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**From:** Kristina Vesk  
**Sent:** Sunday, 19 January 2025 2:55 PM  
**To:** Animal Welfare  
**Subject:** CM: RE: Inquiry into the management of cat populations in New South Wales – Post-hearing responses – 16 December 2024  
**Attachments:** QoN CPS re impact of DX numbers.pdf; QoN CPSNSW re best practice.pdf; QoN CPSNSW re LGNSW proposed changes to CAA.pdf; Supplementary question re One Welfare.pdf; SuppQ CPSNSW re mapping.pdf; Letter to AWC clarifying DIVA.pdf



Hello

I did finish these on Friday night, but I was too tired to proofread then ... please find attached answers to questions on notice, supplementary questions and a letter to clarify an answer that I gave at the hearing.

Thank you  
Kristina

**Kristina Vesk OAM | Chief Executive Officer**

The Cat Protection Society of NSW Limited

**Adoption Centre** 103 Enmore Road Newtown NSW 2042

**Welfare & Education Centre and Cat Boutique** 214 Marrickville Road Marrickville NSW 2204

## **NSW Legislative Council Animal Welfare Committee**

### **Inquiry into the management of cat populations in New South Wales**

Hearing: 16 December 2024

- Clarification of comments provided at the hearing by Kristina Vesk, Cat Protection Society of NSW, regarding the DIVA Cats program.

At the hearing on 16 December 2024, the Hon Abigail Boyd asked me, “Under that DIVA program, how much per cat do you think the desexing cost would be?”

At the hearing, I mentioned prices were different at different clinics and whether the cat was male or female, but that an average cost was about \$350 including vaccination and chipping.

I think my answer was not clear, or that I misunderstood the question. In any case, I wish to clarify that issue.

The ‘\$350’ I referred to was an estimated average cost per cat that Cat Protection pays to vets. Under the DIVA Cats program, cats are health checked, vaccinated, desexed, microchipped, and flea- and worm-treated. Surgery costs vary (eg male, female, pregnant) and some cats need extra veterinary care or might need to be kept overnight after surgery. Some cats have already been chipped or have been parasite- treated recently. Every patient is different but overall, the \$350 average cost is a reasonable estimation. Different vets charge different prices within an overall fee schedule that has been agreed with Cat Protection. I noted at the hearing, and I wish to reiterate, that the fees vet clinics charge us are significantly discounted, and that most vet clinics lose money doing desexings, but they keep those fees low for the social good.

Importantly, however, clients of DIVA Cats do not pay \$350.

Clients of DIVA Cats pay us \$10 per cat, up to a maximum fee of \$20 per client, irrespective of the number of cats they have desexed under the program.

As Cat Protection noted in our submission, many of our DIVA clients never chose to have cats, desexed or otherwise – the cats turned up and the clients wanted to help them and stop the population from growing. One mum cat could easily have six kittens: not many people could afford to desex seven cats, but most people can manage \$20. We’re putting that money back into the program.

After a DIVA Cats client’s cat has been desexed and we get the paperwork from the vet, we then register the cat (we are an authorised registration agent, so we do the work of entering the details into the Companion Animal Register that normally a council would do). We send the registration certificate and cat care information to the client, and as with all our clients, we invite them to get in touch with us if they have any questions or want to share news about their cat/s. We pay the vets; the vets

aren't dependent on individual clients paying (or delaying appointments because they don't have money).

The DIVA Cats program is funded by the NSW Government grant of \$1.5m for the period 2023-2025 and additionally is greatly supported by Cat Protection staff time that is not charged to the program. As noted earlier, fees from clients are minimal but are all directed back into the program.

We have other desexing programs which have various criteria and pricing, for example the Operation Cat programs that we run in and with the support of City of Sydney and Fairfield City Councils; and our discount desexing referral program.

We also offer Adopt-a-Stray for people who have found a stray cat and would like to adopt them; this program covers cat desexing, microchipping, vaccination and registration for only \$100, and also includes information and telephone support. This program receives no government funding and is fully subsidised by Cat Protection's generous supporters.

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17 January 2025