

Submission
No 329

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

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Date Received: 21 November 2024

Careful consideration need to be given to the management and treatment of 'stray' cats. These cats differ vastly from feral cats and are usually homeless due to the failures of humans. A number of colonies are managed successfully by Rescue groups who will feed them and trap/neuter and release them to help keep the populations down. These rescue groups and the colonies they manage should be supported instead of vilified.

The management of cat populations in NSW (and across Australia) needs to be a multipronged approach and should not be denigrated to a hate campaign against cats, which then opens it up to a violent, and inhumane killing of cats by anyone how does not like them. We have already seen some horrific examples of cat colonies being poisoned, drowned and hung by people thinking they have the power and permission to do this.

The management of cat populations should include:

- 1) an investment in widespread desexing projects and laws around the sale of purebred animals which have not been desexed. Extensive and readily available desexing programmes should be made affordable via state government subsidies. Any undesexed cat is a huge problem and can result in an obvious increase in cats and kittens.

Alongside this every cat sold from any source should be desexed and legislation introduced banning the breeding and sale of animals by breeders, kitten farms, pet stores, and online operators to control the flow of new animals. Homeless cats should be the option for purchase instead. 'Adopt don't shop.'

- 2) cat containment policies to be introduced. Cats can happily live indoors or in secure outdoor cat runs (or a combination of the two), provided they have access to enrichment such as toys/games/cat trees etc. Allowing cats to roam outside the home is dangerous not only for wildlife but also for the cats themselves.

- 3) the continuation of mandatory microchipping is essential to make people accountable for their pets and their pet's future.

- 4) increased public education about the importance of cat desexing, at-home confinement (including environmental enrichment), fostering, and adoption.

Alongside this should be increased state government funding of adoption groups and shelters to better house impounded animals and enhance rehoming efforts. Again, also increased funding for these groups to help desex large numbers of cats, including the implementation or assistance by Government to undertake TNR programs across a number of sites

- 5) In cases where it is necessary ie the cat is deemed as truly feral and not rehomingable; they should be euthanised humanely – and there should be an end to cruel, inaccurate lethal methods such as shooting and poisoning which can also lead to the death of friendly and rehomingable cats.