

**Submission  
No 143**

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

**Name:** Elisabeth Dark  
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Dear committee

Thank you for the opportunity to make my submission to this enquiry, which I do as a former cat owner. I grew up in a household that usually had a resident cat and as an adult I have had 2 cats.

Cats are both valued companion animals and one of the world's most successful predators. I remember that cats used to be commonly allowed to roam almost at will. We know better now and it is no longer permissible to have cats not contained. As an active bird conservationist I am appalled by the impact of cats on our native wildlife.

But our laws have not kept pace with changing community attitudes. New South Wales has some of the most archaic cat management laws in Australia. Unlike in other states, NSW's laws still prevent local councils from bringing in rules to ensure that cats are permanently contained to protect our wildlife. It is time for this to change. Cats themselves will benefit, living healthier and safer lives.

I urge the NSW government and the Animal Welfare committee to support:

- Amendments to the NSW Companion Animals Act 1998 to enable local governments to enforce anti-roaming laws for pet cats at a local level.
- State government funding, of a minimum of \$9 million, for compliance, education, desexing, identification and registration programs.
- Requirements for all local governments to develop companion animal management plans to protect wildlife, as is required in Victoria.
- Mandatory state-wide desexing of cats by 4 months of age.

Kind regards,

Elisabeth Dark