Draft Victorian Cat Management Strategy

Summary - Key themes and actions

The proposed cat management strategy themes and corresponding actions are outlined below.

Theme	Actions		Delivery/ Partners
1. Promote cat welfare and responsible cat ownership	1.	Develop state-wide accessible, clear, and consistent information resources that all stakeholders can use. Resources should have simple messages on responsible cat ownership and cat containment that acknowledge the value cats bring as pets.	AWV Key stakeholders
	2.	Develop specific information resources for multicultural communities and encourage stakeholders to use existing multicultural engagement channels to reach different communities.	AWV/Councils
2. Increase cat desexing rates	3.	Support innovative desexing trials and training programs, such as high-volume clinics and pre-pubertal desexing initiatives.	AWV/Shelters, vets
	4.	Explore place-based desexing services in regional communities with limited veterinary access. This could include fostering partnerships between stakeholders, including veterinary practices.	AWV/Shelters, vets
	5.	Invest in affordable desexing options, especially for low-income earners, including targeted grants to assist vulnerable Victorians in desexing their cats	AWV/Councils
3. Expand cat containment	6.	Provide cat containment support to councils with curfews to aid in the transition to new requirements.	AWV/Councils
	7.	Enhance cat containment education and programs, including reviewing and simplifying enclosure guidelines and conducting research on the welfare of contained cats	AWV/RSPCA Vic, conservation groups
	8.	Foster partnerships with local organisations to assist residents in constructing safe and simple cat enclosures	Councils/local organisations
4. Reduce the impacts of semi-owned and unowned cats	9.	Provide ongoing education on the benefits of taking full responsibility for semi-owned cats.	AWV/Councils, Shelters
	10.	Consider implementing shorter holding periods for unidentified cats in shelters and pounds to expedite adoption.	AWV/Shelters
	11.	Develop guidelines to support the cat behaviour assessment process for adoption suitability.	AWV/Shelters, rescue groups, CFCNs
	12.	Promote targeted Capture, Desex, Adopt programs in 'hot spots' with high unowned and semi-owned cat populations and need.	AWV/Councils, shelters
	13.	Explore options to improve cat management on private land.	DEECA/VFF, Councils

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Theme		Actions	Delivery/ Partners
5. Manage feral cat populations and impacts	14.	Implement and monitor humane and effective feral cat control programs informed by decision tools that target and protect key biodiversity values.	DEECA Biodiversity/ Land Managers
	15.	Collaborate with local, interstate, and national authorities to enhance feral cat management in Victoria through knowledge sharing and relevant programs.	DEECA Biodiversity/ Other jurisdictions, Land Managers
	16.	Engage with Traditional Owners to understand the impact of feral cats on biocultural and cultural values, and collaborate to recognise 'two ways of knowing' in feral cat management decision-making.	DEECA Biodiversity/ Traditional Owners
	17.	Support innovative, humane, and effective methods for feral cat control and address knowledge gaps in feral cat management through research and development.	DECCA/Other jurisdictions
6. Improve collaboration and information sharing	18.	Establish a working group with key stakeholders to drive and monitor Strategy implementation.	AWV/Key stakeholders
	19.	Share cat management data on centralised platforms	DEECA/Councils
	20.	Expand opportunities for councils and other land managers to share information and successful cat management practices	DEECA/Councils
	21.	Distribute key findings summary report of all council Domestic Animal Management Plans	AWV
7. Improve laws and processes	22.	Review the cat management framework to identify further options for reform including funding models	AWV
	23.	Investigate aligning cat registration with puberty (4 months) to encourage early desexing.	AWV/Councils, vets, shelters
	24.	Provide more flexible registration options to encourage desexing, containment, adoption, and cat registration	AWV/ Councils

Vision
Cats cared for by responsible owners ensuring the wellbeing of cats, wildlife and the community

Objectives
Promote cat welfare and responsible ownership

Protect the environment and community from the negative impacts of cats

Improve processes, cooperation and knowledge sharing in cat management

Themes
Promote cat welfare and responsible ownership

Increase cat desexing rates

Expand cat containment

Reduce the impact of semi-owned and unowned cats

Manage feral cat populations and impacts

Improve collaboration and information sharing

Improve laws and processes

Outputs
Clear concise information resources in multiple languages and formats

Incentives to desex and contain cats

Increased number of cat containment orders by councils

Strategy working group

Improved online platforms for data sharing and collaboration by key stakeholders

Standardised cat behaviour assessment guidelines

Trial new desexing programs including early age desexing, regional access, high-volume desexing and capture, desex adopt

Additional feral cat management tools or methods

New and amended laws to reduce shelter holding periods, incentivise registration and adoption

Outcomes
Improved cat welfare

Reduce pressure on key stakeholders (councils, shelters, rescue groups etc)

Increase pre-pubertal desexing and cat containment rates

Decrease cat impoundment and euthanasia rates

Decrease impacts of cats on environment, wildlife and agriculture

Increase awareness of responsible cat ownership and the value of cats

Increase effective use and sharing of information, data and improved processes, programs and outcomes

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