

# MEDIA RELEASE

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Promoting  
Responsible  
Dog  
Ownership



## Higgins heads largest vet practice in Australia at Sydney Royal Easter Show

Veterinarian and **Dogs NSW** spokesman **Dr Peter Higgins** manages vet operations for the Small Animal Section for the 14 days of the Sydney Royal Easter Show. Commencing at 7am on 9 April until 22 April 2009, he is responsible for the wellbeing of 5000 dogs, 1500 cats and the hundreds of mice, rats, cavies, caged birds, and rabbits being exhibited during the show, making it the largest veterinary practice in Australia.

**Dr Higgins'** other duties include animal examination and attending to emergencies. He is also the official commentator. "It is a bit of a cross between educating the public about animals and also entertaining them. I have always tried to 'give 'em a Show'." **Dr Higgins** stated. This will be the 18<sup>th</sup> year that he has held the position, demonstrating his passion for helping animals, the public, and the Easter Show itself.

"It's a demanding role that always has me on my feet for 12 hours a day, but I believe that it's one of the best ways to experience the Sydney Royal Easter Show and the world class exhibits that are there. And it is personally very satisfying to be the person responsible for their health and welfare.", exclaimed **Dr Higgins**. "People ask why do I do it. I think I was born with sawdust in my veins. I'm basically a 'Showie'." he added.

In 2004 **Dr Higgins** was awarded the prestigious "Contributor of the Year Award" by the Royal Agricultural Society. "The Royal Agricultural Society is a fantastic organisation and manages to not only to successfully bring the country to the city but also balance the role of steering the Agricultural industry into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, whilst maintaining the good traditions of the past.", declared **Dr Higgins**.

One of **Dr Higgins'** main achievements is pioneering and implementing the dog drug testing program at the Sydney Royal Easter Show, a world first for agricultural shows. Now in its eighth year of its application, the program targets owners who use illegal substances to sedate hyperactive dogs, pep up quiet and shy dogs, or try to cover injuries that would normally prevent them from competing.

"I'm glad to see we don't get substance abuse happening at the Show, but putting this program in place makes sure owners and breeders are doing the right thing by their animals.", said **Dr Higgins**.

**Dogs NSW** representatives will also be at the Show, giving advice on responsible dog ownership and advising future owners on suitable dog breeds.

\*\*\* ENDS \*\*\*

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