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PRESS RELEASE

ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE QLD WELCOMES NEW BILL TO REDUCE STRAYS

The Animal Welfare League of Qld is welcoming the compulsory registration and microchipping of cats and dogs outlined in the new Animal Management Cats and Dogs Bill 2008 introduced into Parliament by Local Government Minister Warren Pitt yesterday, saying it will help lower the rate of strays being euthanased in pounds and shelters each year.

AWL Qld Strategic Development Officer Joy Verrinder congratulated the State Government on their rapid progress with this Bill which includes the compulsory microchipping and registering of cats and dogs to ensure they can be quickly and safely reunited with their owners should they become lost," she said.

"The legislation will see the microchipping of all cats and dogs before they reach 12 weeks of age or when ownership is transferred from one owner to another," she said.

"While dogs have been required to be registered in cities for years, cats have been more casually owned, often unidentified and left to wander, resulting in many sociable cats turning up at pounds as strays. Consequently, only 5-7% of all cats are being reclaimed from pounds, whereas approximately 65% of dogs are reclaimed by their owners," she said.

"Many of these owned cats will join the lengthy list of cats being euthanased unless there is a strong rehoming program by the Council or animal welfare agency such as AWL Qld," she said.

"Rosie a two-year-old Domestic Short Hair cat is one the 1544 stray cats that have arrived at the AWL Qld shelter in the last year," she said.

"She is a beautiful well-kept affectionate cat who most definitely has been someones pet," she said.

"Yet she was not microchipped or registered and so is one of 38 cats currently at the AWL Qld Shelter looking for a new caring home," she said.

"As hundreds of kittens are now being born with the start of kitten breeding season, many adult cats will not get a home," she said.



“AWL Qld is very concerned that the new Bill does not require desexing prior to sale or transfer by 12 weeks of age, to prevent the birth of thousands of unwanted kittens across Queensland with no homes to go to. Microchipping and registration is not going to prevent this tragedy,” she said.

“Even if we reduce the large number of strays from our shelters through microchipping and registration, there is still going to be a high rate of unwanted kittens and puppies being born and consequently surrendered or dumped,” she said.

“We work so hard to find homes for the cats and dogs we already have in Queensland, but with so many more being born, refuges and rescue groups simply can’t keep up,” she said.

“While the State Government has allocated \$77 000 to Gold Coast City Council to trial accredited breeder permit systems over the next 2 years, it is an unnecessary delay that this has not been included in the Bill to be introduced across SE Qld by July next year and rolled out statewide in the next 2 years”.

“The Bill is a positive step towards lowering the rate of cats and dogs euthanised each year, but we still have a long way to go,” she said.

The AWL Qld cares for 10,000 of stray and unwanted cats and dogs every year on the Gold Coast and surrounding areas, with an average of 7500 animals returned to their owners or rehomed each year.

For further information please contact AWL Strategic Development Officer Joy Verrinder on (07) 5509 9027 or Public Relations Manager Kim Assim on (07) 5509 9030.

