

Submission  
No 502

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

**Name:** Ms Constance Papadakis

**Date Received:** 20 November 2024

---

We must prioritise cat welfare and support humane management practices, including desexing and education. Killing cats to protect wildlife hasn't worked before and it won't work now, it's cruel and doesn't solve the problem.

These initiatives also ease the burden on councils, shelters and rescue groups, while supporting the well-being of vets, nurses and volunteers involved.

A NSW Government-commissioned report supports large-scale desexing programs instead, showing that killing programs are ineffective.

The recent NSW Pound Inquiry has recommended a proactive solution: providing grants to councils and rescue organisations to fund large-scale, targeted desexing programs across the state, including community cat desexing in areas with large homeless cat populations, especially disadvantaged communities. These kinds of programs are a long-term, compassionate solution that reduces stray cat populations without demonising cats.

The best solution is helping semi-owners and owners in disadvantaged areas by providing free desexing and microchipping through programs like the Community Cat Program.

Proactive community cat programs have been scientifically proven to reduce stray cat populations, decrease nuisance complaints and prevent wildlife predation.

The Rand myth of domestic cats & urban wildlife provides a helpful summary of common misconceptions and effective solutions such as desexing for managing cats and reducing the number of homeless cats.

When creating policies for reducing feral and community cat populations, it's essential to consider the Vacuum Effect, an ecological principle demonstrating that removing animals from an area only results in new animals filling the space. Without addressing the root causes of population growth, removal efforts are unsustainable and ultimately ineffective.