

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
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Partially  
Confidential

As cat-loving Australians, we are deeply concerned by the lack of well-considered and humanely responsible plans for the cat population of New South Wales.

There is obviously a problem with the burgeoning numbers of cats in our state. Shelters and animal welfare agencies have made it clear that numbers are climbing faster than they can keep pace with. However, shooting, poisoning and mass killing are not the answer. They are ill-advised and cruel, encouraging savagery and blood lust, and often leaving individual animals maimed or condemned to a lingering death. The main fault with these methods is that they simply do not address the problem and are doomed to failure.

The following are strategies which must be incorporated into any plans for successfully controlling cat populations.

1. Like us, many Australians are cat-lovers. With smaller land sizes and many more apartment-dwellers in our population, cats are obviously more suited to our current lifestyles than larger pets. This should be encouraged. Information on the basics of keeping and caring for a cat should accompany cats to their new homes, as should contact numbers for veterinarians in the vicinity. Importantly, all legislation concerning cats should also be included.

2. A law requiring pet cats to be kept indoors, especially at night, is necessary. Most of the damage to native wildlife caused by cats results from the night-time excursions of the neighbourhood felines. To succeed, this requirement must run in tandem with (or better still, be preceded by) a programme of creative insights into keeping cats happy indoors. Not impossible. We kept three cats indoors -- with access to an enclosed small garden space -- for 18 very happy years.

3. Mandatory de-sexing is another method of curbing any population, and cats are no exception until their numbers are manageable, which is when this control may be subject to change.

4. The breeding and sale of cats and kittens through pet shops and backyard pet "factories" must be stopped. There is simply too much supply and not nearly enough homes for all. Far too many are destined to be euthanized or left to fend for themselves. Cats are not on this earth for our exploitation; they have a legitimate place in the scheme of things and profiting from breeding them for sale or for their meat or skins was never a part of this scheme.

Cats are amazing companion animals who deserve so much more from us than we give them. Intelligent, sensitive, affectionate, amusing, and always a joy to observe, we have left their future in a most precarious position through neglect and mismanagement. It is high time to make amends.