

Submission
No 311

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

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially
Confidential

Submission to Animal Welfare Committee
Parliament of New South Wales
21 November 2024

Dear Committee members,

Inquiry into the management of cat populations

The NSW Government should be dedicated to humane, science-based solutions for wildlife protection and cat welfare. Not only is killing cats to protect wildlife cruel, it importantly does not work to protect wildlife. It will instead place a heavy strain on councils, animal shelters, volunteers and local vets.

The NSW Government should support large-scale desexing programs across the state, especially in places with large homeless cat populations. Trap neuter return programs will reduce the number of cats and kittens in shelters, as well as gradually decrease feral cat populations in NSW. Killing cats, however, will create a vacuum effect in which new animals will come in and fill the space, meaning that wildlife is not adequately protected.

Mandatory 24-hour cat containment is also not an effective means of feral cat population control. In 2018, the RSPCA released a report showing that cat containment does not lead to reductions in wandering or cat-related complaints.

To protect native wildlife and cat populations, it is important that owners are properly educated about responsible pet ownership. Community outreach programs educating people on the benefits of keeping cats indoors and spaying/ neutering programs can all help to reduce feral cat populations as well as keeping cats and wildlife safe.

Instead of solely blaming cats, the NSW Government should look at the bigger picture and examine the root causes behind threats to local wildlife. Human-caused problems such as deforestation, habitat destruction, vehicle collisions and dog attacks all pose a much greater threat to wildlife than cats.

By introducing large-scale desexing programs, increasing education and fighting habitat loss, we can ensure a safer and happier future for humans, native animals and cats alike.

Yours sincerely,