EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

NO. 97 OF 1995

Section 22 of the Animal Welfare Act 1992 provides that the Minister may approve codes of practice relating to animal welfare.

The Code of Practice for the Handling of Companion Animals in Pounds and Shelters in the ACT was prepared by a joint working party of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee together with representatives of the ACT Dog Control Unit, the RSPCA, Animal Liberation and the Canberra Kennel Association.

The ACT Animal Welfare Advisory Committee endorsed the Code of Practice for adoption in the ACT in May 1995.

The provisions of the Code are detailed in the Attachment.

The purpose of the Code is to specify the requirements for the handling of animals housed in pounds and shelters within the Australian Capital Territory, with emphasis on dogs and cats.

The Code aims to ensure that all animals in pounds and shelters receive proper treatment consistent with the need to maintain their comfort, security and well being at all times. This includes ensuring that all reasonable action is taken to reunite animals with their owners, or where relocation occurs, to place animals in safe and caring permanent homes.

Section 2 details the responsibilities of the Manager and of animal attendants and requires that veterinary assistance is available when necessary.

Section 3 describes the housing standard required, including construction, size, drainage, temperature, lighting, ventilation, bedding and security.

Section 4 specifies the animal carers' responsibilities during transport and the requirements in relation to the vehicles used.

Section 5 outlines impoundment procedures including capture, admission, identification and quarantine.

Section 6 details daily care requirements including diet, health, cleaning and disinfection, vermin control, and physiological needs of animal in pounds and shelters.

Section 7 discusses release to the owner or adoption by a new owner.

Section 8 describes appropriate methods of euthanasia and disposal of the bodies.