

**Submission
No 158**

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

Name: Judith Hopper
Date Received: 22 November 2024

As a resident of Millfield, and a wildlife rehabilitator I am very concerned about the impact roaming pet cats are having on our wildlife. I therefore support sensible amendments to the law to enable local governments to enforce anti-roaming laws for pet cats, bringing NSW into line with almost every other state. **I am not a cat owner currently but have been for most of my life.**

Cats are one of the world's most successful predators. In NSW, approximately 96 million native mammals, birds and reptiles are killed by roaming pet cats every year – with about 110 native animals killed by each roaming, hunting pet cat. **And I am one of the people dealing with the fallout. Watching traumatised and injured, innocent wildlife die in my arms. Wildlife rehabilitators fac heart break and trauma every day due to cats. Isn't it about time our trauma was also recognised.** Unfortunately about 70% of cat owners still allow their pets to roam.

We can't change the nature of cats, but we can change the culture that allows pet cats to roam and kill. We urgently need responsible pet ownership, and this starts with clear rules to ensure pet owners keep cats contained to their property to save our native wildlife.

This reform should be accompanied by funding for education, compliance and to make desexing and registration easier. We also need clear rules around desexing by 4 months of age to prevent unwanted breeding and requirements for all local governments to develop and implement companion animal management plans.

I am therefore calling on the NSW Government and the Animal Welfare committee to support:

Amendments to the NSW Companion Animals Act 1998 to **force** local governments to enforce anti-roaming laws for pet cats at a local level, bringing NSW into line with almost every other state. **Our LGA Council happily wipes their hands of the issue. Informing me that the cat I trapped on my property was not their responsibility any more and to "release it where I found it", in my yard trying to molest my chickens and in care wildlife.**

State government funding of a minimum of \$9 million to fund 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.

Development of a state-wide web resource for responsible pet ownership.

Making desexing mandatory state-wide by 4 months of age, as is required in WA, Tasmania, ACT and SA.

Yours sincerely

Judith Hopper