



INQUIRY INTO POUNDS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

HEARING – Tuesday 14 November 2023

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

Inner City Strays

1. How would you describe the state of the pound and rehoming sector at the moment?
We've had other witnesses say it's reached a crisis point, what is your perspective?
2. Can you talk about the role rescue groups play in the rehoming system and the degree to which pounds rely on rescue groups?
 - a. Is it commonly the case that there are more requests from pounds than rescue groups can cope with? If so, what kind of pressure does this put on you as a volunteer organisation?
 - b. How can the State Government better support rescue groups, so that they are able to support pounds by rehoming animals and reducing euthanasia rates?

1. I agree that the pound and rehoming sector is in crisis point. I believe rescues are also at crisis point. There needs to be a pro active and humane approach to the over population of cats and the issue of irresponsible pet ownership.

The quantity of animals needing help is quite literally off the charts and those finding themselves in the rescue sector are the lucky needles in the haystack.

A campaign to desex and implement pro active measures to curb the cat population is imperative. A negative campaign such as culling has been proven ineffective to cat population numbers and has a detrimental affect on the mental health of rescuers, pound staff and the cat loving community.

2. Pounds actively rely on rescues to take cats that need intense help; such as neonatal babies, cats needing medical intervention or cats that are not coping physically or mentally in the pound - many of these cases are cats that may die if a rescue cannot help.

a- Rescue groups are inundated with calls for help from both the pounds and members of the public. Sadly there are always cats that stay on Emergency Pound Lists for sometime before - and if - a rescue can take them. For the rescuer it is an enormous pressure as we know - if we cannot take the cat - it may die or be put to sleep. Inner City Strays has taken many cats that were to be put to sleep if we could not take.

It is easy for rescuers to ideally want to limit numbers in care but when an animals life is at risk it puts an enormous burden on the rescue community and many rescuers can find it hard to say no.

2b - The City of Sydney has implemented a Street cat Rehoming Program which has been hugely successful.

The City enables partner rescue organisations to act as a satellite shelter for their impounded cats. The City pays the desex, vaccination and microchip costs of these animals and the rescue group keeps the homing fee - thus enabling the group to buy supplies such as litter, food, worming and parasite medications. I would like to see State Government supporting other councils with such a pro active measure.

An incentive to desex cats is imperative as is a incentive to microchip. Many people do not understand the Registration process and sadly many microchipped cats are not registered. This needs to be simplified.

Incentives need to be given rather than disincentives - fining people for desexing a cat older than 4 months of age does not work. People are already struggling financially and sadly this just persuades people to not chip or register their cat