

Submission  
No 284

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 22 November 2024

---

Partially  
Confidential

I would like to make a submission to the government enquiry into the Management of Cat Populations in NSW. I live in Sydney and have been involved with several private groups trying to help alleviate the very distressing problem of local feral cats, which has exponentially increased over the 17 years I have lived here. The problem as I have observed it is mainly due to lack of education and lack of money.

I agree that some measures must be urgently taken, but I strongly favour an animal welfare approach based on education and TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) which have proven most effective in other countries. The authorised large-scale killing of stray cats, and mandatory domestic cat containment, are not viable or desirable solutions for several main reasons below (and many lesser ones too long to go into here):

- a) They do not address the cause. The causes we see around us all the time are that cats are not desexed because of affordability, ignorance, or carelessness. And that un-desexed cats are abandoned when they become pregnant or no longer affordable, or when owners leave a rental property. (This has become a rapidly growing cause with the increasing density of high-rise apartment living, and the increased cost of living.)

The only answers to these causes are wide-spread education programs, subsidised de-sexing and adequate council funding for animal shelters.

- b) The proposal for large scale killing of stray populations is inhumane, ethically indefensible and a barbaric solution for a civilised society, which will cause great distress to many animal lovers and may well bring other problems in its wake.

Among these other problems are a cruel 'free-for-all', 'kill every cat you see' mentality which is unfortunately likely to develop in some instances.

And a great increase in the numbers of vermin in towns and cities. In spite of scare-mongering and often false 'scientific' statistics, cats kill far more rats and mice than they do native creatures, especially in cities and suburbs. In cities like Mumbai, Athens and Rome, large-scale killing of feral cats in the 1960s resulted in vermin plagues.

- c) Killing and mandatory containment are unnecessary, because education and TNR are in the long term far more cost-effective.
- d) A one-size-fits all approach will not solve a problem which presents different aspects in city and town areas than it does in the country.

Finally, I would like to say that I wish more people knew that the 7 Council areas which use the services of the Sydney Dogs and Cats Home, supply only around 2% of the operating costs of the Home. All the rest comes from charity fund-raising by dedicated volunteers and generous supporters. One of the things we really need is for Councils and government to take proper financial responsibility for animal welfare.

Yours sincerely,