

**INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF CAT POPULATIONS  
IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 10 November 2024

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Partially  
Confidential

Submission for improved regulation of pet cats in NSW

10.11.24

I am a NSW resident and member of a local Northern Sydney Bushcare group concerned about the impact that pet cats are having on our native wildlife.

I regularly see cats roaming around our bushland suburb in the evening hours and recently witnessed one carrying a kill out of a local garden.

'Lost cat' call-outs are almost a daily feature on local community social pages that I subscribe to. Often these cats don't return home for days. As natural predators, during the hours or days spent roaming they are killing native reptiles, birds and mammals. Research indicates that around 70% of cat owners allow their pets to roam. Based on the comments attached to these posts there is negligible awareness of the impacts that cats are having on our native wildlife.

There is evidence indicating that each roaming cat kills around 110 native animals each year and combined they are responsible for an annual death toll of approximately 96 million natives in NSW.

NSW is sadly lagging on regulations that could help reduce this death toll and our appalling native species extinction rates. Improved regulation around cat containment would also improve the welfare of pet cats who will be better protected from car strikes, attack and disease.

Reform is urgently needed and must start with clear rules around pet cat containment, including –

- Amendments to the NSW Companion Animals Act to enable local Government to enforce anti-roaming laws.
- Requirement that local councils develop companion animal management plans to protect wildlife, supported by the development of a state-wide online resource for responsible pet ownership.
- Mandatory state-wide desexing by 4 months of age.
- Funding to support compliance, education, desexing, identification and registration programs.

These sensible amendments will bring NSW into line with almost every other state.

I am also calling on the NSW Government to regulate for pet cat-free areas in any new suburb developments that are adjacent to bushland reserves, waterways or forested areas.

We can't change the predatory nature of cats, but NSW decision-makers can act to protect our vulnerable wildlife, by ensuring that our cat owners are informed about this issue and have an obligation to act responsibly.