

Submission
No 327

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

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 21 November 2024

Partially
Confidential

Dear NSW Parliament,

I am writing to submit my response to the management of cat populations in NSW. I firmly believe that while managing the impact of cats on the environment is important, it is equally crucial to consider the well-being of cats and the significant role they play in our lives. A balanced, humane, and evidence-based approach to cat population management can ensure the protection of both wildlife and cats. Here are some approaches I strongly believe in:

The Importance of Responsible Pet Ownership: Responsible pet ownership plays a critical role in reducing the risks posed by cats to wildlife. Encouraging responsible behaviour, such as desexing, microchipping, and ensuring cats are contained within safe areas, is more effective than implementing drastic measures to eliminate cat populations in an inhumane manner. Public education on the benefits of keeping cats indoors, providing outdoor enclosures, and the importance of desexing and microchipping can significantly reduce the risks of stray cats and the growing feral population.

Addressing the Feral Cat Population with Humane Methods: Strategies such as Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) have been proven to be effective in controlling feral cat numbers. TNR programmes involve trapping feral cats, neutering or spaying them, and returning them to their original location. These programmes help reduce the reproduction of feral cat populations over time and prevent further harm to wildlife, while ensuring the cats do not face unnecessary euthanasia.

Incentivise Responsible Owners & NGOs: Provide incentives for cat owners, NGOs, and community members to desex and release cats. Providing subsidised desexing programmes or discounted microchipping services will be equally beneficial.

Collaboration with Cat Advocacy Groups: Work with cat advocacy organisations to ensure that policies are developed with a balanced view of the needs of both the environment and the welfare of cats.

Community & Adoption Programmes: Support community-based initiatives such as local TNR programmes, cat adoption events, and volunteer-based cat welfare programmes. These initiatives allow communities to take ownership of the problem and work together to create solutions.

Implement a Ban on Cat Breeders and Impose Substantial Fines: Enforce significant fines on breeders who contribute to the overpopulation issue, often without being held accountable. Support and promote the adoption of feral cats by providing resources for their rehabilitation into domestic environments.

In conclusion, I firmly believe that a balanced and compassionate approach to the management of cat populations in NSW is essential. Humane strategies such as Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) for feral cats, along with public education on responsible pet ownership, will offer a sustainable solution that protects both wildlife and cats.

Thank you for considering my submission. I look forward to seeing policies that respect both the rights of cats and the need to protect our unique wildlife.

Yours sincerely,