

Submission
No 484

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

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially
Confidential

Submission to the Inquiry into the Management of Cat Populations in New South Wales

I thank the Animal Welfare Committee for addressing the important issue of cat population management in New South Wales. I am writing to emphasize the need for humane, science-based strategies to address this challenge effectively.

Evidence shows that killing cats to protect wildlife is not only cruel but also ineffective. Removal efforts often trigger the "Vacuum Effect," an ecological phenomenon where new cats repopulate cleared areas, perpetuating the issue. Instead of pursuing unsustainable culling programs, the focus should be on proactive, community-based solutions that address the root causes of cat overpopulation.

Programs such as Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR), targeted desexing, rehoming, and community education have proven highly effective in reducing stray cat populations, preventing wildlife predation, and decreasing nuisance complaints. These initiatives are compassionate, cost-effective, and sustainable, easing the burden on councils, shelters, and rescue groups while supporting the well-being of veterinary professionals and volunteers involved.

The NSW Government-commissioned report and recommendations from the recent NSW Pound Inquiry strongly support large-scale, targeted desexing programs. Providing grants to councils and rescue organizations for such programs, especially in disadvantaged communities, is a practical and compassionate solution. Programs like the Community Cat Program offer free desexing and microchipping to semi-owners and owners, empowering communities to manage stray cat populations responsibly without demonizing cats.

In addition, community education is vital. Efforts to promote responsible pet ownership and dispel common misconceptions about cats and urban wildlife can foster a more informed and engaged public.

I urge the Committee to prioritize humane, evidence-based approaches to cat population management, ensuring positive outcomes for cats, wildlife, and communities across NSW.

Yours sincerely,