

NSW Cat Rescuers & Carers

SECTION 32 & SEIZING / TRAPPING
ROAMING CATS
ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

Protect All Cats

May 2025

SECTION 32 & SEIZING / TRAPPING ROAMING CATS

CONCERNS & RECOMMENDATIONS



This document is provided on behalf of the Protect All Cats group, and approved and supported by the following individuals.

Amy Barley

Amanda Collier

Margaret Dalziel

Joan Diaz

Jennifer Fisher

Kayt Fitzpatrick

Lilly Froud

Eileen Kohu

Kylie Lang

Lydia McDonnell

Greta Martin

Melissa Moyle

Jeannette Peterson

Kayla Jade Rosewood

Jennifer Ross

Deborah Rouse

Corinne Tapp

Jennifer Timms

Hue-Anh Truong

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Concerns & recommendations for improving section 32 of the Companion Animals Act 1998 New South Wales

Background

In the Protect All Cats submission for the New South Wales (NSW) Companion Animal (CA) Act Review, we included a number of recommendations.

We take this opportunity to raise further specific concerns and recommendations in relation to Section 32 of the Companion Animal Act, and provide examples from lived experiences of how this section in the Act is either ignored, misunderstood or misused/abused by cat haters in our communities likely resulting in harm or death of cats.

This is further complicated and magnified with the current approach of many councils refusing to accept stray cats and the Threat Abatement Plan for predation by feral cats now inappropriately and confusingly including stray cats as a subclass of feral cats for their “documentation” purposes.

Cruelty to animals is rising

Cruelty to animals is on the rise. This has been confirmed by RSPCA NSW, and also evidenced by RSPCA United Kingdom (UK). Refer *APPENDIX 1 Data on increasing animal cruelty to cats* of this document.

Anecdotally, the community cat rescuers and carers in the Sydney metropolitan area experience a range of very likely (balance of probabilities) cruelty cases on a regular basis.

There have been incidents of cats being stolen and disappearing, cats being mutilated and kittens being killed in various inhumane ways, as often seen by cat rescuers and carers. These are usually not documented due to the secondary trauma involved, local community bullying, and lack of action from authorities most likely due to lack of certainty in identifying perpetrators, and also most likely their constrained funds. Further, if information is shared then this may incite the cat haters and more perpetrators.

This document will contain a sample of examples from social media where section 32 is used or ignored on social media to inappropriately trap cats, and often where the cat's outcomes are usually unknown and raise grave concerns. Refer to *APPENDIX 4 Examples of section 32 being ignored or misused/abused by community members (likely cat haters)* of this document.

Expert views on risks related to community members trapping cats

In summary there are a number of experts with concerns related to mandatory containment, and increased risks of trapping and harming of all roaming cats.

Refer to *APPENDIX 2 Expert Views & Concerns for consequences of mandatory cat containment*, of this document for quoted references. These are provided by RSPCA Australia, Australian Institute of Animal Management, Local Government NSW, Australian Pet Welfare Foundation, NSW Government, RSPCA South Australia and Animal Welfare League SA, Northern Beaches Council NSW, Kwinana Council Western Australia, No Kill Advocacy Centre, and a number of Australian research items.

- The Threat Abatement Plan for predation by feral cats now inappropriately includes stray cats as a subclass of feral cats, the latter considered a pest animal and to be destroyed not rescued nor rehomed, this blurs the lines between these different classes of cats and the treatments for feral and domestic stray cats. Concerns raised by RSPCA Australia and AIAM.
- Legislation for companion animals is lacking clear classing of feral and domestic cats and lacking appropriate responses to roaming cats with open interpretations. Concerns raised by Local Government NSW.
- Mandatory containment has not proven effective in any Australian council meaning pet and semi owned/unowned cats will continue to roam. These rules penalise those on low incomes and restrict the community volunteer carers assisting and rehoming abandoned cats, council pounds and the large animal welfare organisations accepting “stray” roaming cats for rehoming. Concerns raised by APWF.
- Mandatory legislation for cat containment involves the potential for all roaming cats being deemed “illegal” by cat haters in our communities a substantial risk of increased cruelty to cats and breaches of Acts to prevent cruelty to animals. Concerns raised by NSW Government. APWF, RSPCA Australia, AIAM.
- The councils’ nuisance cat processes and systems should be improved to respond to community needs. Concerns raised by APWF.
- A number of animal welfare organisations and councils do not condone trapping cats by community members due to grave fears for cat animal welfare breaches. Views raised by RSPCA SA, AWL SA, Northern Beaches Council NSW, Kwinana Council WA.
- When community cat programs are established then agreements should include exemptions for community cats and their carers or caretakers as these programs may be based on private property and/or public accessible areas, and during these programs it is not reasonable to expect all cats to be contained. Model provided by the No Kill Advocacy Centre.
- The impacts on community cat rescuers and carers when cats are removed by authorities should be taken into consideration due to mental and emotional health

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impacts, and potentially legal ramifications. Raised by Australian research , APW and AIMAM.

Section 32 concerns

Further to the Protect All Cats CA Act submission, and given the range of expert views in relation to the welfare of cats being assured, we have a number of general and specific concerns.

- a) councils provide different advice in relation to section 32 and other sections on roaming cats and nuisance cats,
- b) community members are interpreting section 32 in different ways most often to the detriment of a cat's welfare by not following through with obligations to transfer the cat to authorities,
- c) trapping nuisance cats by community members should cease based on animal welfare concerns, as it appears there is no effective way to oversee and control that trappers will conform with the legal obligations, meet animal welfare needs, nor confirmation that a trapped cat is transferred to a council pound/ authorities, and
- d) exceptions for seizing roaming cats by the authorities (council team members) to also include community cat rescuers and carers to assist with health and rehoming.

As we have seen, especially on community social media pages, this likely results in cruelty towards cats in either displacing the cats, surrendering to council pounds in far locations, harming or destroying cats that are not completed humanely.

As a group of rescuers and carers, we see issues with the following being open to interpretation by individuals and also across different councils. Refer to

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APPENDIX 3 Section 32 of the Companion Animal Act 1998 for a full copy of this section.

Re sub section “(1) Any person may lawfully seize a cat if that action is reasonable and necessary for the protection of any person or animal (other than vermin) from injury or death.”

- As to what is “reasonable and necessary” is open to interpretation and persons are not required to provide evidence
- “any... animal” may apply to all animals (except vermin) including
 - a. introduced species, including pigeons often considered as vermin in urban communities,
 - b. introduced species which people are encouraged to kill, including cane toads,
 - c. native species which populations are not rated as threatened and for which more than adequate populations exist including in urban and peri urban areas and
 - d. native species on properties where land owners are allowed to remove/eradicate theseⁱ.

Re sub section “(3) If a cat that is not under the effective control of some competent person enters any inclosed lands within the meaning of the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 and approaches any animal being farmed on the land, the occupier of the land or any person authorised by the occupier can lawfully injure or destroy the cat if he or she reasonably believes that the cat will molest, attack or cause injury to any of those animals.”

- “any animal” may apply to small animals of small value such as chickens, which are being “farmed” i.e. grown to be killed even at very young ages

Re sub section “(5) A person who takes action under the authority of this section that results in the injury to or death of a cat must—

(a) take reasonable steps to ensure that an injured cat receives any necessary treatment, and

(b) report the matter to an authorised officer (unless the person is an authorised officer) and comply with such reasonable directions as the authorised officer may give for the purpose of causing the cat to be returned to its owner or taken to a council pound, and

(c) take reasonable steps to inform the owner of the cat.”

- There does not appear to be any way to assure that these conditions are followed, or can be verified. Given community members, rescuers and carers cannot trespass on private property to gain evidence, we cannot see how these conditions are enforced by authorities e.g. council officers, Royal Society for the Protection of Cruelty to

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Animals (RSPCA) NSW, Animal Welfare League (AWL) NSW or the Police NSW. This is critical in relation to the risks of animal cruelty to cats.

Verification and enforcement of breaches posted on social media is more challenging as social media is a difficult tool / platform to trace identities and locations of intended or claimed cruelty to cats.

Section 32 recommendations

Protect All Cat submission for the Companion Animals Act Review included related recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION: Legislation should adopt the well-established RSPCA Australia (2018) definitions that differentiate between feral, owned, semi-owned, and unowned cats, based on behaviour and proximity to humans. This nuanced framework helps ensure cats receive appropriate treatment based on their needs and socialisation.

RECOMMENDATION: The current Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) mislabels urban and peri urban strays as feral, which not only undermines welfare-based care strategies but also gives unearned license to cruelty. The assumption that all roaming cats are invasive ferals is harmful. Policies must reflect the social nature of many of these animals.

RECOMMENDATION: The practice of trapping “nuisance” cats by members of the public must be banned. Without training or oversight, these actions often result in injury, death, or abandonment. Conversely, trained carers should be allowed to trap cats for medical care or desexing as part of recognised community cat programs.

Based on the many expert views and concerns, and our own specific concerns, it is strongly recommended that the NSW Companion Animal Act requires improvements related to section 32 and related sections under the government responsibilities and commitment to animal welfare for cats.

- Impacts of having unclear, confusing and not mutually exclusive cat terms and definitions being misinterpreted by community cat haters are impacting councils’ interpretations, and interpretations by the public / community members. As has been raised by many, the CA Act should contain clear terms and definitions for the classes of cats feral versus domestic with the latter having subclasses owned, semi owned and unowned. Section 32 should include separate actions and responses for the different classes and subclasses of cats in different locations.
- Section 32 should clarify the conditions for seizing a cat to deter traumatising or worse for a cat when the situation may not be fair nor reasonable. For example, cats

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roaming, or a cat attacking an introduced pigeon who are considered near vermin by many people, and rabbits considered noxious animals should not be a death sentence for a domestic cat.

- Section 32 should clearly indicate that only the authorities (council staff) and community cat rescuers / carers may seize cats for improving a cat's welfare. There needs to be a balance for authorities (council Rangers and Animal Management Officers), and experienced community cat rescuers /carers to trap a cat for medical assistance / desexing etc. It is critical that community cat rescuers and carers are enabled and supported for rehoming the domestic unowned and semi owned cats, and Section 32 should be improved to reflect this.
- Nuisance cat management legislation and processes will need improvement to respond to issues within the community related to section 32.

These improvements will provide clarity of obligations, minimise misinterpretations, and help ensure roaming cats are treated fairly and humanely by community members.

APPENDIX 1 Data on increasing animal cruelty to cats

RSPCA NSW

In Australia, RSPCA NSW inspectorate statistics show a steady increase in cat cruelty reports from 4255 in 2021-2022 to 6531 in 2023-2024ⁱⁱ.

RSPCA UK

RSPCA UK produced this information in 2023.

For dogsⁱⁱⁱ:

“In 2022, there were 9,776 reports made to the RSPCA about intentional harm to dogs, compared with 8,176 in 2021 and 7,691 in 2020. That's a rise of 27% in just three years.”

“Dermot Murphy, RSPCA inspectorate commissioner, said: ‘Right now, animal cruelty is happening in England and Wales on a massive scale and rising...

‘While we don't know for certain why there has been an increase, the cost-of-living crisis and the post-pandemic world we live in has created an animal welfare crisis.’”

For cats^{iv} :

“Figures released today show, in 2022, the number of reports made to the charity about intentional harm to cats was 1,726 - around five a day. This is up from 1,387 in 2021, an increase of 25%.”

“...cats are also more vulnerable as they tend to be out and about on their own which can leave them vulnerable to airgun attacks and other forms of cruelty by complete strangers”

“In 2022 the charity saw a 22% increase in reports of beatings... The number of beatings reported to the RSPCA in 2022 peaked in August, when 1,081 reports were received - a staggering 35 a day”

The number of animals killed in ‘suspicious circumstances’ increased in 2022 by 15% from by 2021 (891 in 2022, compared to 775 in 2021)

APPENDIX 2 Expert Views & Concerns for consequences of mandatory cat containment

RSPCA Australia, AIAM on TAP influencing more killing of cats with confusion with stray cats

It is a concern that the Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) for predation by feral cats^v, has blurred the lines between feral and domestic stray cats, having inappropriately made domestic stray cats a subclass of feral cats, where response strategies for these different classes of cats should also be significantly different for several reasons.

It is likely most community members will not recognise the following clarification in the details of the TAP. The TAP responses and actions for stray cats are open to interpretation as the document references “cats” meaning all cats, “feral cats” meaning feral and stray cats without distinguishing between these classes in many sections of the TAP document.

“For the purposes of this threat abatement plan, a categorisation of ‘feral’ cats and ‘pet’ cats has been used...This is not a prescribed categorisation, rather an organising framework for the information in this plan; it does not override the legal categorisations that apply in jurisdictions across Australia.”

RSPCA Australia^{vi} has highlighted their major concerns with the TAP reclassing strays as feral cats, including:

“This means that thousands of domestic cats will be classed as feral, meaning at best it will add a greater burden to organisations that are seen as responsible for managing stray cats, and at worst, **more cats will be killed** — not to mention putting up an additional barrier to these cats being adopted or rehomed.”

“Vilifying cats and declaring ‘war’ on them shifts the focus away from what should be the key objective — to protect and conserve vulnerable native species — to instead **promoting the killing of as many cats as possible.**”

The Australia Institute for Animal Management (AIAM)^{vii} view on the TAP and the need to distinguish between feral and domestic cats includes:

“Domestic cat management policies and actions must reiterate a clear definition of feral cats and distinguish between cats who are genuinely unowned, unsocialised, and have no relationship with or dependence on humans, and domestic cats who are physically present on public land at the time of cat control activities.

Management of domestic cats who are on Crown land that is adjacent to or close by to human habitation and infrastructure, should be consistent with management practices for cats in the residential areas. Local Government Animal Management

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departments and those working on cat control on Crown land must closely collaborate and coordinate activities, to **ensure that domestic cat management actions are carried out appropriately.**"

Local Government NSW Section 32 concerns

The Local Government NSW submission to Inquiry Management of Cat Populations^{viii} included

"powers to seize cats under the Companion Animals Act are unclear. Section 32 provides that a cat can be seized in order to prevent injury or death to an animal or person. **Some interpret this as an indication that all cats are capable of killing and therefore can be seized if roaming.** Others interpret this section as being applicable only if a cat attacks an animal or person. Laws enabling the use of cat containment policies would **need to clarify the compliance and enforcement provisions available to councils and any other regulatory bodies.**"

APWF and research view that mandatory containment has not proven effective meaning cats will continue to roam

Mandatory containment punitive laws fail to address root causes of cats roaming. Promoting cat containment with positive education and coaching will provide more successful results. Under mandatory containment cats will continue to roam, and these rules penalise those on low incomes, and restrict the volunteer carers assisting and rehoming abandoned cats.

Australian Pet Welfare Foundation (APWF)^{ix} research findings across Australian councils include the following.

"Mandated cat containment has been proven to be an ineffective strategy; a failure at reducing wandering cats in the short and long term, both in Australia and internationally. Mandated cat containment is not an effective strategy to reduce wandering cats because most wandering cats are strays with no owner to contain them. Even for cats with an owner, containment is often not achievable due to factors such as housing limitations, lack of financial resources and concerns about the welfare of confined cats."

New Australian research^x confirms the traditional approaches of trapping and culling are ineffective and place a significant negative impact on all those involved.

"Australia's legislative and compliance-based strategies have been used over decades to manage free-roaming urban cats, but they have demonstrated significant limitations and unintended consequences. These approaches, which prioritize enforcement and penalties, fail to address the root causes of non-compliance, such

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as socioeconomic barriers, lack of access to affordable cat sterilization services, and the prevalence of semi-owned or stray cats. Enforcement disproportionately burdens vulnerable populations, strains local government resources, and contributes to persistently high shelter and pound intakes and euthanasia. The mental health impacts on animal care workers, including AMOs, shelter staff, and rescue volunteers, further highlight the need for reform. Frequent exposure to the euthanasia of healthy and treatable cats, compounded by the frustration of ineffective enforcement measures, contributes to depression, compassion fatigue, traumatic stress, and even suicide among these workers [29,30,31,32,33,78,92,93]. This underscores the human cost of current management strategies and the urgent need for a more compassionate and effective approach based on One Welfare principles. Fragmentation among animal welfare agencies, AMOs, and rescue groups also hinders progress, with siloed efforts failing to create systemic solutions.”

NSW Government, APWF, RSPCA Australia, AIAM views on likely increase in cruelty to cats under mandatory cat containment legislation

It is recognised that with mandatory legislation for cat containment there is a substantial risk of increased cruelty to cats, with the potential for all roaming cats being deemed “illegal” by cat haters in our communities.

The NSW Government submission to the Inquiry Management of Cat Populations^{xi} main issues included:

“welfare and behavioural concerns: mandated 24-hour cat containment policies may raise concerns relating to cat welfare and breaches of POCTAA. To enforce cat containment, **there would need to be a program of trapping cats that are not currently contained. This would require specialist equipment and regular monitoring of the traps to ensure no breaches of animal cruelty laws,** which would be a significant financial impact on councils, as the enforcement authority under the CA Act.”

“negative attitudes towards cats: media articles often condemn cats and the role they play in the destruction of native fauna, without also mentioning the impacts of other invasive predators, such as red foxes, as well as roaming dogs. Any introduction of cat containment laws will need to take this into account to ensure such measures do not inadvertently contribute to this narrative.”

APWF Key Issues Mandated Cat Containment^{xii} includes:

“The evidence in Australia and internationally clearly shows that mandated 24/7 cat containment is not an effective strategy to reduce wandering cats or associated issues such as nuisance complaints or potential wildlife predation.”

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with negative consequences including “Increases risks of cruelty towards cats, increasing animal pain and suffering”.

The RSPCA Australia position paper on mandatory cat containment^{xiii}, includes:

“Community members who do not like cats might be incited to trap or even harm cats outside their owner’s property.”

“The RSPCA discourages the use of negative terminology (e.g. labelling of cats as ‘nuisances’) as this may heighten the risk of disrespectful or cruel treatment of cats.”

“Careful community messaging to guard against demonisation of cats, emphasising that there are legal and moral obligations to protect all cats from cruelty and harm and discouraging inappropriate behaviour towards free-roaming cats once legislation is implemented.”

“Amendment of legislation to require that persons trapping cats must be competent, trained, and operating as part of a program run by the government, or a welfare or research organisation that adheres to recognised welfare codes of practice and standard operating procedures. The organisation undertaking trapping is responsible for monitoring use and outcomes and these data should be publicly reported.”

The Australian Institute of Animal Management (AIAM)^{xiv} views that mandatory containment criminalises cats:

“Mandatory containment policies effectively criminalise those cats that are not complying with the legislation and classifies them as stray or feral with the more frequent outcome for them being euthanasia.”

APWF need for improving the nuisance cat processes & systems

The Australian Pet Welfare Foundation (APWF) provides:

“...legislation should better define and encourage practical cat containment and instead of mandating containment, anti-nuisance laws should be used to mitigate nuisance issues, while recognising the unique challenges of managing semi-owned cats”^{xv}

SA RSPCA and AWL object to public members trapping cats

The RSPCA SA and AWL SA Cat Management Plan^{xvi} includes:

“...council Animal Management Officers need to be provided with training, equipment & facilities for the correct care and handling of cats. New cat management legislation and council by-laws are of no value if they are not policed

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and enforced, and councils must be resourced to undertake that function. Trained Animal Cat Management Officers must also be responsible for any use of traps in management programmes. **It is not acceptable on animal welfare grounds for traps to be provided to members of the public.”**

Northern Beaches Council NSW advise Ranger only to take possession of a cat

Northern Beaches webpage^{xvii} under Pets and then Stray Animals includes advice that only Rangers should be seizing or trapping a cat.

“Found cats

Cats do roam and you may occasionally see one you don’t recognise. It is an offence to seize a cat unless the cat is injured, abandoned or lost. If a cat is a pet, it should be microchipped. Only a Ranger may take possession of a cat.”

Kwinana Council WA advise the public should not trap

Kwinana Council include in the pamphlet for responsible pet ownership for dogs and cats^{xviii}

“Cat Trapping

Due to welfare concerns, the City does not condone trapping of cats by member of the public, which may be in breach of the WA Animal Welfare Act 2002.

City’s authorised staff on council owned property only may have cause to undertake trapping ad required. However, welfare of the cats always comes first, utilising purpose built traps in accordance with the provisions of the Animal Welfare Act 2002.”

Community cat program model includes trapping exemptions

When community cat programs are established then agreements should include exemptions for community cats and their carers or caretakers as these programs may be based on private property and/or public accessible areas. During these programs it is not reasonable to expect all cats to be contained. Cats may be trapped for desexing, vaccinating etc or health issues, and rehoming. That is to improve a cat’s welfare.

The Protection for Community Cats publication^{xix} includes a model of legal obligations to be agreed by authorities and community cat rescuers, which includes:

“(a) A community cat shall go through the community cat program instead of euthanasia unless reclaimed, transferred to a rescue group, or adopted, with the

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following exception... Further veterinary care is required, in which case the cat will be returned once it no longer needs care.”

“(e) trapping of a community cat is only permitted for purposes of a community cat program, providing needed veterinary care, adoption, transfer to a rescue group, or reunification with his/her owner.”

Australian Research, APWF and the AIAM recommend that impacts to community cat rescuers & rescuers (semi owners) should be assessed before removing roaming cats

Before actions are taken to remove roaming cats, there should be steps to identify semi owners i.e. community cat rescuers and carers.

While mandatory cat containment has been introduced in many councils, notably Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, the need for volunteer cat rescuers and carers continues. If mandatory containment was effective then there would not be a need for these volunteers, and there would be just pets being surrendered to council pounds and large animal welfare organisations e.g. RSPCA, Animal Welfare League (AWL) and Cat Protection Society.

The Australian Institute of Animal Management (AIAM)^{xx} views that mandatory containment criminalises not just cats but those who care for them:

“Mandatory containment policies effectively criminalise cat caretakers that do not (or cannot) comply with the legislation.”

Yet cat rescuers and carers continue to operate in most states/ territories, as there is an obvious need to humanely improve cat welfare.^{xxi}

“You can’t ban compassion. Those people will go to jail to continue to help the cats if they feel that those cats need their help, and it wastes so much government money and it damages human wellbeing, and there is a much better way, which is to assist them to get the cats desexed and managed in a way that resolves complaints”

“A welfare-based approach should also reduce the burden on vets of large-scale euthanasia of healthy animals, and minimise distress to people who have developed relationships with stray cats”

Community cat rescuers and carers are volunteers from a range of career backgrounds and provide assistance to the abandoned domestic cats in urban and peri urban areas. The misleading information that is frequently circulated to garner ISC members/ followers/ donors can be seen as a form of secondary trauma that cat rescuers suffer alongside the cases of physical cruelty to cats.

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The generally self-funded cat rescuers and carers, do not have the resources, capability or available time to respond to all the forms and instances of misleading information, nor threats or acts of violence to cats.

It is strongly recommended that the research into the Australian Newcastle breakwater cats culling^{xxii} is taken into consideration including:

- the extremely strong bond between volunteer carers and rescuers with colony cats “known by authorities for at least five years, and included using a TNR program to reduce numbers from 100 to about 40” with rehoming many cats abandoned by others,
- the advice “...the severity of the adverse psychological impacts, and the morbidity rate amongst the cat caregivers... was far greater than would be expected as a risk to the community if the cats had remained at the site. We therefore suggest that potential legal ramifications should be considered before authorities intentionally choose a method of management that is likely to inflict substantial harm on community members.”

The Australian Institute of Animal Management (AIAM)^{xxiii} views those who care for them:

“AIAM suggests that the role of volunteer-run rescue groups in urban cat management be more explicitly recognised in discussions about domestic cat management in urban and suburban contexts.

Lack of recognition of the current contribution of Volunteer-run rescue groups in the management of domestic cats is detrimental to relationships within the sector. These groups are not shelters and the work they do is often not in collaboration with councils for a variety of reasons. Where groups are working with councils, they commonly take on care and rehoming responsibility for animals taken into care by councils, at their own cost, with no financial or other practical contribution from Councils. AIAM encourages Local Government to, at the very least, actively participate in and support provision of positive outcomes for the cats that come into their care. Ideally, municipal shelters should be facilitating direct rehoming (amongst other proactive programs such as foster, intake reduction etc.) of the community’s pets that require the shelters’ services.”

APPENDIX 3 Section 32 of the Companion Animal Act 1998

Copied from the Act^{xxiv} for convenience when reading this document.

32 Action to protect persons and animals against cats

(1) Any person may lawfully seize a cat if that action is reasonable and necessary for the protection of any person or animal (other than vermin) from injury or death.

(2) (Repealed)

(3) If a cat that is not under the effective control of some competent person enters any inclosed lands within the meaning of the Inclosed Lands Protection Act 1901 and approaches any animal being farmed on the land, the occupier of the land or any person authorised by the occupier can lawfully injure or destroy the cat if he or she reasonably believes that the cat will molest, attack or cause injury to any of those animals.

(4) An authorised officer who finds a cat attacking or harassing an animal (other than vermin) within a wildlife protection area (as defined in section 30 (1) (b)) can lawfully injure or destroy the cat if there is no other reasonably practicable way of protecting the animal.

(5) A person who takes action under the authority of this section that results in the injury to or death of a cat must—

(a) take reasonable steps to ensure that an injured cat receives any necessary treatment, and

(b) report the matter to an authorised officer (unless the person is an authorised officer) and comply with such reasonable directions as the authorised officer may give for the purpose of causing the cat to be returned to its owner or taken to a council pound, and

(c) take reasonable steps to inform the owner of the cat.

(6) An authorised officer is not to give a direction under this section for the purpose of causing a cat to be taken to a council pound unless the authorised officer is satisfied that the owner of the cat cannot be identified.

(7) Nothing in this section authorises a contravention of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979.

(8) The authority conferred by this section to destroy a cat extends only to authorising the destruction of the cat in a manner that causes it to die quickly and without unnecessary suffering.

APPENDIX 4 Examples of section 32 being ignored or misused/ abused by community members (likely cat haters)

This is just a small sample of a range of people who have or are claiming to have harmed and killed cats including known neighbour's pet cats. These examples also include where these people claim that they are allowed to trap and kill cats that roam on to any private property.

Phil Tripp Coffs Harbour NSW known act of cruelty to cats

Phil's act of cruelty was first shown on social media on a Facebook post.

Source

The Daily Mail reported on the incident, unfortunately the Facebook post link is no longer available.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9816211/Man-70-charged-killing-stray-cat-online-post-showing-animal-drowning.html>



A social media post earlier this week showing a cat trapped in a cage led to a member of the public reporting the man to police

'The first feral cat of the season,' the text accompanying the post said.

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The article includes:

“Filling the green wheelie bin with water so I can give it swimming lesson and mercifully euthanise it in 15 seconds in the sinking cat trap.”

The man has since muted or deleted his numerous social media accounts.

Daily Mail Australia has seen earlier posts by the same person which displayed other instances of animal trapping.”

“Earlier posts show another trapped feline and a dead cat propped on a sign”

Concerns

- the cat is obviously not feral, likely a roaming pet cat which may have not been microchipped, checking for a cat owner was not completed, using the “feral” term was not appropriate
- drowning the cat was shared on Facebook
- the DM claimed they saw other instances of animal trapping
- the deceased domestic cat was hung from a sign on his property

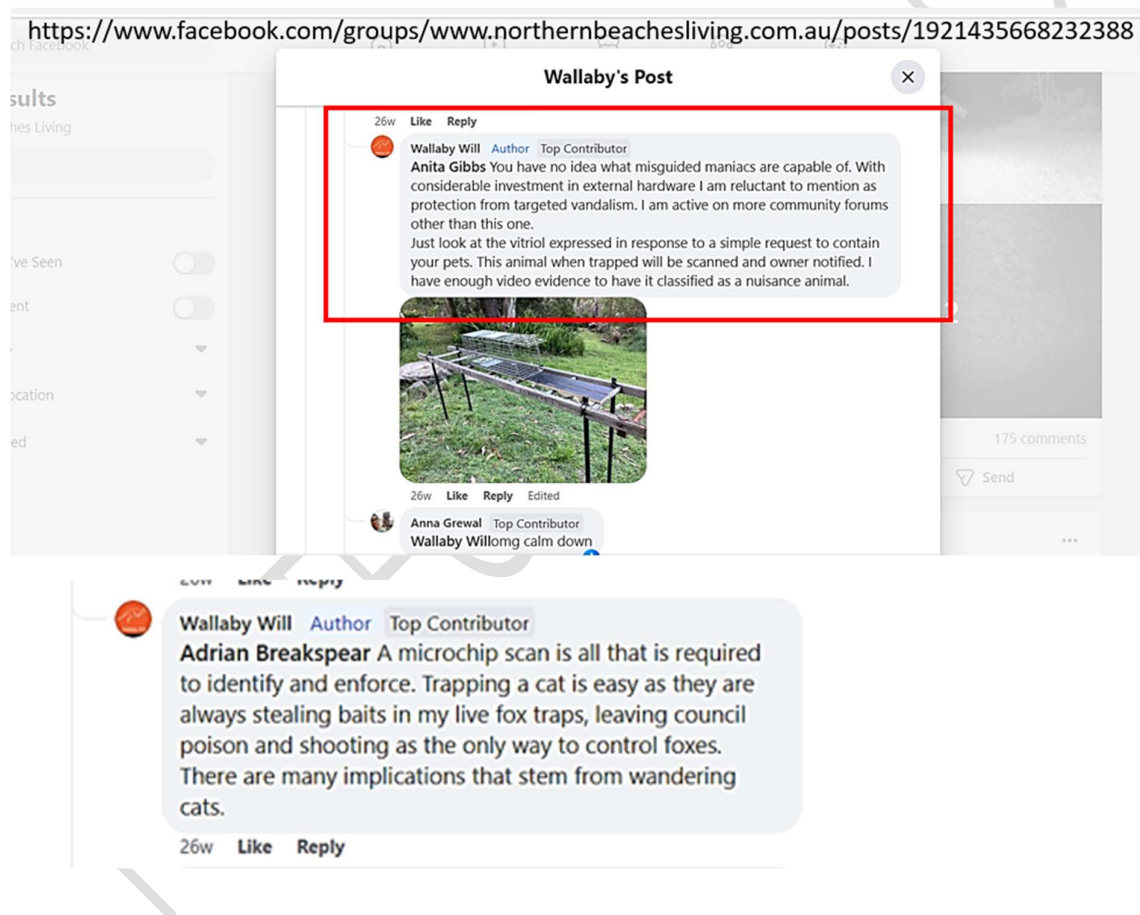
Protect All Cats

- Difficult to gain further evidence from the private/ secure page Native Animal Annihilators – but as can be seen from the image of this page it involves obvious cat haters and where people like Darren Kerry can freely post their acts of cruelty to all cats, even pet/ neighbour cats.

Wallaby Will Example of anger to cats and “Moggy Lobby”

Source

Northern Beaches Living Facebook Group 30 May 2023




Protect All Cats

Northern Beaches Living

Anna Grewal Top Contributor
Dude your pictures are of the one cat, all the same night. But your post says various cats.
Stop putting everyone in the same basket, there are strays in Sydney. It's not like the beaches magically has no strays.
Because of this "cats are evil" rhetoric someone's cat was shot in the end head last week.
26w Like Reply 3

Wallaby Will Author Top Contributor
Anna Grewal Your bias has blinded you - there are multiple cats with time stamps and more on my profile page over the last couple of years. Many more videos have not yet been publicly displayed - it is unfortunately a constant problem.
26w Like Reply

Wallaby Will Author Top Contributor
Anna Grewal Yes humans are one of the few species that are capable of killing for fun. The other unfortunately is the cat, no matter how comfortable or well fed it may be and in greater regularity than your one example of human cruelty. It is the de...
See more

 **THECONVERSATION.COM**
Research reveals why pet owners keep their cats indoors – and it's not to protect wildlife

26w Like Reply Edited

reply to Adrian Breakspear...

Wallaby Will Author Top Contributor
Gioia Jules Unfortunately through concerted efforts of the moggy lobby and complicit admins I have been blocked and banned from a number of social media community sites simply for copying the relevant council info articles on responsible pet ownership. The misguided cat adoption people want nothing to interfere with their efforts to place unwanted cats from other areas of Sydney into our naturally endowed environment.
26w Like Reply Edited

Louisa Rose

Concerns

- Wallaby Will (Ian Minus) blocks people who disagree with him, and offer Australia research that contradicts his view
- from past posts, WW posts are influenced by Invasive Species information
- there is a noticeable level of anger in the comments directed towards all cats, cat rescuers/carers, and the Animal Justice Party, the latter two described as "the moggy lobby".

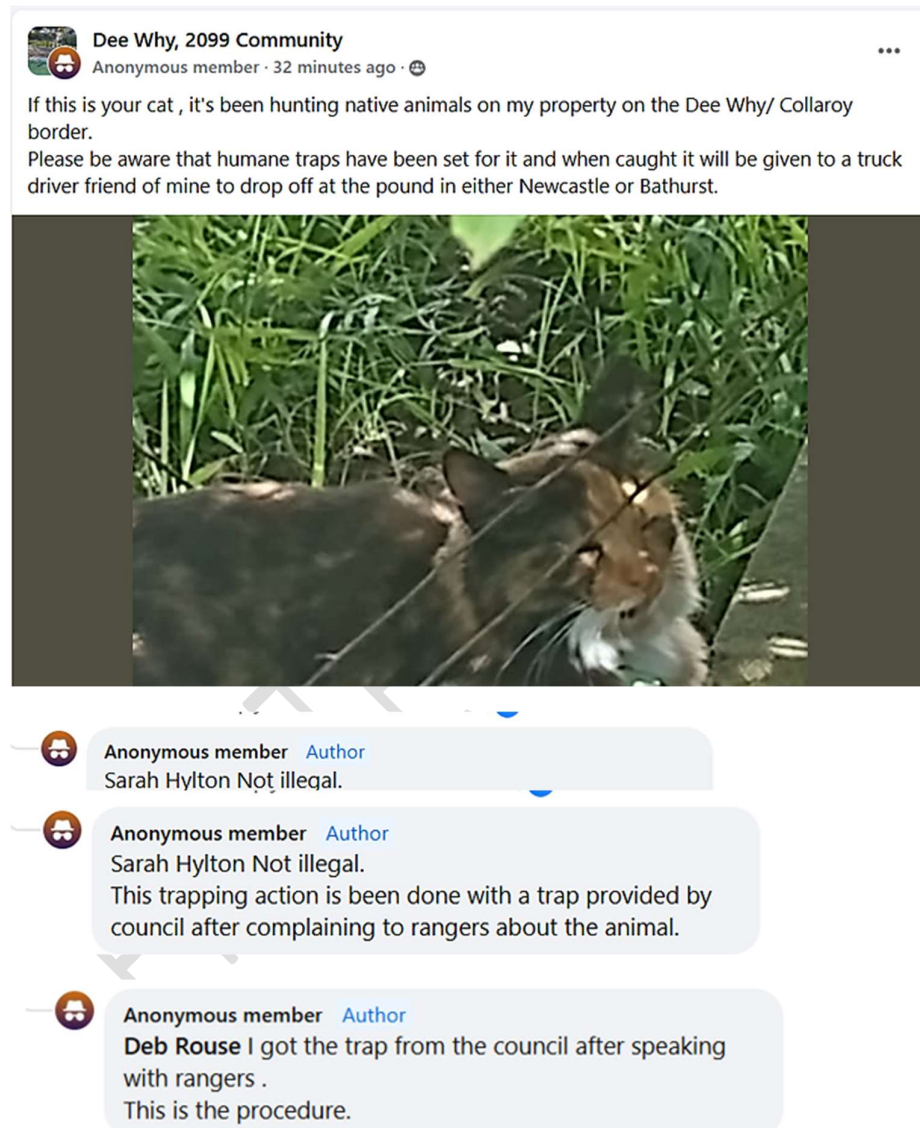
Protect All Cats

Dee Why community member trapping pet cats threatening to relocate to regional areas

People trapping cats where it is more than questionable.

Source

Dee Why Community Facebook page – post was deleted around 24 hours later



Confirmed with council Rangers this is not true – Northern Beaches Council do not lend out traps.

Protect All Cats

Confirmed with council Rangers via phone on the day and then also in council responding to an email on this instance.

Concerns

- community member did not provide evidence / proof of claims, still intended to trap and relocate a pet cat
- confirmed with council rangers that they had not been contacted and do not provide traps to members of the community
- the council webpage indicates rangers should be contacted for stray cats
- the community member argued with many in the posts in relation to their actions being “legal” which they were not

Community member in Hunter Valley trapping stray and neighbours' cats and giving cats away to anyone

A community member giving away trapped cats to anyone who will take the cats. Feared that these cats were handed over to those who will use for live bait for dog fighting etc.

Source

FB Page Pets Needing Homes Hunter Valley Saturday 10 May 2025



Protect All Cats



Summary of information gathered from post and comments:

A man trapped 2 “stray” cats and posted online asking for someone to collect them. He said they would stay in the trap until someone took them. He said they were strays but then later changed his story that they were his 80-year-old neighbour’s cats. He said the grey one was “wild like a panther” in the crate and yet a stranger came and collected it to “adopt”. There was no food or water or covering on the trap and the cats were petrified. There were concerns from many commenters that whoever took the cat was taking for dog baiting to be “ripped to pieces” which is rife in Maitland. Another person commented that the grey cat looked like a missing cat but it was too late as he had given the cat away. He said he will be trapping 6 more and will be doing the same thing.

Protect All Cats

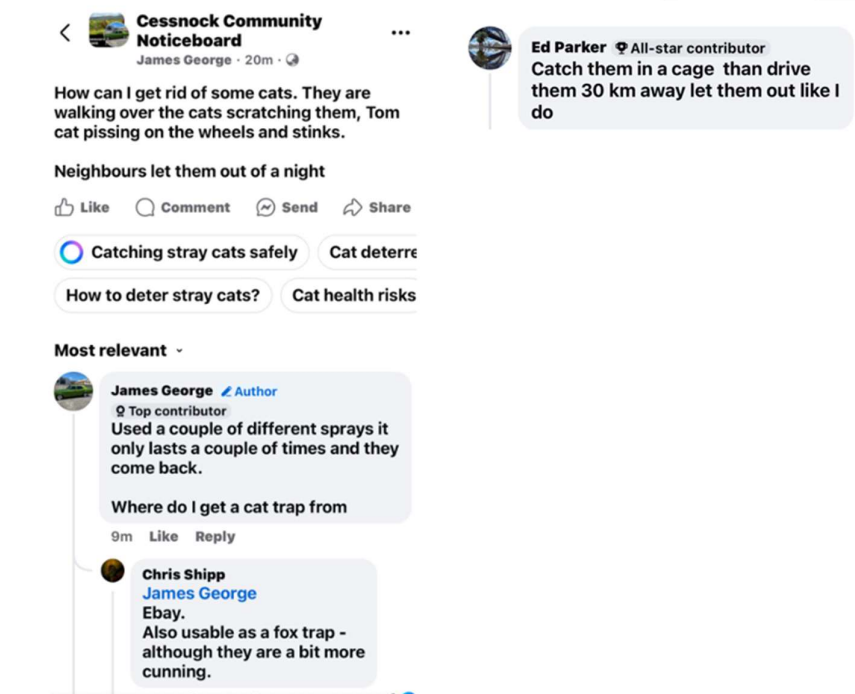
Concerns

- animal cruelty considering cats were kept in small cages for long periods
- any domestic stray cat would act to get out and away from humans in this situation
- cats described as strays but then also included the trapper knew some if not all belonged to neighbours
- cats not handed over to council authorities
- unknow to whom cats were handed – fear the worse being dog fighting rings requiring live bait

Cessnock Community neighbours' nuisance cats to be trapped & relocated

Source

Cessnock Community FB page 02 June 2025 – believe the post has now been deleted



Concerns

- Nuisance cats are known to be neighbours' pets but community member intends to trap
- Advice from another is to take the cat some 30km away and "dunp" the cat there, this may be in a native bush park

Protect All Cats

Cat Colonies in SW Sydney: cats being mutilated and killed

Source

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0ZMasHqaDFKi9F9TqtSGRN9eSM8XCgM4CZrKAAt56dfwD4BWpWsc1YzRsHqLp5B1fl&id=61554727230654

2 June 2025

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0ZMasHqaDFKi9F9TqtSGRN9eSM8XCgM4CZrKAAt56dfwD4BWpWsc1YzRsHqLp5B1fl&id=61554727230654

PAWS Adoption By BEE
23h · 🌐

!!! ⚠️ Please be advised that this is an extremely triggering post. !!! ⚠️

I kindly urge everyone to share this and remain alert regarding their surroundings, particularly concerning the stray kitties and their colonies.

Location Warning: Bankstown & Liverpool / Denham Court & Narellan 🚧

It has been confirmed that a monster has tragically attacked again, targeting a colony/street kitten I have named Mercy. 🥺🥺

This young, beautiful female, with her full light ginger/campaign color, fell victim to an unknown assailant. The vet has confirmed that she was either hooked or some tool was used to hang her by the head 🥺🥺

Additionally, a blow to the head resulted in a missing skull section, and some teeth are broken, along with her legs and spine being snapped, while her abdomen has been sliced right down the middle. 🥺🥺🥺

This situation was brought to my attention by a person who reached out, having never witnessed anything like this before. They found her lying on the sidewalk all day and returned to retrieve the body at my request. 🥺

They have lived in that area for some time, and while an older lady feeds the cats there, it seems the street is overrun with them, and unfortunately, there is no available help.

Someone clearly believes this is the way to send a warning. 🥺

No microchip was detected, nor was there a desexing tattoo found on her ears. 🥺

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the kind soul who reached out after reading about Justice and went back to collect the body after my kind request and placing her in a small nuke box, as I know this was a heavy burden for you. 🥺🥺🥺

Your efforts in answering all the questions have been forwarded to the police, RSPCA, and vets for record-keeping and linking the crimes.

A huge thank you to Zee for bringing the body to me so late at night, I know this was not an easy task. 🥺🥺🥺

I am immensely grateful to my wonderful vet, management, and staff for always being there and handling such heartbreaking cases like this. 🥺🥺🥺

The police have been notified ✅
RSPCA notified ✅
Vet documentation has been recorded ✅

Her small body has been laid to rest alongside Justice and Diamond. 🥺🥺🥺

Mercy and Justice and Diamond did not deserve this, nor did they ask to be born or abandoned on the streets. 🥺🥺

I suggest that those who feed or help Street Kitties keep a record of the cats they feed each night.

If possible, please save them and connect with rescues for assistance in desexing if you can't. 🥺🥺

Many people take kittens without vetting them and abandon them when they lose interest, as they don't realize how quickly a few cats can lead to years of cleanup.

An elderly woman has been feeding these cats for years but can't afford to desex them.

This sweet soul feeds the cats to prevent them from going hungry. 🥺

This situation must change, and we need to identify the cruel individuals who are tormenting and traumatizing these innocent lives. This is occurring more frequently than we realize. 🥺🥺🥺

Please report any suspicious activity involving animals or any findings you come across.

This is crucial because without us, these furry babies lack a voice and protection, and we owe it to them.

I wish I could do more, but my own colonies are at risk, and I face challenges with low adoptions and high bills.


Please help in any way you can, no matter how small.

These innocent fur souls need us 🥺🥺🥺

I am deeply Sorry you weren't protected from the devil. 🥺

Rest easy beautiful, fly high baby. 🥺

#pawsadoptionbybee #bringsjusticeforcats #rescuecats #colonycats #kittens #liverpool #bankstown #catslifematter #nswpolice



Concerns

- cats in known colonies are being attacked, mutilated and killed

Protect All Cats

- appears that cats in colonies are easy targets / fair game by individual cat haters / abusers
- this is not uncommon, and people may have mental health issues, however it is likely influenced by all the negativity around cats and demonising their roaming, "cat hate"

Belrose etc community FB group – roaming pet cat & cat hating comments

Source


Community page 9 December 2024

Belrose, Davidson, French's Forest & Forestville Community Page
Public group · 30.6K members

Discussion Featured People Events Media Files

Anonymous participant
1h · 🌐

Allworth Drive, Davidson. This cat was attacking a baby brush turkey in my garden early this morning. Can't find the bird - hopefully safe. Not the first time I've seen it preying on native wildlife and roaming my property. If yours, be responsible and keep it indoors.



Phil Pakes
Two cats had a swimming race.
One was called "One,Two, Three" and the second called "Une, deux, Trois".
Which won?
'One two three' won because 'une deux trois' cat sank... 🐟

Brett Smith
Any cat that isn't kept under control should be caught and dispatched. When cat owners can't be responsible, they don't get to keep the cat. End of story.

Protect All Cats



Ben Rourke Top contributor

Anon, Remember bad cats make good furry hats 🤪

Top contributor
Best thing you can do is revegetate your backyard with lots of native bushes and trees. Brush turkeys likely considered a native of "least concern", meaning their populations are doing well. The baby brush turkeys are "abandoned" from birth and not uncommon to see adult brush turkeys attack and kill the babies as they are seen as a competitor food.



2h Like Reply Share

stating that natives who are not endangered are fine to be killed by cats because they sometimes kill each other is ridiculous. I know you love a roaming cat, but seriously.

1h Like Reply Share

1h Like Reply Share

Top contributor
your view that a cat is chasing (not killing) a prolific native animal is a serious concern is ridiculous 😞 and your silly statement about "loving" a roaming cat is just passive aggressive going for personal attacks rather than debating the issues 😞 I am happy to debate the issues and provide information from experts

1h Like Reply Share

Top contributor
Also, I did NOT state "that natives who are not endangered are fine", I suggest you read
- what is there rather than making stuff up 😞
- what our governments do and that is limited to the rated status of populations, and even then, so many threatened animals are not protected (and before you jump to wrong conclusions again, I do raise objections to this) 😞

1h Like Reply Share

you're pro cat roaming is ridiculous. You show up on each cat killing post. And I'm not being passive or aggressive. I'm literally a vet who loves cats and wildlife. I don't make anything up. I ignore your fake studies. Cats kill natives. You are blatantly wrong. I disagree completely with your views. Is that direct? I'm not trying to change your mind. Just to get you to quit talking nonsense.

Top contributor

I am not pro cat roaming, you are making ridiculous statements. My "fake studies" are all documented by Australian scientists... go follow the trail to the Australian Pet Welfare Foundation. You aren't very good at looking at the refer... [See more](#)

9m Like Reply Share

fake news. Thanks again for your input. Until the next cat roaming post comes up. Take care.

5m Haha Reply Share

you need to go get a strong coffee and learn to read... I have a lovely snap shot of your statement that this is fake news - I am proud if I add evidence-based science to the "cat killing posts" as you put them.

Concerns

- pet cat out roaming, no hard evidence on attacking a prolific native animal: brush turkey, and given an adult brush turkey has considerable talons, this is questionable
- cate hate comments re drowning cats
- a community member personally attacking another who is raising valid researched findings, calls out "cat killing posts" though this post the cat did not kill an animal, indicates willing to debate issues but ridicules the other's view, calls APWF research as "fake", etc – shows entrenched sentiment for all roaming cats being killers

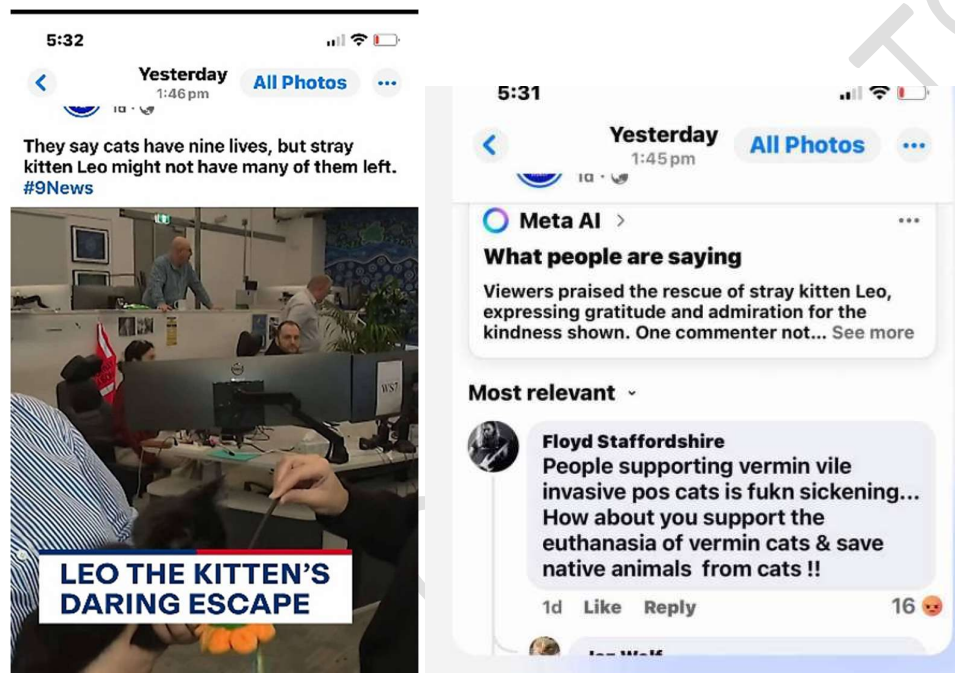
Protect All Cats

Channel 9 NEWS positive story about a kitten marred by cat hater's comment for all cats

Positive story about a kitten running across the M3 and narrowly escaping death marred by cat hater's comment

Source

Channel 9 NEWS FB Page 11 May 2025



Summary from rescuer: A positive uplifting cat post is nearly always marred by a cat hating male quoting invasive species, calling all cats vermin and calling for euthanasia. This is emotional abuse.

Concerns

- misdirection of anger towards domestic kitten flung out of a car
- lack of understanding of the different classes of cats (and kittens) attributing the impacts of feral cats to domestic cats
- these comments are not moderated and are a form of secondary trauma for cat rescuers & carers

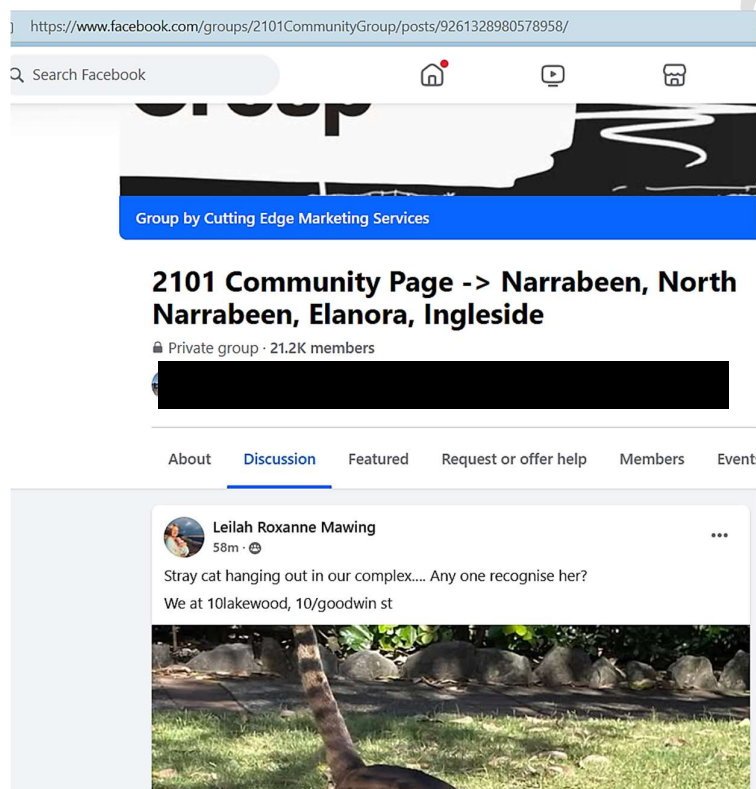
Protect All Cats

Northern Beaches Community member posting about roaming cat - calling the cat a stray & misinformation from others

These types of posts where a roaming cat is reported on a community page occur frequently across Sydney Metropolitan area. These cats are often referenced as strays or feral in urban areas. The cat is not ill nor injured and photos do not show the cat attacking any wildlife. Yet these posts usually generate encouragement to trap the cat, and take to a vet, and we are not sure if the owner's details will be up to date etc. The real intent of these posts is questionable.

Source

Narrabeen Community page post 1 May 2025



Protect All Cats



★ Rising contributor

Can you catch it and take it to the vet for microchip checking.

15m Like Reply

👍👍👍 Beautiful cat!

Definitely not distressed doubt it is a stray

8m Like Reply

👤 Top contributor

Not a stray, very likely owned, what's the point of this post? 😞

17h Like Reply

to reunite the cat with its owner? It's been out for two days according to another post about the same cat. If your cat was missing would you want to know where it is or would you not care?

30m Like Reply

👤 Top contributor

the cat roams during the days, where does it say the cat has been out for 48 hours? If you have concerns ring the council Rangers, read the advice I copied from our council webpage. 😊

19m Like Reply

👤 Top contributor


the council Rangers have access to the Companion Animal Register related to the NSW Pet Registry, and our vet pound teams and should be able to indicate if a Bengal or other cat has been listed as missing.

😊

14m Like Reply

where is the other post please? on this post you have another resident indicating "Hi Leilah, I live in the same unit complex and I've seen that cat around before, it's definitely a local."

Protect All Cats

Josie Stewy  Top contributor

Bengal cat... can be quite dangerous to wildlife as it's the closest domestic you'll get to a wild cat.. shouldn't be out 😞

 Top contributor

Bengal cat... can be quite dangerous to wildlife as it's the closest domestic you'll get to a wild cat.. shouldn't be out 😞

Concerns

- community members posting a roaming neighbour's cat as a stray
- comments to take the cat to a vet for scanning, which is an inconvenience to vet staff and also the owner
- other comments referenced in this post indicate the cat roaming was reported before and the cat does belong to a neighbour
- exaggerated views on Bengal domestic cats being half wild and more aggressive hunters (nice photo of cat just walking through the manicured lawn)

ⁱ "Landholder's licence to harm native animals under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016. This licence allows authorised persons to control protected native animals if shown to be causing a serious threat to safety, property damage or economic hardship on a property"

https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-07/landholder-licence-harm-protected-native-animals-220169_0.pdf

ⁱⁱ <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/other/19636/RSPCA%20NSW-Inspectorate-Annual-Report-2021-2022.pdf> & <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/other/19637/RSPCA%20NSW-Inspectorate-Annual-Report-2022-2023.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.rspca.org.uk/-/news-one-dog-abused-every-hour>

^{iv} <https://www.rspca.org.uk/-/news-cruelty-to-cats-increased-last-year>

^v <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/biodiversity/threatened/publications/tap/threat-abatement-plan-feral-cats>

^{vi} <https://www.rspca.org.au/latest-news/media-centre/feral-cat-plan-targets-the-wrong-cats/>

^{vii} Submission 474 <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/Pages/inquiryprofile/management-of-cat-populations-in-new-south-wales.aspx#tab-submissions>

^{viii} Submission #5 <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/Pages/inquiryprofile/management-of-cat-populations-in-new-south-wales.aspx#tab-submissions>

^{ix} <https://petwelfare.org.au/position-statements/cat-containment>

^x Rethinking Urban Cat Management—Limitations and Unintended Consequences of Traditional Cat Management <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/15/7/1005>

^{xi} Submission 94 <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/Pages/inquiryprofile/management-of-cat-populations-in-new-south-wales.aspx#tab-submissions>

^{xii} <https://petwelfare.org.au/position-statements/cat-containment>

^{xiii} <https://kb.rspca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/PP-A8-Cat-Containment-2024.pdf>

^{xiv} Submission 474 <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/Pages/inquiryprofile/management-of-cat-populations-in-new-south-wales.aspx#tab-submissions>

^{xv} APWF NSW Office of Local Government - Companion Animals Act 1998 Review <https://petwelfare.org.au/government-submissions>

^{xvi} <https://www.rspcasa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/RSPCA-AWL-Cat-Management-Plan-for-South-Australia.pdf>

^{xvii} <https://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/community/pets/stray-animals>

^{xviii} [https://www.kwinana.wa.gov.au/council/documents,-publications-and-forms/publications-and-forms-\(all\)/information-sheets-and-guides/2020/responsible-pet-ownership-guidelines](https://www.kwinana.wa.gov.au/council/documents,-publications-and-forms/publications-and-forms-(all)/information-sheets-and-guides/2020/responsible-pet-ownership-guidelines)

^{xix} <https://nokilladvocacycenter.org/the-toolkit/protecting-community-cats>

^{xx} Submission 474 <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/Pages/inquiryprofile/management-of-cat-populations-in-new-south-wales.aspx#tab-submissions>

^{xxi} “‘You can’t ban compassion’: helping stray cats is illegal in much of Australia – but for some, it’s worth the risk” <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/feb/23/you-cant-ban-compassion-helping-stray-cats-is-in-much-of-australia-but-for-some-its-worth-the-risk>

^{xxii} The Impact of Lethal, Enforcement-Centred Cat Management on Human Wellbeing: Exploring Lived Experiences of Cat Carers Affected by Cat Culling at the Port of Newcastle <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/13/2/271>

^{xxiii} Submission 474 <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/Pages/inquiryprofile/management-of-cat-populations-in-new-south-wales.aspx#tab-submissions>

^{xxiv} <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-1998-087#sec.32>