

Submission
No 258

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

Name: Mr Hasan Kamali
Date Received: 22 November 2024

Managing the Cat Population of NSW

I submit this report based on my experience in animal rescue since 2013, during which I have trapped and desexed over 120 cats and funded medical care for various felines. Below are my observations regarding the management of the cat population in New South Wales (NSW).

****TOR (a): The Impact of Cats on Threatened Native Animals****

There is a critical need for evidence-based research to assess whether mandated cat containment can effectively benefit both cats and wildlife. Many groups cite statistics lacking factual support, with claims that domestic cats do not significantly impact native wildlife populations (source: <https://petwelfare.org.au/2023/07/10/position-statement-on-domestic-cats-and-australian-native-wildlife-populations/>).

****TOR (b): Effectiveness of Cat Containment Policies****

Mandated cat containment has proven largely ineffective. Research indicates these policies fail to achieve their goals and are not cost-efficient. Many cat owners face barriers, such as landlord restrictions and the prohibitive cost of enclosures. This can discourage rescue efforts and lead to misidentification of roaming cats as feral, undermining the work of those trying to help (source: <https://petwelfare.org.au/2022/09/02/key-issues-to-consider-related-to-mandated-24-7-cat-containment/>).

****TOR (c): Welfare Outcomes Under Containment****

Containing all cats is impractical, especially for families in apartments or shared housing. Overcrowded conditions can harm cats' physical and mental well-being and provoke aggression among them. The RSPCA has noted that mandatory containment may lead to negative welfare impacts compared to voluntary measures (source: <https://kb.rspca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/PP-A8-Cat-Containment-2024.pdf>).

****TOR (d): Community Education and Responsible Pet Ownership****

Current educational resources on responsible pet ownership are often ineffective. It is recommended that the NSW government lead interactive programs to promote cultural change and respect for animals in collaboration with local councils and community cat rescuers (source: <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/10/10/1902>).

****TOR (e): Implications for Local Councils****

Enforcing cat containment policies may lead to community disputes and increased complaints. Such policies could:

- Heighten tensions among neighbors
- Lead to more roaming cat complaints
- Increase euthanasia rates and cruelty towards homeless cats

Clear communication regarding the NSW Companion Animal Act and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act is essential (source: <https://petwelfare.org.au/2022/09/02/key-issues-to-consider-related-to-mandated-24-7-cat-containment/>).

****TOR (f): Benefits of Large-Scale Cat Desexing Programs****

Large-scale desexing programs are effective in reducing cat populations by curbing breeding. Successful Australian examples include initiatives in Queensland and Victoria that involve community cat rescuers. These programs benefit both individual cats and the broader community.