

I urge you to support the Animals (Regulation of Sale) Bill. Each year in NSW more than 60 000 cats and dogs are euthanased in council pounds. The bill is an essential first step to reducing this tragic statistic.

Below is an account of just one of the many tens of thousands of animals abandoned each year in our state, he is one of the lucky ones able to have been rescued.

Name: Sailor

Species: Dog

Breed: Maltese x poodle

Sex: Male

Approximate age: 13 months old



Condition upon rescue: Frightened, with some behavioral problems. He was very anxious that he will be in trouble. Physically he was under weight and has matted fur.

Sailor's Story

For over two years the surrounding residents have listened to Sailor's barking – night, day and in all kinds of weather. The only time he was not barking, was when he was crying.

Sailor was purchased from a pet shop with his sister. The family who bought them had never intended owning pets, but their youngest daughter was desperate to take them home, and her parents were eager to please her.

Sadly, a few weeks later their second daughter began to develop a skin allergy which was triggered by contact with the dogs. Immediately they tried to return the dogs to the pet shop where they had been bought, but because they were now a few weeks older, the family were told 'no'.

Instead the family bought two chains and a kennel and resolved to keep both puppies (now 3 months old) chained outside in the garden on a permanent basis. At least they had each other.

These two tiny toy sized puppies spent most of the time crying and barking. Both parents worked and the two children were at school during the day, so their distress largely went unnoticed. At night if they caused too much noise, the puppies were *locked* inside their kennel.

Many months passed, and the family lost all interest in even grooming them or taking them for their weekly short walks. The neighbours found strategies to cope with the noise, but there were many disputes as a result.

After six months of living this way – tied to the same spot each and every day - Sailor mated with his sister. When the owners realised what had happened, they quickly 'got rid of' the female dog (they would not expand on this) and Sailor was now alone.

When the family decided to move to a larger house, they decided not to take Sailor, who had become an increasing source of tension and inconvenience. So they contacted a welfare agency to ask for advice.

Since entering the care of a rescue group, Sailor has become a very different dog. He is now allowed inside the house, he sleeps in a warm and dry bed and receives plenty of cuddles. It has taken him a great deal of time to become confident with interacting with people, but he is gradually learning what it means to be safe, loved and a part of a family.