

**Submission
No 57**

INQUIRY INTO POUNDS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Inner City Strays

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Inner City Strays - Submission to the Inquiry into Pounds in NSW

Inner City Strays is a registered charity. We are an official NSW State Government rehoming organisation, allowing us to take kittens and cats from pounds to alleviate the pressure on the pounds. We also act as a satellite shelter for the City of Sydney Council for cats and kittens found in their LGA. Our submission is as follows:

Terms of Reference #	Inner City Stray's response
(1a) resourcing challenges affecting New South Wales pounds, including the adequacy of funding given towards the operation of pounds by local and state governments	<p>It's currently a dire situation in Sydney for stray cats.</p> <p>Adoptions are at a standstill. Those few homes looking for their cat are searching a saturated marketplace.</p> <p>Rescues are full. Pounds are full - and having to clear space by offering half price adoptions.</p>
(1b) the adequacy of pound buildings and facilities in New South Wales	<p>Lithgow pound is a convertible shed operating next to Lithgow tip. The facility does not meet the standard expected by residents of NSW.</p>
(1c) welfare challenges facing animals in pounds across New South Wales, including the provision of housing, bedding, feeding, exercise, enrichment, veterinary treatment, vaccination and desexing	<p>Despite the efforts of the many pound staff who are compassionate people doing their best, we are finding that usually the cats we are taking in from the pound are in poor condition, both mentally and physically. Cats are often stressed in pound environments and the overpopulation means staff have little time to spend with them. Timid cats have little to no hope of being adopted unless a rescue takes them. The overpopulation being surrendered to pounds means that pounds rely heavily on rescues with any timid cat or cat with a behavioural or medical concern. We have received cats with raging infections, covered in faeces, pregnant, and cats in diabolical states.</p>



<p>(1d) the adequacy of the laws, regulations and codes governing New South Wales pounds, including the Companion Animals Act 1998 (NSW) and the NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice No 5 – Dogs and cats in animal boarding establishments (1996), as well as the adequacy of the current enforcement and compliance regime</p>	<p>The non desexed permit applied to all cats that are not desexed by 4 months of age has proven (to us) to be disastrous and we believe sadly a reason many cats are not desexed upon entering the pound system. Sadly many microchipped cats are not registered or owners’ details are out of date.</p>
<p>(1e) factors influencing the number of animals ending up in New South Wales pounds, and strategies for reducing these numbers</p>	<p>See (1i) Overpopulation of cats</p>
<p>(1f) euthanasia rates and practices in New South Wales pounds, including the adequacy of reporting of euthanasia rates and other statistics</p>	<p>See (1i) below Euthanasia rates are still far to high</p>
<p>(1g) the role and challenges of behavioural assessments in New South Wales pounds</p>	<p>Behavioural assessments are distressingly inadequate. Shy and timid cats that hiss should not be given a death sentence for behaving this way.</p>
<p>(1h) the relationship between New South Wales pounds and animal rescue organisations</p>	<p>Sadly pounds rely heavily on rescue organisations. Shy, timid and underage (neonatal) cats are an automatic callout for rescues as shelters do not have the resources. Often cats are put on a euthanasia schedule for things as simple as dentals, being FIV positive, ringworm, cat flu or needing surgery. Rescues</p>



	<p>are happy to help but staff at the pounds need to have other options available for these animals.</p> <p>The State Government needs to initiate strategies to help pounds by looking at the overpopulation of cats. Culling has proven again and again to be ineffective and is received poorly in the community. Humane and more proactive solutions are needed.</p>
<p>(1i) the challenges associated with the number of homeless cats living in New South Wales for both pounds and animal rescue organisations, and strategies for addressing this issue</p>	<p>The current ‘solution’ of euthanising stray cats is cruel and has demonstrably failed – see https://theconversation.com/australian-shelters-and-pounds-kill-50-000-mostly-healthy-cats-and-kittens-in-a-year-theres-a-way-to-prevent-this-pointless-killing-201947 .</p> <p>The only humane way to reduce the numbers of homeless cats is to neuter them and prevent the inevitable population explosions occurring. The burden and considerable expense for doing this has been borne by members of the public for decades now, often by people who really can’t afford it.</p> <p>Many human lives are devastated by post-traumatic stress as a result of killing treatable cats and dogs.</p> <p>The State Government needs to clamp down on undesexed cats being given away and initiate proactive incentives for members of the public to desex their cats. Backyard breeding needs to be outlawed. Pet shop adoptions unless done by a rescue need to be banned.</p>
<p>(1j) strategies for improving the treatment, care and outcomes for animals in New South Wales pounds</p>	<p>See (1i) above.</p> <p>In the past, the City of Sydney Council had a rehoming officer. We found this very helpful in the day-to-day management of our work.</p>



(1k) any other related matter.

Hopefully the breakthroughs in developing a lifetime contraceptive for female cats will change attitudes and options:

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2377074-one-off-injection-may-provide-lifetime-contraception-for-female-cats/>

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues in person.

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