

Submission  
No 388

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
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Partially  
Confidential

I never thought I'd be writing something like this. Truthfully, I used to dislike cats—they seemed aloof, smelled strange, and I didn't understand them. That all changed when I adopted one. I wasn't sure I'd made the right decision at first, but it turned out to be one of the most rewarding choices of my life. My cat brought love, companionship, and a newfound perspective on these misunderstood animals.

It's deeply upsetting to hear that cruel methods such as shooting cats are being proposed as solutions for managing their populations. These practices are not only inhumane but also lack robust evidence of effectiveness. The idea that cats could be subjected to such unnecessary suffering is horrifying to me as a responsible cat parent and compassionate community member.

We need to focus on solutions that work—and that are kind. A community desexing program would be far more effective and humane. Targeted desexing initiatives can significantly reduce stray cat populations over time, breaking the cycle of breeding without causing harm.

When I lived in Parramatta, I noticed a colony of stray cats living in the area. They lived quietly, mostly out of sight in the gutters and shadows. What I didn't see during that time were rats. The cats were doing what they naturally do—helping to keep vermin under control. Their presence was a quiet reminder that cats, even when stray, can play a role in urban ecosystems.

The idea that domestic cats are the primary threat to native wildlife is overly simplistic and misleading. Cats who have homes rarely roam far; they enjoy the comfort of their families and aren't responsible for widespread hunting. Instead, it's human activities—deforestation, habitat destruction, and pollution—that have the most devastating impacts on native species.

I urge this inquiry to adopt a progressive approach to cat population management. Support for community education programs would go a long way in fostering responsible cat ownership. This could include advice on desexing, microchipping, and keeping cats safely contained when necessary. At the same time, humane, evidence-based strategies—such as desexing and managed care for stray colonies—should be prioritised.

As someone who has come to love and respect these animals, I implore you to consider approaches that reflect compassion and coexistence. There are ways to live harmoniously with both domestic and feral cats, ensuring the welfare of all animals and the preservation of our shared environment.