

**Submission
No 184**

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

Organisation: Inner City Strays Inc

Date Received: 22 November 2024



Inner City Strays - Submission to the NSW Parliament Animal Welfare Committee

That the Animal Welfare Committee inquire into and report on the management of cat populations in New South Wales, and in particular:

Terms of reference #	Inner City Stray's response
(a) the impact of cats on threatened native animals in metropolitan and regional settings	<p>Cats' alleged impact on wildlife is not based on robust science. Predation numbers remain unknown and cat numbers remain unknown.</p> <p>Cats are blamed for the extinction of many of animals and birds. There is NO peer-reviewed study to back this claim, nor other evidence to substantiate the claims of cat-caused extinctions.</p> <p>Human-driven animal extinctions are ignored, despite there being evidence of the impacts of habitat destruction on populations of native animals. This isn't acceptable to us.</p> <p>Blaming cats ignores the impact of humans on the environment.</p>
(b) the effectiveness of cat containment policies including potential barriers	<p>Many people are unable to contain their pets – especially in low socio-economic areas. This may be because of the nature of their property, or for financial reasons.</p>
(c) welfare outcomes for cats under contained conditions	<p>We encourage cat owners to contain the cats within their property where possible. The welfare outcomes depend on the nature of both the cats and the containment. Some cats need more territory than others, particularly in multi-cat households. Getting it right is complex.</p>



<p>(d) the effectiveness of community education programs and responsible pet ownership initiatives</p>	<p>Given the current explosion in the number of abandoned and homeless cats in NSW, community education and programs and responsible pet ownership initiatives have clearly not worked.</p>
<p>(e) implications for local councils in implementing and enforcing cat containment policies</p>	<p>No comment</p>
<p>(f) the effectiveness and benefits to implementing large scale cat desexing programs</p>	<p>The only humane way currently available to reduce the number of homeless cats is large scale desexing programs.</p>
<p>(g) the impact of potential cat containment measures on the pound system</p>	<p>Conditions in pounds for cats are generally below optimal, impacting both the cats and the pound workers. Any reduction in the numbers of cats ending up in the pound will be an improvement, but only large-scale desexing will have any real impact.</p>
<p>(h) the outcomes of similar policies on cat containment in other Australian states or territories</p>	<p>No comment</p>
<p>(i) options for reducing the feral cat population</p>	<p>Mandatory containment does not work. Many people are unable to contain their pets – especially in low socio-economic areas.</p> <p>Culling - trapping, hunting, shooting and poison</p>



	<p>baiting - is NOT a humane or accepted solution.</p> <p>Support desexing programs and TNR programs are humane solutions and result in less cats which means less predation.</p> <p>Immunocontraception is also a humane and realistic approach.</p> <p>Different solutions need to be available and researched for different environments and situations. Any solution needs to be humane.</p>
<p>(j) any other related matters.</p>	<p>We need evidence-based cat management – TNR trials must be implemented and discussed. Fund community cat programs and desexing initiatives. Start in low socio-economic areas and establish programs to assist people with mental health issues such as hoarders. Hoarding is a major problem. We have come across 13 cases of hoarding. Hundreds of cats are living in squalor and disease. Cat hoarding is one of the main reasons for the explosion in cat populations.</p>

16 November 2024

Inner City Strays ABN: 77199491539, CFN/23653