

Submission  
No 229

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 21 November 2024

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Partially  
Confidential

## SUBMISSION:

As a resident of New South Wales I am concerned about the impact that free roaming pet cats are having on Australian Native Wildlife.

My concerns also extend to the fact free roaming pet cats cause health issues to people due to allergies with cat fur, and coming into inadvertent contact with smelly cat urine and faeces.

Generally people who own the cats refuse to assist by containing the cats and simply point to the existing legislation that allows pet cats to roam and trespass freely.

These same pet cats do roam freely around the neighbourhood, entering neighbours' homes and defecate in those homes. Suburban wildlife have been wiped out, birds attacked, and as mentioned above, any complaint to owners is ignored. Local Councils are powerless to act as they have no authority to control free roaming pet cats as they do have for dogs.

I wish to give an example of the result of harm to wildlife cats, either domestic or feral, can do. Some time ago I visited a museum in Port Augusta SA. On display there was a cat's body along with the contents of it's stomach, which consisted of the remains of over 30 bodies of native wildlife! This brought home to me just how much havoc just one cat can do over what was said to be a 3 day period.

Now I understand pet cats may not do as much hunting, but nevertheless in my experience of seeing what has happened to native wildlife in my yard, extrapolated, I believe the figures quoted elsewhere for harm by free roaming pet cats are very conservative.

Whilst we can't change the nature of cats, a change in the Legislation imposing on owners stricter control of pet cats may be able to enhance ownership responsibilities, provided such changes have enforcement powers and are pro-actively enforced.

There should be no allowances to allow existing free roaming pet cats of any age to continue to roam freely. There should also be no lengthy grace period to allow for pet cat owners to adjust to proposed changes in Legislation.

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

- a) Amendments to the NSW Animal Companions Act 1998 to enable local Governments to immediately enforce anti-roaming laws for all pet cats at a local level, thus bringing NSW into line with almost every other state and territory;
- b) Requirements for all local governments to develop and enforce companion animal management plans to protect wildlife; and

c) Making desexing mandatory for all cats by 4 months of age, though with appropriate exemptions for breeding stock owned by authorised cat breeders.

Kind regards,

