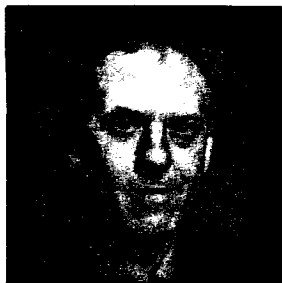


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# Election '95

## Tom Lonsdale



Tom Lonsdale has enjoyed 45 years of a varied life. Born in the UK, he attended the Royal Veterinary College, London, graduating in 1972. He taught in Kenya on a voluntary basis. A one-year stint at the London School of Economics helped him gain a social, economic and philosophical perspective. His practice experience includes small animals, mixed practice and zoo animals.

In 1981 he established a four-location, mixed practice in outer Western Sydney. He now has a three-person, two-location small animal practice. He has been a member of the AVA since 1982. Tom has written a number of papers and delivered a number of lectures on pet animal health, in particular, the link between diet and periodontal disease in dogs and cats. He has contested two previous Executive elections.

## Support sought for self regulation

Dr Lonsdale believes that the issue of self regulation of the profession will dominate the AVA election.

"We must safeguard that privilege by fearlessly identifying our problems, providing a diagnosis and then proceeding to a remedy," he said. "In this way, we can honour our compact with society in the provision of timely, effective advice regarding all aspects of animal care. My candidacy in this election is founded on these beliefs."

Dr Lonsdale said that the most pressing problem of self-regulation is that 30 years ago, due to lack of vigilance, the profession allowed "economic colonialists" free entry to develop their pet food culture. "At the time we were scientifically and socially naive and, as a community, we were persuaded to favour foreign-owned, expensive items over the superior, cheap local produce. Given the

difficulty of correcting culturally conditioned errors it must be a concern to all Australians that the AVA and various government departments are still in denial over this issue. When we stop the internal battles over this absurdity, we can re-direct our resources for the good of the community. Everyone from either side of the debate will have a role in retrieving our credibility and setting about the task of re-education," he said.

He said his approach as a practice manager was to methodically identify and isolate problems. "By building on basic principles, common sense and past achievements we can steer a way forward. Free speech has been restored to the letters page of the AVA News and thus, the voice of the individual members has been retained in the Association's affairs.

"The landmark *Diet and Disease Report* was published and Australian pets consequently reap the benefit. I am confident that very much more can be achieved as an elected representative.

"For the future I envisage a renaissance for the profession as we show a lead in animal welfare, the human economy and the natural environment. New environmentally-friendly industries should emerge for the feeding of the world's pets. Spin-off benefits would likely include solutions for our feral goat, rabbit and kangaroo problems. Our farming communities and our children should obtain a sounder economy and a better environment. Veterinarians working in primary industry, government, teaching and general practice should all gain a new importance.

"In all things, timing and information are crucial. It is my view that for the first year of Executive membership I shall bring a welcome outsider's view whilst learning the ropes of the organisation. In 1996/7, the presidential year, I shall make myself available to meet the needs of the Association. The purpose of the AVA is to serve all the members and this can only be achieved by constant rejuvenation with new ideas and new members.

"Of course the budget must balance. As a practitioner I am well aware of the need to be available, whether in person or on the phone, and I can be contacted on (02) 627 4011.

"This important decision is yours. I urge you to post your vote for the self-regulation and self-determination of our profession," he said.

