

**Submission
No 173**

INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF CAT POPULATIONS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Cat Adoption Sydney Inc

Date Received: 21 November 2024

I became involved in cat rescue in 2017 when I was confronted with a homeless cat and her five babies. At this time, I was living in Pyrmont in the heart of the city.

This encounter exposed me to the dire situation on our streets for homeless domestic cats.

I have lived in Sydney all my life and grew up when a residential street always had the local neighbourhood cats and even at a young age, I knew that a desexed cat was vital and the RSPCA existed to rescue one. This was back in the 80's.

I have worked as a volunteer rescuer and recently became President of a small charity this year however, we are way behind almost every country in the world.

In Europe and the US, TNR programs are encouraged and proven to work. This is also done in China where Cat Colony Programs are run and effective - [Cat Colony Care Programme - SPCA](#)

I have visited Greece, Serbia and Italy where cats are TNR'd and monitored by volunteers and communities. It is not new and the programs work.

There are thousands of people like me who are reducing the numbers of cats on the streets, and we are the ones who are aware of what works and what doesn't.

Several volunteers and I were involved in a huge colony of over 300 cats and kittens. That colony is now down to less than 50 and the numbers continue to reduce, and we monitor and ensure any new cats are trapped and scanned for microchips.

This requires many hours of time each week as well as feeding and vet care (when required).

If we had not assisted in this colony then the suffering and numbers would have continued to increase.

We are about helping the wildlife, as minimising the cat numbers with TNR programs and feeding, stops the need to hunt and leave the area that the cats live in.

We have monitored numerous numbers of cat colonies in Sydney and always see that the cats, once desexed, stay in the same area as there's no need to look for a mate, there's no need to search for food and they live in a colony peacefully with each other.

Over time the numbers reduce due to ill health or incidents causing their passing.

The colonies need to be monitored, and people are willing to and are already doing that.

The way that is being proposed to tackle the cat situation is inhumane and will not work. It encourages people to see cats as vermin and treat them accordingly. It assists in justifying animal cruelty which we see often doing the work we do.

Cats are demonised by images shown along with articles and the other side of it is not shown so nobody is offended.

Seeing tiny kittens with serious health issues suffering along with the adult cats who are skeletal, riddled with cat flu and fleas, living on our streets is traumatising.

Being told that you can't get help by every charity you ring when you are confronted with this is not only distressing but also unacceptable in a country like ours.

We have a cost-of-living crisis, a rental property crisis and people are struggling to keep their pets, and we are often finding well-loved cats and kittens on the streets not desexed and without microchips who have been left there for whatever reason someone feels justified.

We are out there every day and night doing this and are the experts when it comes to cats, kittens and how to reduce the numbers.

When you have people working for FREE who are already doing this work, why not utilise them?

Encouraging people to own a cat reduces the numbers.

Educating people, particularly cultures and nationalities who are not familiar with desexing, reduces the numbers.

Start in schools when children are young about responsible pet ownership.