

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Cat and Dog Review](#)
Subject: Re: Submission for the Cat Act Review.
Date: Sunday, 4 August 2019 8:51:00 PM

PS please accept the following additional points for my submission:

- * that desexing kittens prior to rehoming be made mandatory.
- * exception to the above be because of weight issues or cryptorchidism. In these cases the breeder may supply a desexing voucher so the kitten can be desexed when it is older. Vets prefer that a kitten with cryptorchidism be desexed later so that the retained testicle/s are more easily found and removed. Many operations have been botched by operating early. It is about the safety of the kitten.

Thank you
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to make comment and add my thoughts for the review of the Cat Act 2011.

The cat act and dog act must remain two separate acts for specificity of two distinct species.

Cats can breed year round and the majority of cats come into season every few weeks or couple of months. Dogs do not come into season that frequently - every 6 to 12 months for most breeds.

RETAINING KITTENS FOR ASSESSMENT

Kittens should be at least 9 months to a year of age prior to rehoming for breeders to make an assessment of breed standard quality and health. The standard of a particular kitten may be excellent and then as it matures it can be clearer if the standard holds or the cat has developed into adulthood away from the breed standard. Breeders should be given time to make their assessments. Breeders do not sell mature kittens or teenagers at full kitten price. They are discounted by 50% or more of their usual adoptions price. It is therefore not about making money but doing what is best to improve the breed. Backyard breeders would sell off kittens as young as they could - 6 weeks without vet checks or vaccinations. Registered breeders will do all vet work with two vaccinations, a worming and defleaing schedule, three vet checks and also desexing of the kitten prior to adoption.

To this end, registered breeders should be allowed to have at least twelve breeding cats. This will also enable best practice in not inbreeding lines and not overbreeding queens.

REHOMING RETURNED KITTENS/CATS

Allowance should be made for returned cats to breeders by their owners for rehoming.

The microchip is still in previous owner's name. These cats should not be counted as part of a breeder's total numbers. These cats are desexed anyway and breeders need time to rehome them. Microchips are then changed to their new owner's name.

Some cats may never be able to be rehomed. If this was the case, the desexed cat should not be counted towards the breeder's total number of cats. It is in the cat's best interest to have a stable environment.

LEASING STUDS AND QUEENS

Allowance should be made for leasing studs and queens for the purposes of breeding with new lines. This allows outcrossing so that lines are healthier and the problems of inbreeding do not occur.

A leased cat is deemed to still be the possession and therefore owned by the breeder who has leased the cat out. The breeder in possession of the cat during its lease is not the owner and therefore a leased cat should not be counted towards the breeder's total number of entire cats.

NUMBER OF BREEDING CATS

Registered Breeders (who have a mission to love and continue the lines of their chosen breed) should be allowed to have any amount of cats they need to improve their breed, as long as they can feed them well and provide an enriched environment for them. Stipulating three times (3X) what a local government would ordinarily allow a resident breeder is too limiting.

The above relates to the requirements for breeders to avoid inbreeding - highly undesirable eg Father to Daughter matings, causing unhealthy traits to emerge in the next generation. Line breeding - grandfather to granddaughter is still frowned upon, but may be a necessity if the breeder does not have an unrelated cat to progress their breeding program.

Complete outcross matings are highly desirable, so that unhealthy traits are not magnified. Refer CatsWA policy on in-breeding, line-breeding and outcrossing:

http://www.fcc-wa.com/CatsWA_PolicyOnInbreedingAndLineBreeding.pdf

Registered Breeders should be applauded and allowed to have any number of cats in their breeding program, so that only healthy kittens are bred. At the very least, as mentioned above, breeders should be allowed to have at least twelve (12) entire cats. Major cat breeders with large facilities should certainly be allowed any number of cats they can maintain and love.

INDOOR CATS

All cats should be indoor cats and or confined to the property. No cats should be wandering. No need for a curfew if this is law.

Although at a bare minimum cats should be confined indoors between the hours of 6.00 pm and 7.00 am when they are most active. Otherwise they cause havoc by fighting with other neighbourhood cats, digging up other people's gardens and even using backyards as their own personal litter box. This should not to be tolerated. Cat fights in the middle of the night and the after-effects - blood on the driveway or verandah also will be prevented. (Yes I have experienced all the above).

The best prevention is a TOTAL curfew with indoor only cats who may have access to a secure catio or backyard.

If a curfew is in place, penalties should apply to owners for not abiding by the curfew.

REGISTERED BREEDERS, THEIR CAT MANAGEMENT AND THEIR SHIRES

Registered breeders are trying to do the right things by their cat organisation, their breeding program with their chosen breed, and their council rangers.

However it needs to be said that some rangers have been using intimidation tactics and showing their hand that they actually do not want breeders in their shires. Please retain the statement in the Cat Act 2011 that anyone has a right to be a registered cat breeder and must be issued with a breeders licence if they satisfy what is currently listed in the act (no non-compliance against the Dog Act, Animal Welfare Act etc and is a current registered member of a recognised cat organisation eg CatsWA, COAWA and ANCats.)

Registered breeders provide their cats with the best possible habitat they can give -

- * an enriched environment - toys and vertical space with cat trees and suspended hammocks
- * a comfortable environment (heating and cooling; multiple litter boxes)
- * Food and fresh water at all times
- * Shelter and bedding (many spend a lot on comfortable bedding and Snugglesafe heat pads in winter and for queens with babies)
- * regular vet checks and vaccinations
- * regular worming and defleaing programs
- * a loving environment with cats sleeping in their breeders' bedrooms and beds
- * extensive DNA testing of foundation cats to screen out major diseases so that their progeny is as healthy as possible at that time those tests are available.

Many breeders take leave from their jobs to be there for a queen in labour. This is so the queen is comforted during labour and breeders can ensure her safety and the safety of kittens. Should anything untoward occur - breeders

will rush their queen to emergency for a Caesarian section.

Many registered cat breeders show their cats at considerable expense. Showing three cats for example at a local show could cost \$80-120 for that show. Show sets and bedding also average \$90-120 per set. Times this by three cats per show and you can see what a breeder spends. Showing 8 to 10 times a year with different cats and additional show sets demonstrates what registered breeders will do to understand their breed standards and whether their cats are the best they are breeding from.

Registered cat breeders provide tall play enclosures (eg. Catmax enclosures), enclosures to isolate a queen in labour and enclosures and XXL cages to house hormonal studs and hormonal queens temporarily. Cats that start skirmishes with other cats are placed in a holding cage for a day or two - it is good management to protect cats from each other when they are testy.

Councils such as Joondalup require that their breeders have XL cages to isolate cats who are poorly or appear sick. All councils should require their breeders to have at least one to two cages. If a more permanent structure is preferred to isolate cats from each other then breeders should look at enclosures from companies such as Catnip Australia that are eg L 1700 X W 850 X H 1800 (or 2400). These can double as play pens especially when numerous steps and landing platforms and hammocks are added. Vertical space is so important to cats. They are not dogs.

Councils should understand that breeders do all the above for love and improvement of their chosen breed. The expense of an entire cat is not taken lightly by any breeder. Cats can cost \$1200 to \$3000 or more depending on breed. Many breeders do not make any money out of breeding and actually incur a deficit when veterinary costs, capital costs and ongoing maintenance costs are taken into account.

Many breeders also have contractual obligations with their studs' or queens' breeders, limiting the sale of entire kittens to other breeders. This is why it is so important that breeders should be able to retain kittens to replace cats they desex and rehome. This is why it is also important to allow breeders time to assess a kitten as to whether it is suitable for a breeding program.

Registered breeders DNA test their foundation cats for hereditary diseases available at the time their entire cat is purchased. Over time, diseases are screened; carriers of undesirable diseases (recessive genes) are homed as pets. This is responsible breeding practice.

COUNCIL INSPECTIONS

Breeders are accepting of inspections. Many are obsessed with Heath and an environment that is free of malicious viruses.

Rangers should accept this and also breeder requirements of what they need to do to comply with entering their homes. Shoes should NOT be worn into breeders homes.

Rangers should abide by any other requirements such as disinfecting hands

with F10 disinfectant when asked to. This is respectful. Rangers who work at their council pound should also wear footlets, hair nets and coveralls when entering a breeder's home. This is not over the top when viruses can cause still births and other tragedies. This is not over the top when ringworm can cause havoc in the breeder's home and can take 12 months to eradicate.

People do not let strangers into their home. Why should breeders allow Rangers into their home who they do not know and turn up unannounced? This is potentially a safety issue for the resident if anyone **IMPERSONATED** a council ranger. This is highly possible. Why would WA government and local government want to put their residents at risk of physical harm and potential burglary? Many breeders are single women (divorced, separated or widowed) or women with young children. This is why a **prearranged** visit or inspection is necessary. Breeders need to know who is coming and adequate ID must be provided to breeders when visiting.

Also, ranger visits should always be pre-arranged as many breeders need to work (and are time poor) to support their expensive hobby. Transparency of what council rangers are looking for should be published on council websites. At the very least, a checklist should be given to breeders prior to ranger visits. This should be a consultative process and councils should always be mindful that registered breeders are NOT their enemy. These breeders are striving to do the right things by their cats and their council.

Rangers must be educated about the Cat Act and what its objective actually is. Rangers should also be educated about the different cat breeds and learn about each breed's behaviour and idiosyncrasies.

CONCLUSION

I hope that my points raised will be given serious consideration.

Legitimate registered breeders

do not contribute to unwanted litters of kittens / cats. They do not cause unwanted kittens / cats to be dumped in shelters and do not contribute to the feral cat problem

Registered Breeders ask their adopters to return their cats if they can no longer care for them. They state categorically that the adopted cat must not be dumped at any shelter. This is stated in breeder adoption contracts.

The Cat Act should recognise all the above and focus on backyard breeders.

Registered Breeders should be assisted in their breeding efforts as without them a cat breed will die out in as little as a decade. Imagine if we didn't have any more Siamese, Maine Coons, British Shorthairs or Ragdolls. It would be akin to having breeds on the endangered list. We don't want moggies who contribute to the unwanted cat population produced by backyard breeders. We encourage early Spay and Neuter. Therefore registered breeders need to be supported by government.

Thank you for reading my submission.

[REDACTED]