

CAT ACT 2011

86. Mr I.M. BRITZA to the Minister for Local Government:

As we all know, the Cat Act 2011 was a well-debated bill when it was introduced into this place. Could the Minister for Local Government please provide an update to the house on the practical cat legislation—namely, its impact in Western Australia? Especially with metropolitan communities like mine in Morley, and particularly because our house has a young female cat, and Harry needs to know what is in line for her!

Mr A.J. SIMPSON replied:

I did not know that a female cat could be called “Harry”! As the Minister for Local Government, I suggest that the member for Morley should get her desexed, microchipped and registered with the local council. Please, do! I noticed a sigh of, “Oh, my goodness”, when the member for Morley stood up and spoke about the Cat Act 2011. I will take the opportunity to update the house on this legislation. We have made some great inroads on this alone. Members may remember that I provided an update to the house last year. Over 5 000 cats per year are being euthanised, which is nearly 100 cats a week. It was great to see in the paper last Sunday the report about the Cat Haven experiencing a considerable decrease in the amount of cats it has to euthanise, given the passage of the new legislation. When we step back and look at where we are with this legislation, we can see that each local government authority knows how many cats each person has in the area. Local governments are also receiving data to find out where the cats are. It is interesting to note that owners need to get their cat registered, and to receive the discount, owners also need to have their cat desexed and microchipped.

The legislation has been brought into line with the Dog Act 1976. As Minister for Local Government, we have addressed an issue that no-one in government has tried to address in years gone by and arrived at the point at which today we are not only seeing a reduction in the amount of cats being euthanised, but also recording some hard data. I acknowledge the member for Jandakot, who chaired the first committee to look into this, for his contribution to the legislation and for being the great animal lover that he is. As I said, it is great to see the reduction in the number of cats being euthanised. We can look at how we can help our community and, through my Department of Local Government and Communities, provide a subsidy towards the desexing of cats. It is a good news story for not only the people of Western Australia, but also the government’s commitment to cats.