

Submission
No 466

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

Name: Ms Susan Cuneo
Date Received: 21 November 2024

The problem of homeless cats is not the cats' fault. It is human neglect and irresponsibility that leaves cats on the streets to fend for themselves.

Cats are very successful breeders so I desexed populations grow quickly.

Cats who are not fed by humans will turn to hunting to survive and this can impact wildlife, which makes many people hateful and judgemental about. Cats.

The proposed punitive actions such as destroying stray cats are highly unfair, given that it's our actions that have put them in this situation.

The focus instead should be on neutering cats to control population numbers. This includes offering incentives and educating owners about the need to desex, as well as supporting cat welfare groups to either catch and neuter strays to put up for adoption, or trapping, neutering and releasing them back into environments and supporting them with feeding, to reduce the problem of hunting.

Cats are sentient beings and deserve our compassion, especially as it is often humans who have put them in impossible situations where it is hard for them to survive.

Even those who behave as wild cats can become more civilised through contact with humans.

I have been supporting stray cats myself daily for years now. They deserve our help, not our hatred.

Please be compassionate in your decisions about how to deal with this issue- many stray cats can become sweet and loving pets given the chance.

There should also be thought put into educating the public about confining pet cats, especially at night, for the sake of their safety and for the safety of wildlife. Modifications to home environments can be made to let cats outside in restricted ways. I have successfully built outdoor rooms attached to my house to give my cats the freedom they need but prevent them from escaping.

Alternatively, cats can be brought inside at dusk, as they venture out into a wider territory at night, with the potential to get into trouble. In contrast they are relatively inactive and tend to lounge around their own home and garden during the day. Cat owners should be educated about this and encouraged to keep their cats safe and reduce the problem of strays.