

Submission
No 220

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

Name: Elizabeth Reichstein

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To whom it may concern,

I support sensible amendments to the Animal Welfare Management law to enable local governments to introduce anti-roaming laws for pet cats to effectively reduce their impact on native wildlife.

Such amendments should also include Community Cat Programs involving trap, neuter, and return of homeless cats which have demonstrated effectiveness in reducing municipal cat intake, euthanasia and associated cat management costs. See "The myth of domestic cats & urban wildlife"

<https://petwelfare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Rand-Myth-cats-Wildlife-2023.pdf> a study which has shown that the number of wildlife killed annually by cats is wildly exaggerated and which concludes, based on sound research, that other factors including land-clearing for urban expansion and animals killed by cars or pet dogs are the greater culprits for decimating wildlife populations.

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

These reforms should be accompanied by funding for education, compliance and to make desexing and registration easier. Funding should also be available for people who are financially unable to secure their backyards to prevent their pet cat from straying from their property.

Clear rules are also needed regarding the 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:

1. 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.
2. State government funding of a minimum of \$9 million to fund compliance, education, desexing, identification and registration programs and the "trap, neuter, return" programs for homeless cats.
3. Development of a state-wide web resource for responsible pet ownership.
4. Making desexing mandatory state-wide by 4 months of age, as is required in WA, Tasmania, ACT and SA.

Kind Regards,

Elizabeth Reichstein