

Submission  
No 205

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

**Name:** Julie Holcombe  
**Date Received:** 18 November 2024

---

I am a volunteer member of WIRES and constantly witness first hand the utter devastation and suffering that uncontrolled domestic cats and feral cats wreak on our beautiful wildlife.

It is utterly heartbreaking to see the immense pain and shocking wounds that cats inflict and I know we only see a small portion of the carnage that is reported by caring members of the public.

We desperately need strong regulation to make cat owners responsible or face the consequences of their inaction. Because right now it is our beautiful wildlife that is suffering under the inaction of cat owners and government. They are equally as deserving to be looked after as much as everyone and everything else. Otherwise what kind of desolate, apathetic society do we have?

As a resident of Blackheath, I am very concerned about the impact roaming pet cats are having on our native 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.

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,

Julie Holcombe