

16th December 2024

Inquiry into the management of cats in NSW - Opening Statement

Good afternoon,

Chair – I ask that this statement be tabled.

I am Michelle Grayson, the Animal Care Australia Cat Representative and I am joined by Karri Nadazdy – Assistant to the President of Animal Care Australia

Animal Care Australia represents keepers and breeders of pets and companion animals nationally and our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care.

Animal Care Australia questions the appropriateness of the title of this Inquiry. We believe the focus of this Inquiry is not about cat management. It is about the responsible ownership of cats in NSW.

Whether that be ownership:

- by pet cat owners; or
- by government of its policies – including responsible funding – not the cheapest funding. By necessity, this must include responsible data collection & reporting, and most importantly, responsible education of the communities where the varying sets of cats exist that have different needs and how those different sets should be responsibly owned; or
- of the community cats, working cats and the stray cats; or,
- of the humane removal of feral cats.

We need to define what exactly are we trying to manage?

The simple answer is: there is not one definition and accordingly there is not one answer.

Animal care is animal welfare and we all must own that. What we don't need to do is bundle all cats into the same basket.

They each require different approaches with different policies all aimed at interconnecting the one goal: do more to protect the welfare outcomes of all cats.

In doing so we will not only protect the cats but native wildlife and other animals as well. They all deserve that.

We would like to thank the Chair and the Committee for inviting us to appear today and welcome your questions.