

INQUIRY INTO ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: CatRescue 901

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INDEPENDENT ANIMAL WELFARE OFFICE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I have been with CatRescue for 15 years; first as a foster carer for CatRescue NSW and then eventually as a director when CatRescue 9NSW metamorphosed into CatRescue 901 for practical reasons after the director of CatRescue NSW moved to a different state.

I have sat here for 15 years (in Sydney) watching the stray cat population explode and the cruelty and cat hate grow horribly too. 15 years ago the street cat situation was somewhat manageable. Now it is just a joke. As this population has exploded and gets worse each year, we see the cats getting sicker and sicker and kittens being born with far more congenital deformities due to malnutrition.

It appears to have become the fashion for many not to desex then dump their cats when pregnant or with babies. These poor cats suffer horribly on the streets. It is way beyond the realm of rescuers to be able to cope with the probably well over 100,000 strays in Sydney. RSPCA estimates between 10,000 and 20,000 stray cats just in the Liverpool LGA.

The suffering I see on a daily basis is horrible. The amount of times in a day I have to say no to people asking us to help kittens, mums and babies or even stray adults they find is soul destroying.

When it comes to reporting the cruelty people see towards cats every day, seems the RSPCA and AWL are powerless to do anything. They need to be allowed to set up cameras and catch people in action so they can charge them with animal cruelty. I hear of people find cats clearly bashed to death or set alight found dead. People who care for colonies of stray cats see this repeatedly.

Hoarders and back yard breeders also create horrible issues for cats who effectively might as well be homeless given their health issues due to the poor care they are given when they are not desexed (this is normal) and they constantly breed.

A few years ago were involved in rescuing 9 kittens, all very sick, aged between 3 and 4 weeks. They were being given away for free on a facebook group. This is highly illegal yet nothing is ever done about it. Other people, with no experience, had wanted the kittens and frankly they would have all died without skilled care, quality food, vetting and medicine.

Kitten are dying on streets all day every day !!!! How is this acceptable? Why is noone doing anything?

Within 5 years I estimate we can improve the situation for these cats enormously with the following:

Make it illegal to sell animals on horrible places like Gumtree or Facebook unless licenced eg rescue groups and breeders.

Stop back yard breeding and hoarding which is contributing to the situation badly.

Bring in "Point Of Sale" desexing so it is illegal to sell a cat or kitten undesexed. It isn't hard to do this. Most in rescue only adopt cats out when they have had all their vetwork done.

And stop the very counter intuitive \$80 late desexing fee. Generally people who don't desex don't microchip so you will never find nor fine them. You are not helping the situation by fining the many people the \$80 late desexing fee when they are just trying to improve the situation by desexing as many cats as they can. We are all being "fined" for helping cats.

None of the above would be difficult to do.

Finally give the RSPCA and AWL inspectorate better laws to work under. We hear of so much abuse of cats and dogs and so often we report it but are told they don't have good enough laws to work with to do anything in most of these situations. This is sadly pathetic in this day and age.

NSW needs animal welfare reform now and we need an Animal Welfare Peak Body comprised of all stakeholders including some of the many rescuers working on the ground who know the reality of the horrid situation for cats (in our case).

Yours faithfully

CatRescue 901