

**ANNEXURE D**  
**COLONY CAT AUDIT**  
**Incorporating Welfare Assessment Criteria**



## Colony Cat Audit results

### Introduction:

Unitec undertook an independent audit to assess and compare the welfare between managed and unmanaged colony cats in Auckland. In this study, welfare assessments were performed that encompassed 5 indicators of welfare, namely:

- body condition,
- coat condition,
- nasal and/or ocular discharge,
- ear crusting and
- injury.

The welfare scale was then used in combination with a subjective **Quality of Life (QoL)** score.

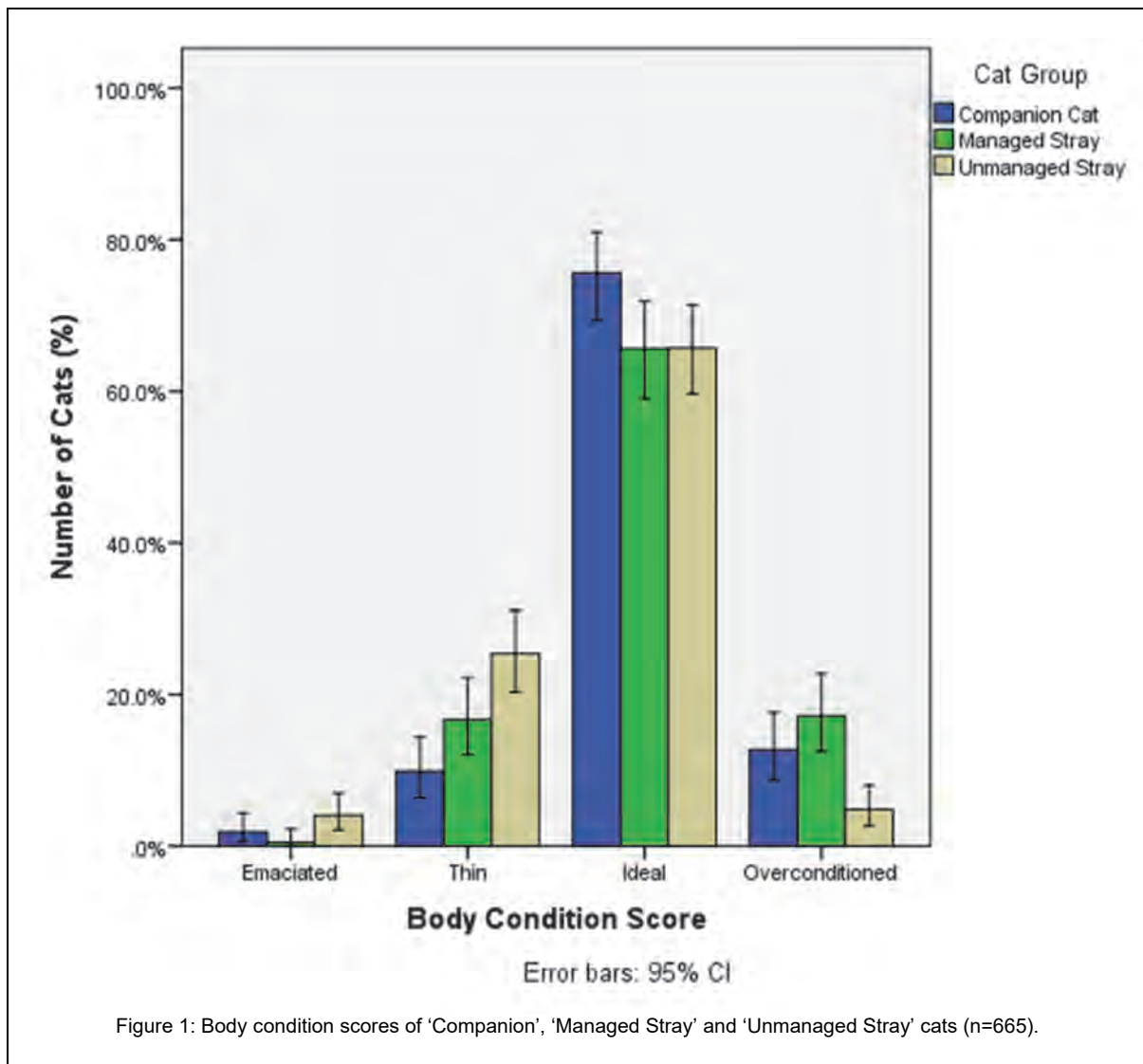
The welfare assessments (refer to the **Cat Welfare Assessment Criteria** refer on the last page of this document) were conducted over a 12 month period from November 2013 to November 2014 on 676 cats in Auckland, New Zealand by a team of ten researchers. The cats comprised of managed (colony) stray cats (n=210); unmanaged stray cats (n=253); and owned companion cats (n=213).

### Results:

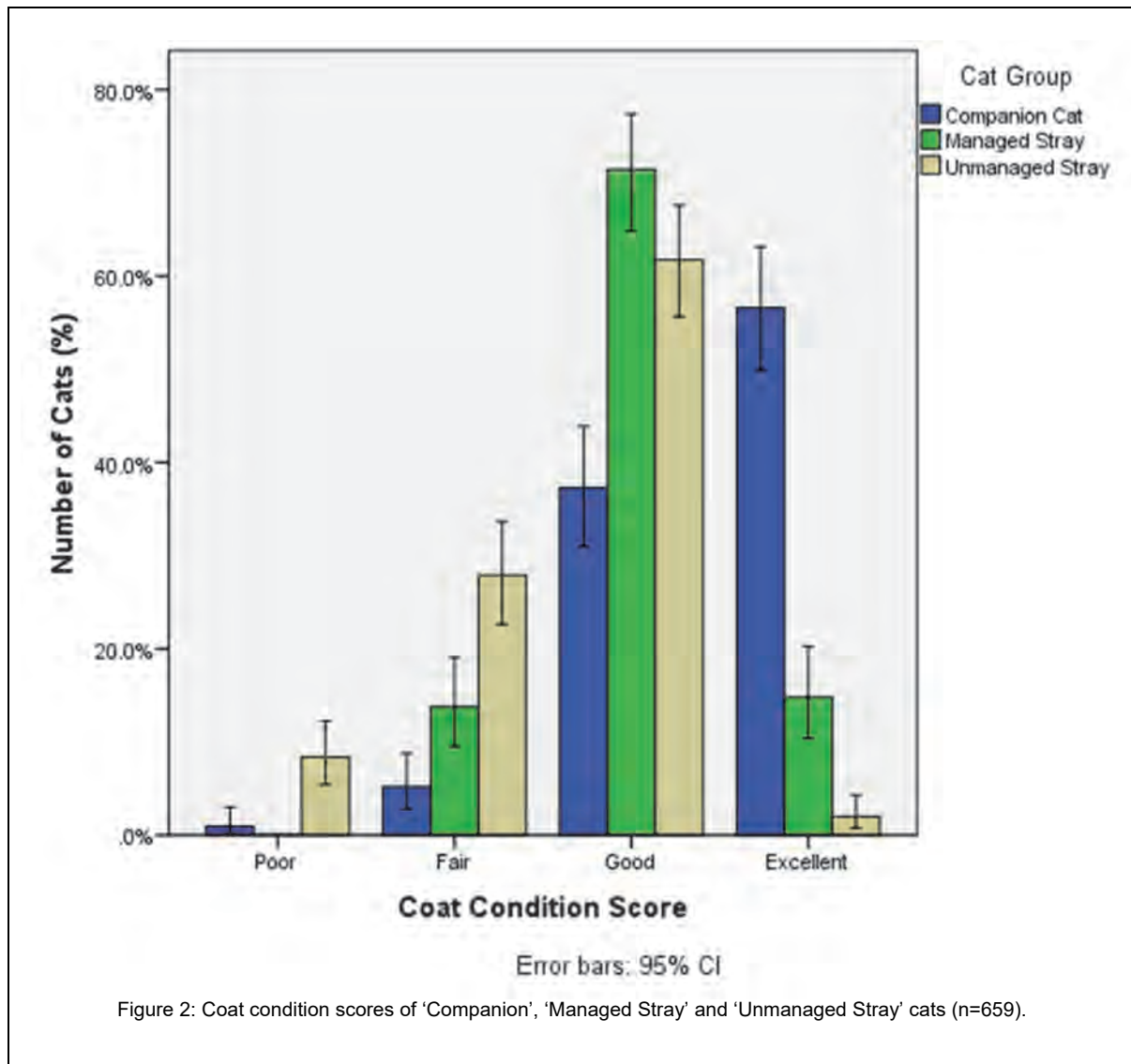
The majority of companion cats were desexed (n=195; 92%), compared with 53% of managed stray cats (n=111), and 45% of unmanaged stray cats (n=114). Most cats in the study were short haired (n=535; 79%). Only a small number of cats were ear-tipped which is considered to be the universal symbol of a desexed stray cat (n=72, 34%). Most of the cats were adult (n=557; 82%).

During this research a stocktake of the number of cats was taken and it was noted that the numbers of cats in the surveyed colonies reduced by 45.5% over a measured time frame, a reduction of 429 cats.

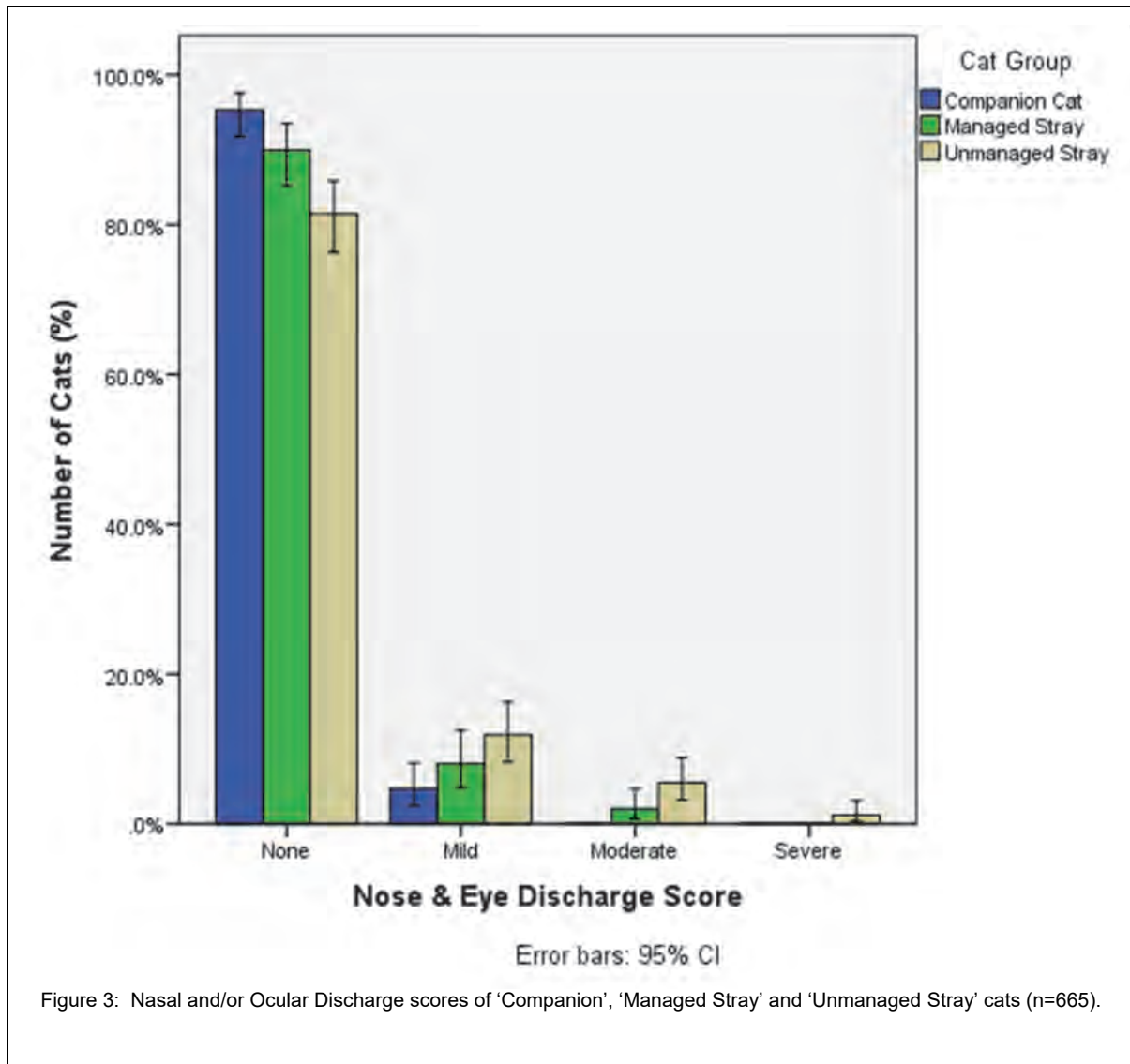
The majority of cats were found to have an 'ideal' **Body Condition Score (BCS)** (n=458; 69%), compared with 'over-conditioned' (n=74; 11%), 'thin' (n=118; 18%) or 'emaciated' (n=15; 2%). Refer to figure 1 below.



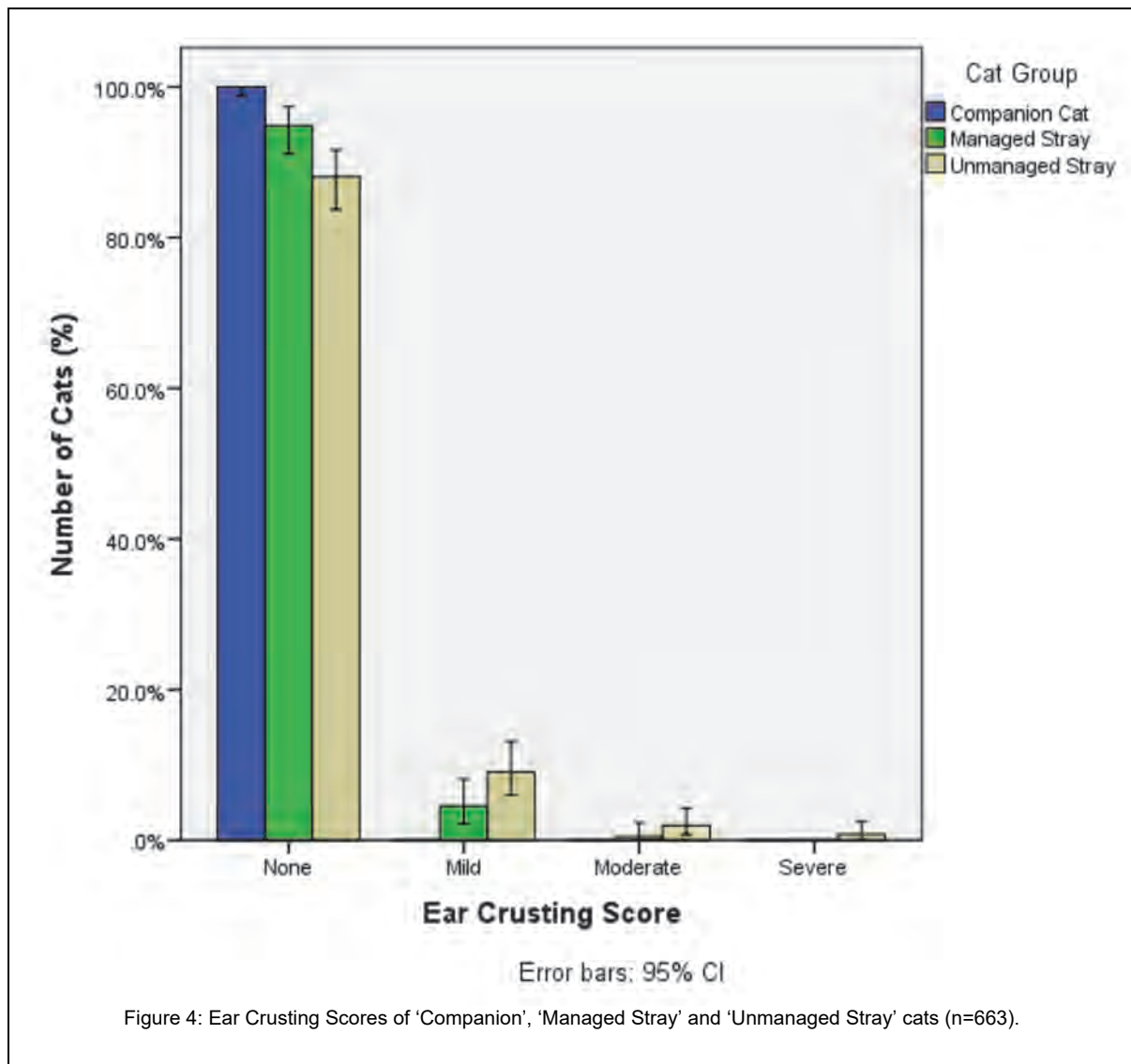
The majority of cats had a 'good' or 'excellent' **coat condition score** (n=528; 80%), compared with 'fair' or 'poor' (n=133; 20%) (Figure 4). Most of the cats with 'poor' coat condition were unmanaged stray cats. Refer to figure 2 below.



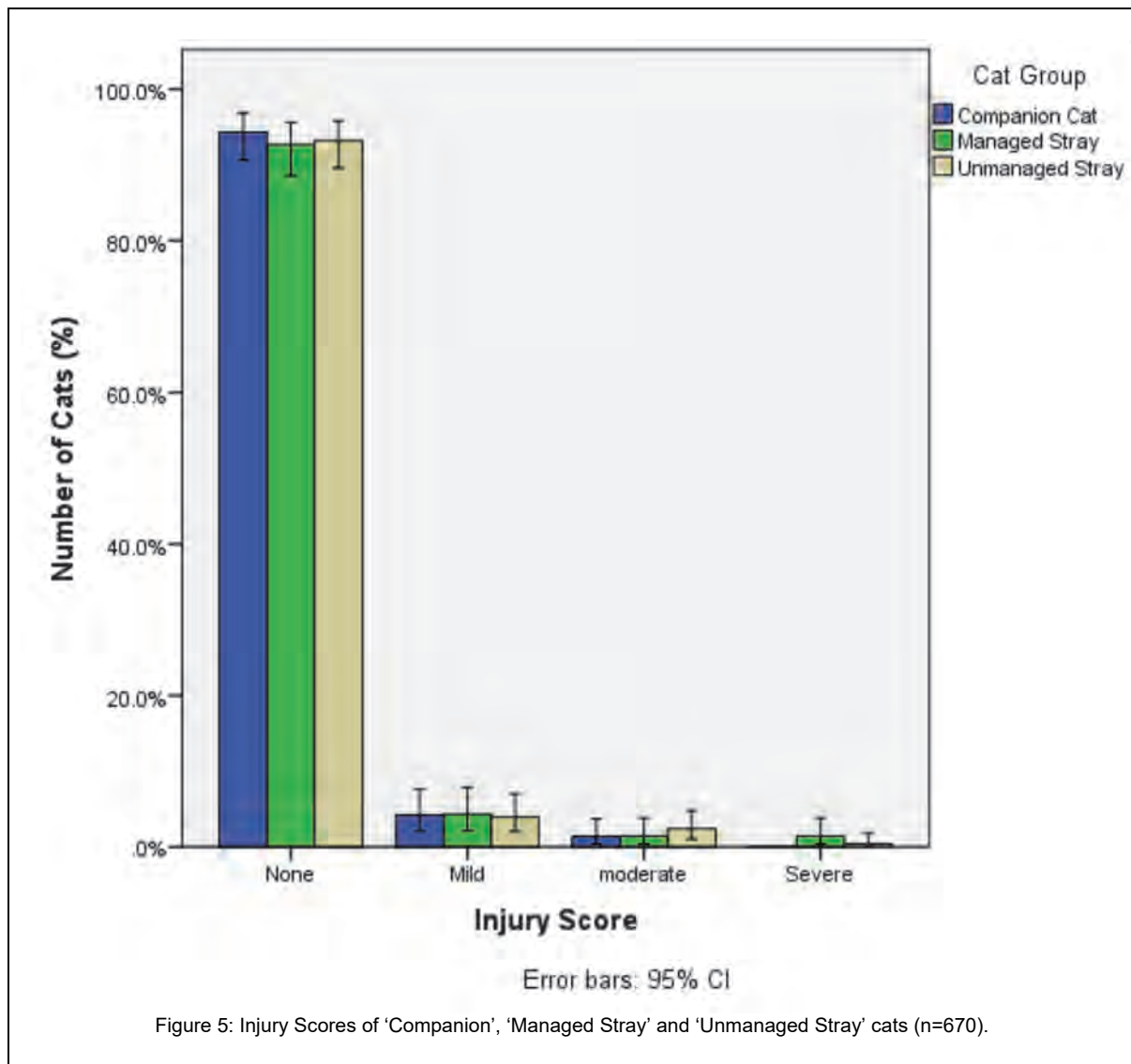
The vast majority of cats had no **Nasal and/or Ocular Discharge (NOD)** (n =588; 88%), the remaining cats had 'mild' (n=56; 8%), 'moderate' (n=18; 3%) or 'severe' NOD (n=3; 1%) (Figure 5). Most of the cats that had either 'mild', 'moderate' or 'severe' NOD were unmanaged stray cats. Refer to figure 3 below.



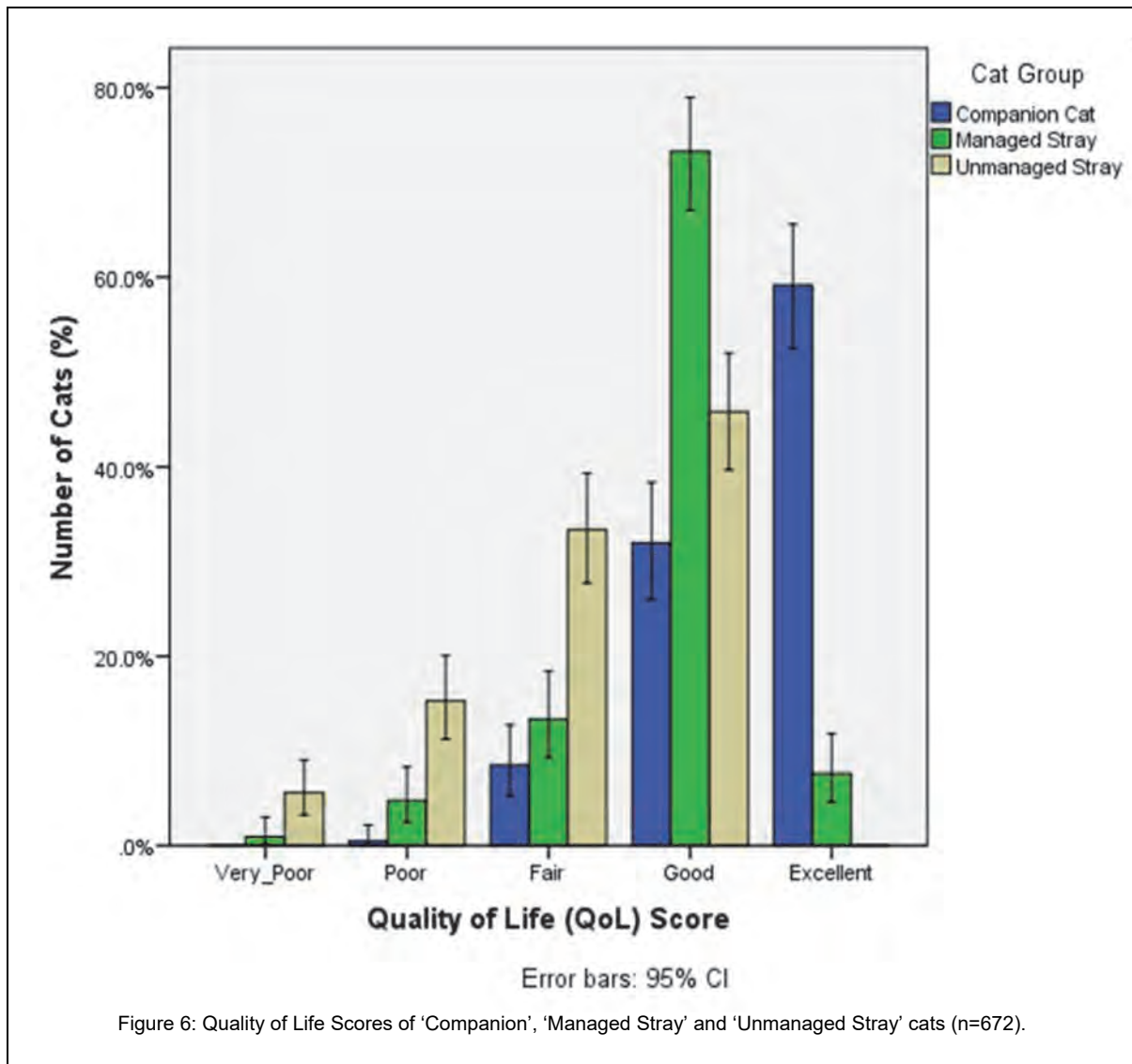
The vast majority of cats had no **Ear Crusting (EC)** (n=623; 94 %), the remaining cats had 'mild' (n=32; 5%), 'moderate' (n=6; 0.7%) or 'severe' EC (n=2; 0.3%) Refer to figure 4 below.



The vast majority of cats did not have any visual injuries (**Injury Score, IS**) (n=623; 93%). A small number of cats had a 'mild' (n=28; 4%), 'moderate' (n=12; 2%) or 'severe' injury score (n=4; 1%). Refer to figure 5 below.



The majority of cats had a 'good' or 'excellent' **Quality of Life score (QoL)** (n=478; 71%), the remaining cats had a 'fair' (n=129; 19%), or 'poor' (n=49; 7%), or 'very poor' QoL score (n=16; 2%) Refer to figure 6 below.



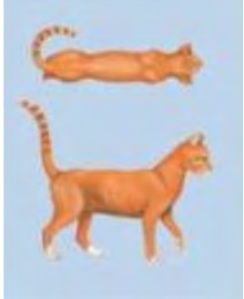


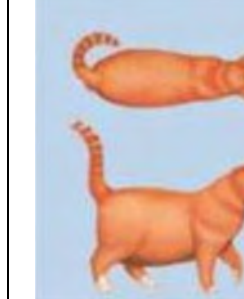
### **Summary:**

For all 5 indicators of welfare, the results demonstrate that the majority of cats (69% - 93%), across all three groups, were in an 'ideal' welfare state. This comprised of an 'ideal' BCS (69%), 'good' to 'excellent' coat condition (80%), no NOD (88%), no EC (94%), and no injuries (94%). Additionally, the majority of cats across all three groups obtained a 'good' or 'excellent' QoL score (71%). Although, significant differences were observed between the cat groups on four of the five welfare indicators (all except injury score), the majority of differences occurred between the unmanaged stray cat groups).





Overall, the welfare status of managed stray cats was relatively comparable to companion cats, with both groups having a higher welfare status than unmanaged stray cats. These results suggest that human assistance benefits the welfare status of cats.



# Cat Welfare Assessment Criteria Reference Photographs

Body Condition			
Emaciated (1&2)	Thin (3&4)	Ideal (5)	Over-condition (6+)
			

Coat Condition			
Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
			

Nasal &/or ocular discharge			
None	Mild	Moderate	Severe
			

Ear Crusting			
None	Mild	Moderate	Severe
