

Submission
No 287

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

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially
Confidential

Stray cats in highly urban areas are not a threat to wildlife and should be treated humanely and handled differently from feral cats in the wilderness who do cause ecological damage.

I help care for a number of stray cats in inner Sydney who are beloved by locals and well cared for. They have all been neutered and are fed. I would love to see a decrease in stray cats through the work of local councils and rescue organisations.

The key is all in desexing - councils should support free desexing and microchipping of any domestic (non-designer / breeder) cats in their areas. There should be heavier penalties for owners not desexing cats, and non-desexed pets should not be allowed to roam at all. In the area where I look after strays we have seen a real decrease in new kittens appearing by proactively trapping and spaying strays, and I hope to see this trend continue until there are no more stray cats without homes. While ideally we would rehome all stray cats, there are simply not enough homes and resources available - cat rescues are often completely overwhelmed.

I would also like to see councils take the approach of trapping, neutering and releasing strays in their area rather than euthanasia, which makes many reluctant to report stray cats to their councils. In the long term, this will hugely reduce the stray cat problem and allow a more cooperative relationship between councils and rescue organisations and cat lovers.

Unfortunately completely feral cats in rural or wilderness areas are an invasive species impacting our environment and most cannot be domesticated, thus I believe that humane trapping and euthanizing is the best solution. But there should be a careful distinction between stray and feral cats and emphasis on treating both with respect and humanity, not cruelty.