

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Cat and Dog Review](#)
Subject: Cat Act 2011 Pause for paws
Date: Sunday, 4 August 2019 3:45:32 PM

To whom it may concern,

I submitted my survey response some weeks ago in regards to public feedback to the Cat Act 2011 however I have some additional feedback regarding cat ownership and cat breeding in particular after I have spoken to veterinary clients and friends who are cat breeders.

The cat owners I have spoken to who are members of ANCATS, COAWA, CatsWA or Cats United (these are cat registries found in WA) are very concerned that any changes to the laws regarding breeding cats will specifically target them and make it harder for them to enjoy their passion of breeding sound, healthy cats responsibly. One of the main concerns is that councils will try to severely restrict the amount of cats that a breeder can have. As a veterinarian I must stress that if this happens, the breeds will really suffer as the gene pool will be too restricted, leading to breeds dying out. This would be extremely heartbreaking and very sad for the cat fancy in Australia. Breeders who show and are registered with a registered body are the people who are keeping and breeding cats ethically. These people should be commended as they promote responsible cat ownership.

As a veterinarian I have found that the main problems with cat breeding are people who re-home free or very cheap kittens on Gumtree or some other online marketplace and then fail to get them sterilised. (Unlike registered breeders who already in most instances have their kittens sterilised prior to sale). Because these pets are free or cheap, they attract buyers who have little money to spend in general on essential veterinary care including sterilisation. These kittens then go on to have kittens of their own at their new homes and the resulting progeny are often rehomed in the same way, or dumped at local vet clinics or Cat Haven.

There will be no quick fix to this issue. The only real change I can see making a difference would be cat confinement to an owner's property 24/7 but there would have to be an adjustment period whilst owners can make amendments to their properties. Besides this, the best method of changing attitudes is through education and this will take a long time. Responsible animal ownership should be taught to children at school. How about having the local rangers visit schools and talk to the children about this? School visits to wildlife centres such as Kanyana is also a great way to educate them about nature and how to avoid cat attacks on the wildlife (by keeping cats confined to owner's properties). Bringing in harsher laws won't necessarily make much of a difference, as people who are purposefully breeding without registering their cats or obeying any local government laws will continue to do so regardless. An integrative approach through the community and local veterinarians would be very helpful. Why not put on some information sessions for the public regarding responsible cat ownership and ways to contain their cats to their properties.

Regards,

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