

CAT ACT 2011 — FUNDING ALLOCATION

401. Mr J.M. FRANCIS to the Minister for Local Government:

There was an allocation in this year's budget of some \$3.244 million to help organisations and local governments implement the Cat Act. Can the Minister for Local Government inform the house exactly how this money will be spent?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI replied:

I thank the member for that very unexpected question.

The overarching principle, of course, is to reduce the number of unowned cats in Western Australia. We are achieving that by encouraging responsible pet ownership. Coupled with that is the improvement through cat control legislation throughout the state. This state government has made \$3.24 million available over the next two years to provide assistance with the cost of implementing that legislation. I announced the Cat Act implementation program just yesterday. The funding package will help the local government sector to prepare for the administration of the act and enforcement of the legislation. It will also help low-income earners by subsidising the cost of sterilisation. The funding will be available on a competitive basis. The focus will be on collaboration and innovative solutions, particularly in the provision of cat management facilities, member for Jandakot. I would like to see a few major shared facilities across the metropolitan area and also in major regional centres.

Mr J.M. Francis: That's great news for cats.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Yes, it is great news for cats. A facility is not something that every local government needs to have. I want to see local governments and non-government organisations working together on good, workable solutions. I would also like to see local governments looking at existing facilities within their area such as veterinary clinics and catteries for partnering opportunities. I think that a few of those opportunities will be available. Small grants will also be available to every local government to help them cover the cost of microchip readers, cages and other equipment. Funding is also available to organisations to provide discounts for sterilisation of cats belonging to pensioners and low-income earners. This is a very responsible and targeted use of funds, and I think it will go a long way to seeing the great implementation of the act.

Several members interjected.

A government member: Wakey-wakey, Leader of the Opposition!

The SPEAKER: I give the call to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr M. McGOWAN: No supplementary?