



Question on Notice for Blacktown City Council

(1) From: The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK: The reconciliation of impounded cats in 2023/2024, in particular the outcome of 692 remaining cats that were not reclaimed (13) or euthanased (188).

Response

The full reconciliation of incoming and outgoing cats at Blacktown Animal Rehoming Centre is detailed below. The data has been extracted from the Office of Local Government's *Annual survey of impounding facilities* for Blacktown City Council and the excerpt from the original submission has been provided.

In 2023/24, the outcome of the 692 remaining cats that were not reclaimed or euthanased that were desexed, vaccinated, health checked and adopted was that 540 were cats sold, 110 were given to an approved rescue agency, and 42 died whilst in care, often due to being neonates or not responding to treatment.

Incoming cats 2023/24

Stray	770
Surrendered	123
Total	893

Outcome of incoming sample

Reclaimed	13
Euthanased ¹	188
Sold	540
Rescue	110
Died	42
Total	893

¹ The breakdown of euthanasia reasons reported:

- Requested by owner (6)
- Sick/untreatable (90)
- Feral/infant (65)
- Unsuitable behaviour (27)

The excerpt from our original submission: *Blacktown City Council Response to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the management of cat populations in New South Wales*

Cat intake vs. reclaim rate and euthanasia rate

Year	Cat intake	Reclaimed by owner	Percentage	Euthanased	Percentage
2023/24	893	13	1.4%	188	21%



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(2) From The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Which Victorian Council would be a model for NSW to adopt for the adequate management of cats including resourcing and funding subsidies.

what are the particular restrictions in relation to, say, the Companion Animals Act here or rental regulations that would restrict us from doing the same thing? Can we do it as well? What would restrict us from doing that? Where's the money coming from?

Response

We thank the Member for their question regarding the management of domestic cats in New South Wales and the possibility of adopting best practice models from Victoria.

A standout example in Victoria is the City of Greater Bendigo, which has been recognised for its comprehensive approach to cat management. Bendigo has implemented 24-hour cat containment, subsidised desexing programs and targeted community education campaigns. Importantly, these initiatives have been supported through local government funding, state grants and strategic partnerships with animal welfare organisations, ensuring both community engagement and sustainability.

In NSW, our legislative framework is primarily governed by the *Companion Animals Act 1998*. While the Act does provide councils with powers to regulate companion animals, including cats, there are key differences from Victorian legislation. Notably, NSW does not currently mandate state-wide cat containment or desexing, although councils can adopt local policies and ordinances to that effect. Legislative amendments would be required for a broader, standardised approach similar to Victoria's.

In terms of rental regulations, current NSW tenancy laws do not provide a clear pathway for renters to keep pets, including cats, by default. This presents an indirect barrier to responsible pet ownership and can undermine efforts at effective cat population control, particularly in areas with high rental rates populations. Comparatively, Victoria's rental reforms in 2020 gave renters the right to keep pets with landlord consent, which cannot be unreasonably withheld — a measure that supports stable and accountable pet ownership.

In response to 'Can we do it here in NSW?', the short answer is yes, but it would require a coordinated effort involving:

- legislative review and potential amendment to the *Companion Animals Act 1998*
- reform of rental legislation to better support responsible pet ownership
- commitment to resourcing from both local and state levels of government.

'What would restrict us?' would be:

- legislative constraints as outlined
- varying capacity and willingness of local councils to implement and fund such programs
- a lack of dedicated, sustainable funding streams
- gaps in public awareness and education around responsible cat ownership.

And, 'Where's the money coming from?':

In Victoria, councils have accessed a combination of:

- State government animal welfare grants
- partnerships with NGOs and veterinary services to subsidise costs
- allocation of municipal funds as part of environmental and community health strategies.

For NSW, similar funding mechanisms could be explored. This includes expanding existing state programs, creating new grant streams tied to biodiversity and urban wildlife protection, and encouraging council-led initiatives backed by clear state policy support.

In conclusion, with the appropriate legal, financial and administrative support, there is no inherent reason why NSW could not adopt or even exceed the Victorian model in cat management. It is a matter of political will, inter-agency cooperation and ensuring that communities are equipped and resourced to take the lead.