

Submission  
No 294

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

**Organisation:** Lake Macquarie City Council Staff

**Date Received:** 22 November 2024

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22 November 2024

The Hon Emma Hurst MLC  
Chair  
Animal Welfare Committee

Submitted via online form

Dear Ms Hurst

**Subject: Lake Macquarie City Council Staff Submission into the Management of Cat Populations in NSW**

Lake Macquarie City Council staff welcome the opportunity to participate in the inquiry into the management of cat populations in New South Wales. This issue is increasingly pressing for local governments, which often face significant challenges in balancing community interests, animal welfare, and environmental conservation.

Lake Macquarie City Council is the largest local government area (LGA) by population in the Hunter region. Home to more than 220,000 people, Lake Macquarie is a geographically dispersed city and handles hundreds of cats that enter its animal management facility each year.

Council staff have provided three recommendations to effectively manage emerging issues relating cat populations. Due to resource limitations, such recommendations rely on the support of the State Government and relevant bodies.

1. **Cat Curfews:** Implementing cat curfews can significantly reduce the impact of cats on local wildlife, particularly threatened species, however, the logistics and resources needed to manage these curfews is substantial. Enforcing these curfews requires improved legislation, clear guidelines, community support, and educational initiatives to ensure compliance. To implement successfully, local governments require support in crafting cat curfew policies and in effectively engaging the community. Additionally, securing additional funding will be crucial for local governments to develop effective cat curfew policies and engage the community meaningfully.
2. **Desexing Programs:** Large-scale desexing initiatives are crucial for controlling cat populations. While many councils have programs in place, they often lack the funding and outreach necessary to maximise participation. Financial support would enhance these programs, making them more accessible and effective.

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- 3. Companion Animal Registration Fees:** Improved utilisation of registration fees can provide a sustainable funding source for cat management initiatives. By accessing additional funds specifically to desexing programs, community education, and enforcement of containment policies, councils can create a more robust framework for managing cat populations.

Council staff believe addressing the three key areas of cat curfews, desexing programs and companion animal registration fees would foster a collaborative approach that not only protects our native wildlife but also ensures the welfare of domestic cats.

Should you require further information or wish to follow up on any matters raised within this submission, please contact Derek Poulton, Manager Environmental Regulation and Compliance on

Yours faithfully,

**David Antcliff**  
Director Development Planning and Regulation