

**Submission
No 161**

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

Name: Gillianne Tedder
Date Received: 21 November 2024

Dear Madam

The impact roaming pet cats are having on our native wildlife is dreadful.

We live in a rural area. Neighbours either don't understand, or don't care about these impacts and let their cats roam free.

On our bush block we have bandicoots, brush tail possums, swamp wallabies and eastern grey kangaroos and the endangered greater glider that occasionally comes to ground to travel between feed trees. **God help them!**

I have personally witnessed a pet cat stalk a young swamp wallaby only metres from my back door. Fortunately the wallaby made an escape.

Despite the cat being much smaller than the wallaby it wasn't deterred.

Cats are brilliant killers and the damage they are doing to native wildlife is immense.

I can't believe that NSW doesn't have anti-roaming laws for pet cats.

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.

Cats are both valued companion animals and 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. 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 will also benefit pet cats. Cats that are kept at home are happy and can live up to 10 years longer than cats that roam which are often injured or killed through fighting, car accidents and disease.

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 enable local governments to enforce anti-roaming laws for pet cats at a local level, bringing NSW into line with almost every other state.

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.

Kind Regards,

Gillianne Tedder