

30th August 2026

Cat Act Review 2026

Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety
Western Australia

Email: lgpolicy@lgirs.wa.gov.au

Re: WA Cat Act Review 2026

Animal Care Australia is a national incorporated association established to consult with government in advocating for real animal welfare by those who keep, breed and care for animals. Our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care.

Animal Care Australia encourages continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale, and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species, including pets, companion animals, animals used for educational or entertainment purposes or kept for conservation.

This submission responds directly to the questions within the online survey.

Registration, microchipping and identification

Under the Cat Act 2011 (the Cat Act), a cat that is six months of age or older must be microchipped, registered with the local government in whose district the cat ordinarily lives, and the owner of the cat must ensure their cat is wearing a registration tag in public places.

Under the Cat Act Regulations 2012, a person can register their cat for either one year, three years or for the cat's lifetime.

Animal Care Australia supports the existing three (3) levels outlined within the Act & Regulations. Animal Care Australia also supports the inclusion of a pensioner concession of 50%.

Animal Care Australia DOES NOT support the inclusion of the ability for local government to set variations on the fee structure. Fees should be the same no matter where you live, and registration should seamlessly cross jurisdictions without penalty (at no cost to the pet owner).

Sterilisation

Under the Cat Act, cats must be sterilised by six months of age unless exempt.

Animal Care Australia has no concerns with this section.

Breeding

Under the Cat Act, any person who wishes to breed cats must apply for and obtain approval to breed. Only approved cat breeders are permitted to breed cats.

Animal Care Australia conditionally supports this section. There are a number of stand-out issues with how and why this is enforced.

Having to renew your breeder licence every 12 months does not give a breeder any confidence in planning for future years, especially given the registered breeder has already been assessed as a suitable person and premises to breed. The potential for a one-year permit to be rejected simply disincentivises breeders to plan ahead or plan properly, and most importantly does not provide the appropriate ability for a breeder to rest Queens knowing that they can continue after resting. This last fact actually incentivises breeders to ignore the rules of the approved associations that limit the number of times a cat can be breed in a two-year period.

Animal care Australia strongly recommends a permit should be valid and not require renewing for at least 2 years, preferably 3 years. Of course, a permit can be cancelled at any time a breach of animal welfare is determined by a Court.

In saying that, the current reasons to reject a new or a renewal application are based around the suitability of a home for breeding, and this is supported.

Animal Care Australia does not have issue with only members of registered breeding associations being permitted to breed cats, although again, we question the ability to enforce this.

Animal Care Australia is concerned that the legislation is not sufficiently worded to prevent a cash grab by local councils, given they are able to set and collect extra fees from registered cat breeders. Some councils are charging \$100 per un-desexed cat (male or female) per year as part of their permit schemes and yet everyone knows a registered breeder MUST have a certain number of un-desexed cats. This feels like the registered breeders are being penalised for being a registered breeders (ie for doing the right thing)

Enforcement

Again, Animal Care Australia is not supportive of the freedoms given to local councils, especially in their ability to set animal (cat) number restrictions.

In other states (eg Victoria), local government by-laws restricting pet species numbers has only led to less people actually chipping and registering pets they may own in excess of the numbers set by councils. Studying many Victorian Domestic Animal Management Plans (DAMPs) and reviews of those Plans, there is a constant issue of low uptake of microchipping and registrations, meanwhile these same councils keep increasing the registration fees and excess animal permit fees. This is making it impossible for even the most responsible pet owners to comply if they have more than the prescribed animal numbers – in WA cases that is only 2-3 cats TOTAL.

Reminder – animal numbers are not a measure of animal welfare standards and outcomes.

Additional suggestions

Animal Care Australia notes “community cats” are not addressed in the Cat Act or Regulations.

This creates a major animal welfare concern, especially where humane management options are to be considered and/or implemented – by local councils who in general do not have the expertise to adequately assess the most appropriate measures to manage the cats and then simply defer to broadscale trapping and killing of the cats. Many community cats are not ‘feral’ by behaviour – but are deemed as feral because they were trapped ‘free-roaming.’ This labelling and subsequent action is no longer acceptable.

Cat containment is supported by Animal Care Australia but must be implemented in such a manner that allows for cat owners to acclimatise their cats to containment over a reasonable timeframe and in accordance with the [Animal Care Australia Cat Ownership Policy Statement](#).

Are there initiatives in other jurisdictions that have been successful in cat management that could be considered in WA?

Government subsidised or free microchipping and desexing initiatives in many jurisdictions Australia-wide have shown that when implemented, cat owners are more than happy to comply with ownership obligations that would otherwise have been financially out of reach for them. Further investigation and implementation of these initiatives should be considered. Again, Animal Care Australia refers you to the [Animal Care Australia Cat Ownership Policy Statement](#).

Should you require further details please do not hesitate to reach out as we would be happy to meet with you and further discuss this matter.

Kind regards,



Michael Donnelly
President
0400 323 843
E: president@animalcareaustralia.org.au

About Animal Care Australia

As a nationally recognised animal welfare organisation and Australian Registered Charity, Animal Care Australia encourages continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale, and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species, including pets, companion animals, animals used for educational or entertainment purposes or kept for conservation.

Animal Care Australia was founded in early 2018 to establish an organisation run solely by volunteers to lobby for real animal welfare. With extreme animal rights and animal liberationist ideologies influencing government legislation, regulation, and policy at our expense and to the detriment of our animals and pets, it has become necessary to provide government with a balancing voice.

By uniting the broad spectrum of animal groups, collectively we offer an experienced, sensible approach to animal welfare.

By educating our members and the public about the importance of treating animals with kindness and respect for their needs and promoting the humane treatment of animals to improve animal welfare outcomes, Animal Care Australia is in the unique position of lobbying and advocating for all animals within our care.

Animal Care Australia provides priority to the following:

- advocating for stronger welfare outcomes
- advocating to increase education of the public in animal welfare and best care techniques
- educate the public on handling their animals with kindness & respect and the importance of their needs
- educate the public in the differences between animal welfare and animal rights