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Media Release

28 October 2009

Cat Management Bill a historic achievement for cat welfare and protection of the environment

The Tasmanian Conservation Trust acknowledged the entry into Parliament yesterday of the Cat Management Bill 2009 as a historic achievement and probably one of David Llewellyn's most important achievements as a minister.

“The reason this government has succeeded where numerous previous efforts have failed is they have listened to the concerns of people who own and care for cats and those who wish to control cats from impacting on wildlife and livestock” said TCT Director Peter McGlone. “They have produced workable legislation that will empower those who want to control cats, reduce the number of unwanted and abandoned cats and put in place safeguards for peoples much loved pet cats.”

The Cat Management Bill proposes a phase-in of compulsory de-sexing and micro-chipping of pet cats, taking effect in 2014. After 2014 a pet cat that strays and is not de-sexed and micro-chipped will risk being destroyed, however no fines will apply. The other key elements of the legislation are to provide public and private land owners clarity on where and how they can destroy cats and providing a registration system for cat breeders. Fundamental to the Cat Management Bill are the twin goals of promoting the welfare of cats and reducing the impacts cats have on native wildlife and agricultural industries.

“The government has made it clear that compulsory de-sexing and micro-chipping of cats will be phased in over a four-year period, giving cat owners time to prepare for when de-sexing and micro-chipping will become compulsory.

“The legislation will require cat owners take responsibility for their pets in the same way that dog owners currently do. If cat owners care for their cats then they will get their cats de-sexed and micro-chipped and stop them straying. Responsible cat owners have nothing to fear from these proposals.

“De-sexing benefits cats by ensuring there are less unwanted kittens produced, to be abandoned and suffer a premature death, and micro-chipping ensures pet cats which stray are given a chance of being reunited with their owner.

“The TCT strongly supports measures in the legislation that permit owners of private reserves, farmers and owners of land isolated from other residences – as well as managers of Public Reserves and State Forest – to destroy any cat they find on their land.

The TCT urges the State Government to provide funding in the next State Budget to help subsidise the cost of de-sexing and micro-chipping of cats. “The Government will win over more cat owners and ensure the success of its proposed legislation if it funds a program to provide cut-price de-sexing and micro-chipping in the lead up to them becoming compulsory”.

Further information:

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