

Submission
No 345

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

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 21 November 2024

Partially
Confidential

As a resident of Concord West Drummoyne state electorate, I am very concerned about the impact roaming pet cats are having on our native wildlife, both in urban and rural areas. I therefore support sensible amendments to the law to enable local governments to enforce anti-roaming laws for pet cats, bringing NSW into line with almost every other state.

Cats are both valued companion animals and one of the world's most successful predators. In NSW, approximately 96 million native mammals, birds and reptiles are killed by roaming pet cats every year – with about 110 native animals killed by each roaming, hunting pet cat.

We can't change the nature of cats, but we can change the culture that allows pet cats to roam and kill. We urgently need responsible pet ownership, and this starts with clear rules to ensure pet owners keep cats contained to their property to save our native wildlife. Pet cats should be kept indoors at night. Cats also need to be kept responsibly by their owners and not dumped when no longer desirable; this is both cruel and irresponsible. More support should be given to cat rehoming services and cat shelters so that stray cats can find loving and responsible homes and not be euthanised because a human being has dumped them on the street.

Native wildlife such as birds, marsupials and reptiles (and amphibians /frogs) are already struggling with loss of habitat. Keeping cats indoors at night at least will give them a chance.

This will also benefit pet cats. Cats that are kept at home are happy and can live up to 10 years longer than cats that roam which are often injured or killed through fighting, car accidents and disease.

This reform should be accompanied by funding for education, compliance and to make desexing and registration easier. Also, include requirements for all local governments to develop and implement companion animal management plans.

I am therefore calling on the NSW Government and the Animal Welfare committee to support:

Amendments to the NSW Companion Animals Act 1998 to enable local governments to enforce anti-roaming laws for pet cats at a local level, bringing NSW into line with almost every other state.

State government funding to fund compliance, education, desexing, identification and registration programs as well as urban native wildlife education programmes to foster greater understanding why such reforms are necessary.

Requirements for all local governments to develop companion animal management plans to protect wildlife, as is required in Victoria.

Development of a state-wide web resource for responsible pet ownership.

Many thanks and kind regards