive years were not identical – some questions were the same and some different. Where possible, we compare between years when questions were consistent.

When interpreting the findings of this report, it is important to note that this is **not** a randomly recruited sample of dog owners. The people that took the time to participate are likely to be more interested and knowledgeable about dogs and dog ownership compared to the general dog ownership population.

In both years of research, approximately six in 10 respondents owned only one dog, and four in 10 owned two or more dogs. Respondents who owned more than one dog were asked to answer all questions about their most recently acquired dog. At all times, where there is no statistically significant difference between results seen in each year, we report only the figure for one year (the average result). Key findings are outlined below.

Dog characteristics

- The most commonly mentioned breed, in both years, was “cross breed” (35%), followed by working dogs (14%), gundogs (12%), and terriers (11%).
- Six in 10 dogs were adults, two in 10 were puppies and a further (approximately) two in ten were seniors.
- The gender of dogs was relatively evenly split in the sample (52% male, 47% female – 1% of respondents did not answer this question).
- About of dogs were both desexed and microchipped. Of the remains, it was more common for dogs to be only desexed (18%) compared to only microchipped (15%). Only one in 10 dogs were “neither”.
- It was most common for dogs to be desexed between six months and one year of age (66%).

Dog acquisition

- The majority of dogs were acquired when they were between eight and 12 weeks old (69%).
- The most common means of acquiring a dog was through a DogsSA registered breeder (22%), though dogs were also commonly acquired through “other” breeders (21%), pet shops (18%), and shelters (12%).

Dog behaviours and information search

- The 2010 and 2011 surveys differed on the format in which questions related to behaviours were asked, as such, direct comparisons were not always made in this section.
- In 2010, 63% of respondents indicated that their dog did not have any behavioural issues, while in 2011; this figure was only 21%. This is likely caused by differences in question wording and structure.
- The most common behavioural problems in 2010 were barking (13%), destructive behaviours (10%) and separation anxiety (8%).
- The most common behavioural problems in 2011 were destructive behaviour (32%), jumping (30%) and chewing (29%).

- In 2010, respondents were asked if they had *consulted any professionals* about the problem behaviour. Vets were the most commonly consulted (50%). Dog trainers were also commonly consulted (26%). Questions relating to information sources were only included in the 2011 survey.
- In 2011, respondents were asked if they had sourced any information about the problem behaviour and what was *the most helpful source*. Once again, vets were also considered to be the most helpful source of information (29%), along with personal experience (22%) and the Internet (22%).

Dog parks

- Over half of respondents said they never use fenced dog parks (51%), with an even spread of respondents using them either regularly (15%), frequently (14%) or infrequently (18%).

Dog management perceptions

- Dogs on leads: Most (62%) respondents indicated that it is their responsibility to keep their dog on a lead at all times outside of their property, except when in a designated off-lead area, with a further 40% suggesting that they must keep it on a lead at all times.
- Picking up faeces: Virtually all respondents (94%) said that it was the owners' responsibility to pick up their dog's faeces at all times.
- Responsibilities of AMOs: There was a spread in perceptions of the responsibilities of Animal Management Officers, though the most commonly mentioned responses were "picking up stray dogs" (63%), "registering dogs" (49%) and "investigating reports of dog fights or incidents" (42%).
- Responsibilities of the Board: A similar spread of responses was evident for perceptions of the responsibilities of the Dog and Cat Management Board. The most prevalent perceptions were "writing dog legislation" (39%), "investigating reports of animal cruelty" (24%), and "investigating reports of dog fights or incidents" (20%).

Obedience training

Questions related to obedience training were asked only in the 2010 survey.

- About half (52%) of respondents indicated that their dog had not attended any form of training. Of the remains, 21% attended obedience training, 16% attended a puppy preschool and 8% attended both.
- Puppy preschools were most commonly attended at vets (57%) and at obedience clubs (18%).
- Five in 10 respondents had their dog attend a puppy preschool for five or more weeks.
- Satisfaction with puppy preschools was very high, with an average score given of 5.8 out of 7 (where seven indicated that they were extremely satisfied, and 1 indicated they were extremely dissatisfied).
- Seven in 10 respondents said that their dog had reached a level of basic obedience.

Owner demographics

- There was a fairly even spread between age groups included in the research, in both years. However, people over 61 years old were under-represented and people between 36 and 45 years old were over-represented when compared to the general population.
- It was, by far, most common for respondents to live in a house (86%), while 8% lived on either a farm or hobby farm.
- Respondents were widely spread across the state, with only a small number of respondents living interstate. The largest representations from any one council area were Onkaparinga (14%), Salisbury (9%), Port Adelaide Enfield (8%) and Playford (8%); these are some of the biggest council areas in South Australia.

Recommendations for next year's survey

- Many of the issues seen on the 2010 survey had improved by the 2011 survey.
- However, as a general point, we would recommend that response options always include a "Don't know" option, as it is often unclear if a question was skipped because the respondent did not know an answer or whether they simply refused to answer it.
- If the Board wishes to conduct a similar survey in coming years, we would also suggest that question wording remain the same as for the 2011 survey, where possible. Even slight changes can alter how respondents answer a question, and therefore when changes are made, it limits the comparability of results.

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INTRODUCTION

This report details key findings from research analysis undertaken by the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute (the Institute), University of South Australia, on behalf of the Dog and Cat Management Board (the Board).

Research objectives

The aim of the research was to better understand dog owners – who they are, how they acquired their dog and their knowledge of dog management policies – and the characteristics and behaviours of their dogs.

The specific research objectives for the 2011 analysis of dog owners were as follows:

- Identify common characteristics of pet dogs.
- Describe how owners acquired their dogs.
- Measure the prevalence of bad behaviour by dogs (e.g. biting, jumping) and owner's response.
- Measure how often dog owners visit fenced dog parks.
- Measure knowledge and opinions on dog management policies.
- Report demographic characteristics of dog owners that responded to the survey.

A series of questions related to dog obedience training was included in the 2010 survey, but not repeated in 2011. We report the findings, but this was not an objective of the proposal written for the 2011 analysis. The 2009 research also differed in its purpose, but comparisons are made to this research, where appropriate.

Data collection method

The data analysed in this report was collected through a self-completion survey with people that attended the Board's stand within the dog exhibition pavilion at the Royal Adelaide Show in 2010 and 2011. Surveys were also collected at the DogsSA Open Day, held at DogsSA Park in Kilburn.

Volunteers from the Delta program and staff from the Board manned the stands and administered the survey to people in the immediate vicinity and to those that approached the stand. Participants at both events were given a "GoodDog" bag to compensate for their time and effort.

Not a random sample

It is important the data and findings of this report are interpreted within the context of the sampling approaches. People visiting the dog exhibition or who attended the open day are not a random sample of dog owners – they are likely to be more interested and therefore more knowledgeable about dogs in general than the average dog owner. In the case of the Royal Show particularly, this is demonstrated by the fact that they paid to enter the show to access the animal exhibitions. Compounding this, those that took the time to complete the survey were likely to have an even more heightened level of interest. Therefore, we cannot say with certainty that the opinions of these people are entirely representative of the entire dog owner population.

The survey

The surveys were brief and consisted of mostly close-ended questions. Comparisons are drawn between the 2009, 2010 and 2011 surveys where possible (e.g. where the same questions were asked in both years), however, in many instances such comparisons were not possible due to differences in the questions included in the surveys.

The analysis

Analysis was done using statistics package SPSS 18, with cross tabulations and analysis of variance (one way ANOVA) used to identify differences between groups. Differences were significant if the probability of the results being due to sample variation, rather than true between group differences, was less than 5%. This also applies when comparing between the three consecutive years (2009 to 2011). Where percentage columns do not add to 100, this is a result of rounding. It is not uncommon for columns to sum to between 99 and 101.

FINDINGS: DOG CHARACTERISTICS

Number of dogs sharing the residence

Respondents were first asked how many dogs shared their residence, in all three years of research. Table 1 shows that about six in 10 people shared their residence with just one dog each year. A further three in 10 people claimed they had two dogs, and the remaining two in 10 had three or more dogs.

Table 1: How many dogs reside at your home?

	2009		2010		2011	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
One	1,472	59	690	58	1,312	62
Two	738	30	358	30	659	31
Three	157	6	66	6	99	5
Four	39	2	27	2	14	1
Five or more	69	3	40	3	23	1
Missing	10	<1	20	2	11	1
Total	2,485	101	1,201	101	2,118	101

Not surprisingly, a higher proportion of owners with multiple dogs were living on larger properties, such as a farm or hobby farm – e.g. 13% of owners of two or more dogs had larger properties compared to 5% for owners of one dog in 2009, 12% v 4% in 2010 and 16% v 6% in 2011.

From here, all results relate to the respondents' most recently acquired dog.

Breed

The breeds in Table 2 are sorted according to the ANKC classification. Results show that the most commonly owned breed of dog, in both years, was a "cross breed" (35% in both years), followed by working dogs (14%), gundogs (12%) and terriers (11%). There was no significant change between years in the percentage of breeds most recently acquired.

Table 2: What breed is your most recently acquired dog?

	2010		2011	
	n	%	n	%
Cross breeds	420	35	742	35
Working dogs	164	14	280	13
Gundogs	140	12	244	12
Terriers	130	11	232	11
Toys	110	9	200	9
Non-sporting	83	7	116	5
Utility	74	6	151	7
Hounds	49	4	117	6
Missing	31	3	36	2
Total	1201	101	2118	100

Age

The age of dogs was collected across the three consecutive years; however, the response options differed between years. We were able group categories from the 2010 and 2011 surveys such that they were directly comparable. This was not possible for 2009 because younger dogs (less than 12 months old) used different cut-offs. As such, we have reported baby and puppy dogs as one group in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that the relative size of dog age groups was highly consistent across years. The largest group was adult dogs, representing six in 10 dogs. The only difference was in 2010; the survey captured slightly more puppies and slightly fewer senior dogs.

Table 3: How old is your most recently acquired dog (at time of survey)?

	2009		2010		2011	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Baby – 8 weeks to 12 weeks	561	23	48	4	98	5
Puppy – 12 weeks to 12 months			269	23	386	18
Adult – 12 months to 8 years	1,482	60	690	58	1,267	60
Senior – 8+ years	437	18	185	15	362	17
Not specified	5	<1	9	<1	5	<1
Total	2,485	101	1,201	100	2,118	100

Gender

Gender of dogs was collected for the first time in the 2011 survey. Table 4 shows an almost even split between genders, with only a slight skew to respondents owning male dogs.

Table 4: What sex is your dog?

	n	%
Male	1,108	52
Female	1,002	47
Not specified	8	<1
Total	2,118	99

Desexing and microchipping

Desexing and microchipping information was collected across the three consecutive years. Table 5 shows about half of dogs were consistently desexed *and* microchipped across years (i.e. 52%, 49% and 54% consecutively for 2009, 2010 and 2011). There was one statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between years; the number of dogs neither desexed or microchipped in 2010 (17%) compared to 2011 (12%). However, in 2011, the proportion of dogs with both returned to a level similar to 2009, indicating this was not a sustained, downward trend.

Table 5: Your most recently acquired dog is...?

	2009		2010		2011	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Desexed only	431	20	214	18	382	18
Microchipped only	432	17	178	15	321	15
Desexed and microchipped	1,296	52	589	49	1,152	54
Not desexed or microchipped	272	11	202	17	260	12
Not specified	-	-	18	2	3	<1
Total	2,485	100	1201	101	2,118	99

The sex of the dog had no impact on whether the dog had been desexed, microchipped or neither.

Age of dog when it was desexed

In 2011, respondents that had a desexed dog were asked how old the dog was when it was desexed. This was the first time this question was included in the survey. The answer was open-ended so respondents could select their own frame of reference (weeks, months, years).

Table 6 shows the vast majority of dogs (more than eight in 10 dogs) were desexed as a puppy, most commonly at six months (46%), with a further 11% desexed at 12 months. Very few dogs were desexed as either a baby puppy (4%) or as an adult (12%).

Table 6: At what age was your dog desexed?

	n	%
<u>Baby</u>		
4 weeks	1	<1
6 weeks	16	1
8 weeks	44	3
Total:	61	4
<u>Puppy</u>		
9 weeks	1	<1
10 weeks	10	1
11 weeks	2	<1
12 weeks	90	6
4 months	88	6
5 months	39	3
6 months	700	46
7 months	34	2
8 months	70	5
9 months	37	2
10 months	13	1
12 months (1 year)	161	10
Total:	1,245	81
<u>Adult</u>		
18 months	30	2
24 months (2 years)	54	4
36 months (3 years)	38	2
48 months (4 years)	24	2
60 months (5 years)	10	1
72 months (6 years)	13	1
84 months (7 years)	12	1
Total:	181	12
Unsure	40	3
Not specified	7	<1
Total	1,534	100

FINDINGS: DOG ACQUISITION

Age of the dog when it was acquired

This question was asked of owners in 2010 and 2011 only. Table 7 shows the majority of dogs – almost seven in 10 – were acquired between eight and 12 weeks of age. The same pattern can be seen between years.

Table 7: How old was your dog when you acquired it?

	2010		2011	
	n	%	n	%
8 to 12 weeks	824	69	1429	68
12 weeks to 6 months	115	10	292	14
6 months to 1 year	91	8	123	6
12 months to 8 years	142	12	235	11
8+ years	22	2	32	2
Not specified	7	1	1	<1
Total	1,201	102	2,112	101

How the dog was acquired

How the dog was acquired was asked across all three years of research (although the Internet was a response option only added in the 2011 survey). Table 8 shows the most common means of acquiring a dog was through a breeder; either a Dog SA registered breeder or an “Other” breeder.

There were some changes between years. Proportionately fewer owners adopted their dog from a shelter in 2011 compared to previous years ($p < 0.05$). Further, it seems newspapers are becoming a less prevalent source for searching for dogs, possibly in favour of the Internet.

Table 8: How did you acquire your dog?

	2009		2010		2011	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Other breeder	484	20	228	19	436	21
Dog SA registered breeder	565	23	259	22	429	20
Pet shop	444	18	201	17	369	18
Friend	351	14	125	10	272	13
Shelter	276	11	149	12	194	9
Newspaper	260	11	110	9	175	6
Internet	-	-	-	-	87	3
Other	104	4	125	10	140	7
Not specified	1	<1	4	<1	0	0
Total	2,485	100	1,201	100	2,112	100

“Other” means of acquisition were highly varied. In 2011, the most common included: “family”, “found/rescued” and “bred from my own dog”. None of these options received more than 10 responses.

FINDINGS: DOG BEHAVIOURS

Prevalence of dog behaviours

Owners were asked if their dog had exhibited certain problem behaviours in the 2010 and 2011 surveys. However, the question was posed very differently and so gained very different results.

In 2010, owners were first asked if their dog had shown any “problem” behaviours. If their answer was yes, then a list of negative behaviours was provided. Whereas in 2011, owners were given an exhaustive list of behaviours and asked if their dog had exhibited any of these. This list was twice as long as the one from 2010, and provided several, less extreme problem behaviours (e.g. excessive licking).

In Table 9 the percentages refer to the percentage of respondents (from the total sample size) who identified that behaviour, rather than the percentage of responses (from the total number of responses). It is for this reason that the percentages columns do not sum to 100%.

The result of this was that the proportion of owners claiming their dog exhibited none of the behaviour was much lower in 2011 compared to 2010 (63% in 2010 v 21% in 2011).

The key observable difference between years was the proportion of dogs showing destructive behaviour increased (32% v 10%). While this is a sizeable difference, it is difficult to read too much into the result, given the differences between the question wordings used, and the breadth of behaviours considered. Another data set consistent with 2011 (i.e. 2012) would be needed to draw conclusions of meaningful or true changes.

In 2011, additional to destructive behaviour, the most common behaviours were jumping (30%), chewing (29%) and excessive licking (20%).

Table 9: Has your dog exhibited the following behaviours?

	2010		2011	
	n	%	n	%
Destructive behaviour (e.g. digging)	119	10	676	32
Jumping	-	-	643	30
Chewing	-	-	621	29
Excessive licking	-	-	426	20
Separation anxiety	99	8	306	14
Whining	-	-	293	14
Eating inappropriate items	-	-	280	13
Aggression – Other dogs	65	5	262	12
Barking	162	13	256	12
Biting	-	-	147	7
Food aggression	-	-	84	4
Aggression - people	29	2	82	4
Leash reactivity (e.g. lunging)	92	8	-	-
Noise phobia	50	2	-	-
None of these behaviours	756	63	453	21
Other	68	6	89	4
Total	1,440*	117	4,621*	216

*Owners could give multiple responses; therefore column totals do not equal the sample sizes.

The most common “Other” responses in 2011 included: “just plain bad”, “excited when near other dogs” and “scratching”, though no more than 10 responses were provided to any of these.

Information sought by the owner

Again, questions related to information sought to address problem behaviours differed between the surveys.

In 2010, owners who had stated their dog had a behavioural problem and specified that problem, were then asked if they had consulted a professional. They were given a list of professional positions related to animal behaviour. In 2011, owners were asked if they had simply sourced information, with the list of sources extending beyond professionals to other people (e.g. friends), books, the Internet, etc. Additionally, in 2010 owners were able to select multiple professionals, whereas in 2011, owners were asked to specify only the *most helpful* resource. Given these differences, the results are presented separately in Tables 10 and 11 for 2010 and 2011 respectively.

Professional advice sought in 2010

Table 10 shows that one in two owners with problem behaviour(s) consulted a vet and one in four owners consulted a dog trainer. Very few people consulted animal behaviourists, veterinary behaviourists or veterinary behaviour specialists.

Table 10: Have you consulted a professional about problem behaviours?

	n	%
Veterinarian	266	50
Dog trainer	138	26
Animal behaviourist	50	9
Veterinary behaviourist	9	2
Veterinary behaviour specialist	7	1
Other	58	11
Total	528	99

“Other” responses included: RSPCA, “Bark Busters”, breeders, friends, the Internet, books, and the “South Australian Dog Obedience Club”. However, the frequency of these responses was not recorded.

Information sourced in 2011

Despite the survey asking respondents to select only the “most helpful” source, multiple responses were recorded for some respondents. Again, the percentages column refers to the percentage of respondents (from the total sample size) who identified that information source, rather than the percentage of responses (from the total number of responses). It is for this reason that the percentages columns do not sum to 100%.

Table 11 shows that the most commonly cited source of information was a vet (29%), followed by personal experience (22%), the Internet (22%), obedience clubs (18%) and family and friends (18%).

Table 11: Have you sourced information to address this behaviour?

	N	%
Veterinarian	605	29
Personal experience	470	22
Internet	450	22
Obedience club	391	18
Family and friends	390	18
Books	178	8
Face-to-face with a behaviourist	89	4
Internet forum, requested advice	34	2
Haven't sourced any information	154	7
Total	2,761	130

FINDINGS: DOG PARKS

How often owners use fenced dog parks

Information about visits to dog parks was collected for the first time in the 2011 survey. Table 12 shows about half of the respondents visit a fenced dog park very rarely to never. Of the remaining half, owners were fairly evenly distributed between the three categories – very regularly, regularly and not very regularly.

Table 12: Regularity of visits to dog parks

	n	%
Regular (3+ pw)	326	15
Frequently (1-2 pw)	296	14
Infrequently (less than 1 pw)	378	18
Very rarely to never	1,078	51
Not specified	40	2
Total	2,118	100

FINDINGS: DOG MANAGEMENT PERCEPTIONS

In the 2011 survey, respondents were given four questions related to their knowledge of dog management and control in South Australia. For each question, respondents were given a number of possible options to choose from, as well as an “I don’t know” option.

For the questions related to leads, Animal Management Officers (AMOs) and the Board, because respondents chose multiple options, the percentages column in the tables refer to the percentage of respondents (from the total sample size) who selected an option, rather than the percentage of responses (from the total number of responses). It is for this reason that the percentages columns do not sum to 100%.

Dogs on leads

Table 13 shows that the majority of respondents – six in ten – recognise that it is their legal obligation to keep their dog on a lead “at all times outside my property except when in a designated off-lead area” while four in ten identified “at all times outside my property”. All other options were identified by only 5% of the sample, or less.

Table 13: When do you have a legal obligation to keep your dog on a lead?

	n	%
At all times outside my property, except in designated off-lead areas	1,303	62
At all times outside my property	854	40
When I see another dog approaching	107	5
On the beach	86	4
Only in parks and in public spaces	36	2
Outside of specific times	29	1
Not required if my dog is well-trained	14	1
Don't know	39	2
Total	2,468	117

Picking up faeces

Almost all people recognised that it is their responsibility to pick up dog faeces outside of their property “at all times” (94%).

Table 14: Who is responsible for picking up dog faeces outside your property?

	n	%
The owner, at all times	1,992	94
The owner, if there is access to council-installed waste bags	33	2
The council	24	1
Owner, if you have a waste bag handy	16	1
The faeces don't need to be picked up	14	1
Don't know	11	1
Missing	27	1
Total	2,118	101

Responsibilities of AMOs

Owners were asked what they think Animal Management Officers (AMOs) are responsible for and allowed to choose multiple responses from the list of options provided.

Table 15 shows the key perceived responsibility of AMOs is to “pick up stray dogs” as a responsibility of AMOs, with a fairly even distribution of results for other responsibilities, except “picking up faeces”. 17% of respondents were unable to indicate what AMOs are responsible for, reflected by the “Don’t know” responses.

Table 15: Responsibilities of Animal Management Officers

	n	%
Picking up stray dogs	1341	63
Registering dogs	1045	49
Investigating reports of dog fights / incidents	900	42
Monitoring dog parks	861	41
Investigating reports of animal cruelty	817	39
Writing dog legislation	567	27
Picking up dog faeces	78	4
Don't know	361	17
Total	5,970	282

Responsibilities of the Board

Owners were asked what they think the Dog & Cat Management Board in South Australia are responsible for and allowed to choose multiple responses from the list of options provided.

Table 16 shows writing dog legislation is considered a responsibility of the Board by significantly more people than other options ($p < 0.05$). There is some crossover between the results seen in Tables 15 and 16 – e.g. registering dogs, investigating reports of dog fights or incidents' and investigating reports of animal cruelty. This suggests some degree of belief that responsibilities of the AMOs and the Board overlap.

41% of respondents were unable to identify any responsibilities of the Board, as compared to only 17% for AMOs. This would suggest that people know a lot less about the Board as compared to AMOs.

Table 16: The Board in SA is responsible for...

	n	%
Writing dog legislation	836	39
Investigating reports of animal cruelty	507	24
Investigating reports of dog fights / incidents	417	20
Registering dogs	385	18
Picking up stray dogs	308	15
Monitoring dog parks	293	14
Picking up dog faeces	52	2
Don't know	858	41
Total	3,656	173

FINDINGS: OBEDIANCE TRAINING

This section reports on questions related to puppy preschool and obedience training. Most of the data for this section comes from the 2010 survey, which included a series of questions related to obedience training. This was not the case with other years, which chose to focus on other issues.

Dog obedience training

Both the 2009 and 2010 surveys asked about the level of obedience training the owner's most recently acquired dog had achieved. Table 17 shows it was most common for dogs to have not attended puppy pre-school or obedience training (neither) across both years.

However, the relative proportion of dogs receiving no professional training rose significantly ($p < 0.05$) between years, from 45% to 52%, while dogs that attended both significantly dropped, from 14% to 8%.

Table 17: Your most recently acquired dog has/or is currently attending...

	2009		2010	
	n	%	n	%
Puppy pre-school	426	17	191	16
Obedience training	601	24	256	21
Both of these	343	14	100	8
Neither of these	1,115	45	620	52
Missing	-	-	34	3
Total	2,485	100	1,201	100

Puppy preschool location (2010)

Table 18 shows that, of the dogs that attended puppy preschool, it was much more common the courses to be attended at a vet clinic (57%) compared to obedience clubs (18%).

Table 18: Where were/are these puppy preschool classes held?

	n	%
Veterinary clinic	167	57
Obedience club	51	18
In both of these locations	4	1
Other	11	4
Missing	61	21
Total	291	101

The "Other" locations included: private dog trainers, dog busters and DOGS (private dog school), amongst others. However, the frequency of these responses was not recorded.

Length of attendance at puppy pre-school (2010)

Almost half (47%) of owners who had attended puppy preschool, attended for five or more weeks.

Table 19: How many weeks did you attend puppy preschool?

	n	%
1 week	15	5
2 weeks	12	4
3 weeks	22	8
4 weeks	93	32
5 or more weeks	137	47
Missing	12	4
Total	291	100

Length of the course (2010)

It was most common for courses to run for at least five weeks (44%). However, four-week courses were also prevalent (34%). The “other” responses were not recorded.

Table 20: How many weeks does/did the Puppy preschool run for?

	n	%
3 weeks	13	4
4 weeks	98	34
5 or more weeks	127	44
Other	27	9
Missing	26	9
Total	291	100

Name of the organisation (2010)

There was a large spread of responses to the question asking respondents the name of the organisation that ran/or is running the puppy preschool. Rather than listing every response here, Table 21 shows the most frequently mentioned organisations.

“Unspecified vet” was the most common response (10%), suggesting that many people either could not remember the correct name of their vet, or misinterpreted the question, this may also be the reason for the higher number of missing responses. Of vet clinics that were named specifically, Semaphore and Chandlers Hill were the most commonly mentioned, but still only by seven and six respondents respectively.

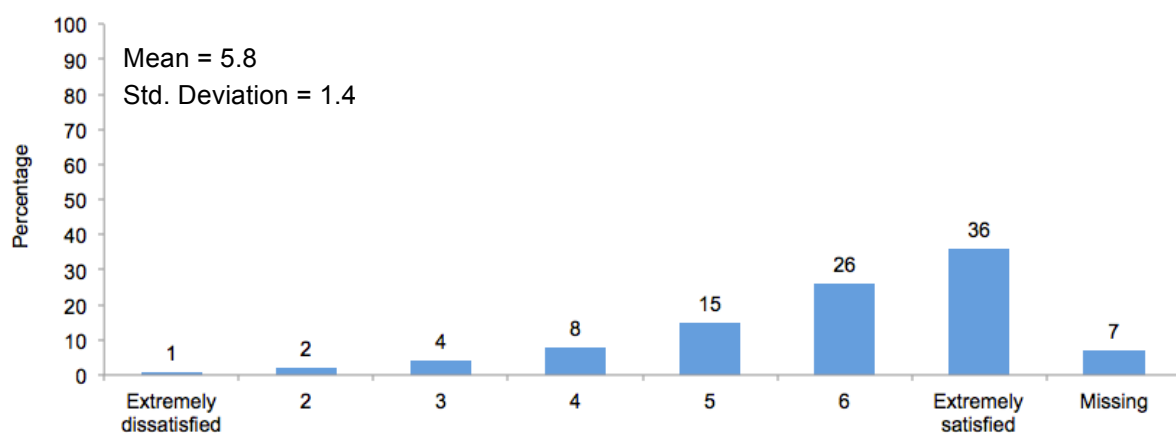
Table 21: Name of the Puppy preschool organisation

	n	%
Unspecified vet	28	10
Semaphore Veterinary Surgery	7	2
Chandlers Hill Veterinary Hospital	6	2
Other	141	48
Missing	109	37
Total	291	99

Satisfaction with puppy preschool (2010)

Respondents were asked to rate their puppy preschool experience, where a score of one indicates that they were “extremely dissatisfied” and a score of seven indicates they were “extremely satisfied”. Figure 1 charts the results, where the x-axis is the score the respondent gave, and the y-axis is the percentage of total responses.

Figure 1: How would you rate your puppy preschool experience?



The distribution of responses skewed towards the positive end of the scale, with a low standard deviation, suggesting the majority of respondents were satisfied with their experience, as evidenced by the mean score of 5.7 (out of 7). Such a distribution is common in satisfaction research, but a positive result nevertheless.

Level of obedience reached (2010)

Results in Table 22 are from respondents who said their dog had or was attending a puppy preschool or obedience club (or both) at the time of survey. Seven in 10 respondents said that their most recently acquired dog has reached basic obedience, while a further two in ten had achieved advanced intelligence. Only 6% of respondents said that their dog had gained agility from obedience courses.

Table 22: What level of obedience has your dog reached?

	n	%
Basic obedience	383	70
Advanced obedience	95	17
Agility	31	6
Missing	38	7
Total	547	100

Length of attendance at obedience training (2010)

Of dogs that had attended an obedience-training course (separate from puppy preschool), attendance to obedience training was quite long-term; almost a third of respondents had attended obedience training for more than one year. Comparatively, only 4% attended for less than eight weeks.

Table 23: How long has your dog attended obedience classes for?

	n	%
<8 weeks	15	4
8 weeks to 6 months	98	28
>6 months to 1 year	52	15
>1 year	109	31
Missing	82	23
Total	356	101

FINDINGS: OWNER DEMOGRAPHICS

A limited amount of descriptive data was collected about the owners themselves – how old they were, in what kind of residence they lived, and where they lived (i.e. postcode).

Age of respondents

There was a fairly even spread of age categories. The age categories were well matched to ABS statistics, however, people over 61 years old were under-represented and people between 36 and 45 years old were over-represented when compared to the general population. As such, the results discussed in this report may not accurately represent the opinions and behaviours of people who are 61 years of age, or older.

Table 24: Age of respondents

	2010		2011		ABS %
	n	%	n	%	
18 to 25 years of age	151	13	329	16	12
26 to 35 years of age	210	17	350	17	16
36 to 45 years of age	336	28	530	25	19
46 to 60 years of age	350	29	618	29	33
61 or more years of age	135	11	267	13	20
Missing	19	2	24	1	-
Total	1201	100	2118	101	100

Living arrangement

It was, by far, more common for respondents to live in a house (85%) than any other living arrangement. Farms (when inclusive of hobby farms) were the next most common response (8%).

Table 25: Types of residence

	2010		2011	
	N	%	n	%
House	1031	86	1782	84
Unit or Townhouse	52	4	87	4
Hobby farm	52	4	95	4
Farm	38	3	111	5
Apartment	2	<1	6	<1
Missing	6	<1	26	1
Other*	20	2	11	1
Total	1201	99	2118	99

*"Studio" was an option in 2010 but not 2011. It is grouped into "Other" in 2010 in this table.

Postcodes

Postcodes are sorted into local council areas (or regions in outermost suburbs) for reporting purposes. The spread of responses by local council area can be seen in Table 26.

Respondents were widely spread across the state, with only a small number of respondents indicating that they lived interstate. The largest representations from any one council area were Onkaparinga (14% in 2010, 13% in 2011), Salisbury (10% in 2010, 8% in 2011), Port Adelaide Enfield (8% in 2010, 7% in 2011) and Playford (8% in both years); these are some of the biggest council areas in the state.

Table 26: Where owners lived (by local council or region)

	2010		2011	
	n	%	n	%
Onkaparinga	170	14	274	13
Salisbury	122	10	168	8
Port Adelaide Enfield	101	8	143	7
Playford	94	8	160	8
Charles Sturt	89	7	100	5
Mitcham	83	7	161	8
Tee Tree Gully	81	7	187	9
Marion	77	6	122	6
Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula & Limestone Coast	70	6	168	8
West Torrens	49	4	55	3
Unley	33	3	54	3
Campbelltown	29	2	54	3
Burnside	28	2	66	3
Barossa, Riverland & Mallee	26	2	50	2
Gawler	25	2	12	1
Yorke Peninsula & Lower Mid North	22	2	33	2
Holdfast Bay	20	2	73	3
Norwood, Payneham & St Peters	17	1	48	2
Prospect	13	1	20	1
Mid North & Lower Flinders Ranges	12	1	26	1
Adelaide City	11	1	8	<1
Far North	5	1	6	<1
Eyre Peninsula	4	1	10	<1
Walkerville	-	-	25	1
Unknown*	2	<1	4	<1
Missing	-	-	45	2
Other - Australia	18	1	46	2
Total	1201	99	2118	101

*Postcode was provided but does not exist.

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY 2011

Dog Owner Questionnaire



Government of South Australia
Dog and Cat Management Board

Please circle appropriate answer

- 01** How many dogs in total reside at your home
1 2 3 4 5 or more

If you have more than one dog, please complete this survey ONLY about your most recently acquired dog

- 02** What breed is your most recently acquired dog? (If a cross-breed, please indicate with 'cross-breed')
-

- 03** How old is your most recently acquired dog?
a Baby puppy 8-12 weeks
b Puppy 12 weeks- 12 months
c Adult 1- 8 years
d Senior 8 years plus

- 04** How old was this dog when you acquired it?
a 8- 12 weeks
b 12 weeks- 6 months
c 6 months- 1 year
d 1- 8 years
e 8 years plus

- 05** Where did you obtain your most recently acquired dog?
a DogsSA registered breeder
b Other breeder
c Pet shop
d Newspaper
e Animal shelter
f Internet
g Friend
h Other: _____

- 06** What sex is your dog?
a Male
b Female

- 07** Your dog is
a Desexed
b Microchipped
c Neither

- 08** At what age was your dog desexed?
-

- 09** Has your dog exhibited the following behaviours? (circle as many as required)

- a** Digging garden
b Inappropriate chewing of items (not toys)
c Persistent barking for no reason
d Aggression towards dogs
e Aggression towards people
f Aggression around food
g Whining
h Jumping
i Biting
j Excessive licking
k Eating inappropriate items
l Anxiety/ nervousness
m Other: _____
n None of the behaviours

- 10** If you selected one of the behaviours in the previous question, have you sourced information to address this behaviour? If yes, please select on the most helpful source.

- a** Vet
b Friends/ family
c Internet
d Face to face source (eg behaviouralist) located through internet/phone book
e Books
f Obedience club
g By posting on an internet forum (inc Facebook etc) and requesting assistance
h My own experience
i I have not sourced any information
j Not applicable

- 11** Please describe your regularity of visits to fenced dog parks;
- a Regular (3+ visits per week)
 - b Frequent (1- 2 visits per week)
 - c Infrequent (at least once per month)
 - d Very rarely or never

The following questions relate to your knowledge of dog management and control in SA

- 12** When do you have a legal obligation to keep your dog on a lead?
- a At all times outside my property
 - b At all times outside my property except when in a designated off-lead area
 - c When I see another dog approaching
 - d Not required if my dog is well-trained
 - e Only when in a park or other public space
 - f On the beach
 - g Outside of specific times
 - h I don't know
- 13** Who is responsible for picking up your dog's faeces outside your property?
- a The council
 - b You, the owner, at all times
 - c You, the owner, if there is access to a council-installed roll of waste bags
 - d You, the owner, if you have a waste bag handy
 - e The faeces don't need to be picked up
 - f I don't know
- 14** The animal management officers at my local council are responsible for (circle as many as appropriate):
- a Registering dogs
 - b Writing dog legislation
 - c Picking up stray dogs
 - d Picking up dog faeces
 - e Monitoring dog parks
 - f Investigating reports of animal cruelty
 - g Investigating reports of dog fights/ incidents
 - h I don't know

- 15** The Dog and Cat Management Board in SA is responsible for (circle as many as appropriate):
- a Registering dogs
 - b Writing dog legislation
 - c Picking up stray dogs
 - d Picking up dog faeces
 - e Monitoring dog parks
 - f Investigating reports of animal cruelty
 - g Investigating reports of dog fights/ incidents
 - h I don't know

Questions about you, the dog owner

- 16** Your age is
- a 18-25
 - b 26-35
 - c 36-45
 - d 46-60
 - e 61 plus
- 17** You currently live in a/an
- a Apartment
 - b Unit/ townhouse
 - c House
 - d Hobby farm
 - e Farm
 - f Other: _____
- 18** Your postcode is: _____

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please hand it to one of the staff to receive a FREE GIFT Courtesy of the Dog and Cat Management Board and your local Council.