

Submission
No 263

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

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To start with I do not support the Australian Draft Threat Abatement Plan, in respect to classify of all cats being Feral., which would include stray, abandoned , and the intention to cull cats by which ever means, this is totally Barbaric, particularly when there are other non lethal means to control the cat population.

The biggest negative impact on threatened native animals is the destruction of their habitat by overdevelopment this also applies to loss of bird life..

Cat containment is only effective for owned cats, and will be of little value, in controlling the cat population, also the cost to councils to police this would be financially not viable. Also by bringing in mandatory cat containment this will incite cat haters and unscrupulous behaviour and cruelty giving free rein to remove cats on the street by which ever means. The situation with the cat population increasing is because the stray or unowned cats are generally not neutered therefor the numbers increase dramatically

THERE IS A SOLUTION TO THIS..

THE SOLUTION Large scale cat de-sexing targeted programs for owned, but particularly for semi-owned an unowned cats, this prevents the breeding therefor the cat population is reduced significantly.

These programs should be offered free for community cat carers and rescuers and particularly when there is a high intensity of cats.. In the long term this would be far more financially viable than what is happening now, eg putting cats to death., and further into the future it becomes more and more cost effective, as there would be less breeding and therefore less compounding of the number of cats.

Also we need to account for the grief and feeling of helplessness felt by the cat carers when lethal practices are put into place when there is a non lethal more effective way to control the cat population , this cannot be dismissed as it is a real concern, and the majority of people generally would choose a non lethal more effective programme.

Other Related Matters

There needs to be more support for the cat rescuers and Animal rescue groups; as they save the local councils of New South Wales significant amounts of money by rescuing, desexing and rehoming of cats thus taking the pressure of the pound system., they work alongside the pound by reducing the intake and rehoming.

There should be significant Government funding assistance to these groups, at the moment they are self funded, which puts a financial and emotional stress on these tireless volunteers

Personally I have a very small part to play in a group of about 6 people who in the last 2 years have desexed 560 stray cats and kittens, and rehomed the majority. It can be done and if you work out the mathematics of compounding about 50% being female its a significant reduction to the population of cats in these areas..

Education has been in place, with I believe, little effect, other than a great big waste of money. Unless we educate through the school system and clearly explain what happens to Cats that are unable to be rehomed, without sugar coating the lethal end to the cats life. THEN we can educate the pupils, as they will have a greater understanding about the reality and the reason why it is important to neuter cats, to reduce the numbers.