

Submission
No 281

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

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Date Received: 22 November 2024

Management of Cat Populations in NSW

Submission by

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Management of cat populations in urban and regional areas must involve empathy and compassion - compassion towards the cats and empathy for the owners and volunteers who devote their time to protecting, managing and caring for the cats.

The government should provide regular assistance to **charitable cat groups** that rehome and desex cats or support owners to do so. Comprehensive desexing programs, assisted by state government and council, should be in place. Cat organisations should be consulted.

An extensive **community education** advertising program promoting the merits of desexing should be funded and organised by councils and government. It needs to dispel the widespread myth that it is beneficial to allow cats to have one litter before being desexed.

Education programs might also discourage the ownership of pedigree cats when there are so many rescue cats requiring homes.

It would be beneficial if councils and government offered planning and financial support to cat owners to build suitable enclosures in their gardens that would contain cats. In the long-term, this would be cost effective and promote **responsible pet ownership** while also reducing pressure on the pound system.

As most cat owners are **women**, any attack upon cats is another attack on women. Early in November, 2024, I spoke to a dog owner who was in the process of donating the effects of her deceased pet to the Hunter Animal Watch. The distraught lady explained that her dog had been deliberately run over and killed by her male neighbour. She felt too intimidated to report the incident which had been caught on camera. Similarly, cats regularly suffer the

same fate. By publicly demonising cats, the government gives free rein to those who take pleasure in being violent towards animals and women. The vilification of cats will unleash violence.

As for the **wildlife**, the dog who lives next door to me has killed countless blue tongued lizards. However, cats are unfairly portrayed as the predators while their canine counterpart is ignored. Why? Figures provided by **self-interested groups** (that benefit from government funding) support the theory that cats are killers. Their main evidence is scats and the urban myth that cats are killers. It cannot be assumed that animals have killed, or grown, what they have eaten. Cats are often discovered eating the remains of animals killed by other predators. **Scats, as evidence, would not stand up in a court of law.**

The human animal, a ruthless and dangerous predator, is the main enemy of native wildlife in this country. To enumerate a few examples:

- Thousands of protected black swans have been killed in Tasmania in recent years. The Tasmanian Government's Department of Natural Resources and Environment issues permits for the swans to be killed as they foul the waters making it unsuitable for the introduced trout and famous fishing industry. The native species must not get in the way of a profitable business!
- Every night thousands of endangered and irreplaceable kangaroos are hunted and slaughtered for the measly sum of \$15 per head.
- Farming livestock for export devastates the environment, increases the greenhouse effect and adds to global warming while also destroying and displacing native species.

Cats are good companion and therapy pets for the elderly and those living alone. They improve the quality of life for many and assist mental health. Cats must not be transformed into public enemy number one, while diverting attention from the true culprits. Any plan should avoid a repeat of the Port of Newcastle cat massacre.