

**MINUTES OF THE 10<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE NSW KANGAROO MANAGEMENT  
ADVISORY PANEL**

**ZOO FRIENDS BUILDING WESTERN PLAINS ZOO – 1<sup>ST</sup> November 2007**

**PRESENT:** Joshua Gilroy - Chair (DECC), Jon Fuller (DECC), Arthur Snook (DECC), David O'Shannessy (RSPCA NSW), Marie Russell (RLBP), Ben Mannix (NSW Farmers), Greg Markwick (NSW DPI), Sandy Bright (PAWD), Michael Cavanagh (KIAA), Michael Mulligan (AGMPA), Dick MacFarlane (Dubbo Field Nats), Dr Tony English (Aust Veterinary Assoc), Patrick Medway (Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc), Trevor Estens (Trapper)

**1. Formalities**

**Induction of committee**

- Members were given a copy of the Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct and Operations Guide for the new committee.
- Patrick Medway moved motion to accept, seconded by KIAA.

**Adoption of Agenda and introduction for new members**

- For the new Panel members DECC gave a brief explanation of the content of the agenda and the issues and challenges faced in the delivery commercial program.
- Explained also were the agencies we share information with – Food Authority and AQIS. An MoU with AQIS is under development.
- An AAT appeal against the new KMP will be heard late March, early April 2008. Members will be kept informed of its progress.
- One possible outcome of the appeal is that the program will be overturned. This will shut down the industry, and will mean no commercial harvest within NSW until a new Plan is in place because without a Plan no kangaroos can be exported overseas.

**Ratification of Minutes # 9**

- Minutes from Meeting # 9 were accepted
- Mike commented that these were the most informative minutes over many years.

**Review of Actions from Meeting # 9**

**Action 1:** Supply members with a month by month tag allocation breakdown for each species and for each zone. This would be done by way of a graph.

Completed

**Action 2:** Sarah will summarise the FATE proposal for KMAP members by the 16<sup>th</sup> March.

Completed

**Action 3:** DEC will distribute electronically to all Organisations ASAP a copy of the FATE proposal, along with dot points of the issues discussed at the meeting.

**Members were requested to have their 1<sup>st</sup> comments back to DEC by the 25<sup>th</sup> April.**

Completed

**Action 4: DEC will consider how a Shooter's Organisation can be formed, so that the interests of the Trappers can be represented on the new Panel. DEC will keep the Panel updated on any progress made.**

Completed

**Action 5: DEC will take up a fresh proposal with the new Minister to change this terminology and will keep the Panel up to date.**

Ongoing

**Action 6: The Panel have asked for a copy of Mike's email from AQIS. DEC to send.**

Completed

**Action 7: Members need to start talking to their organisations now. When the proposal is received from Industry DEC will distribute to member Organisations and seek views. Turn around 2 weeks.**

Completed

**Action 8: Out of session proposal of dates for the next meeting.**

Done

## **2. Review of YTD 2007 Statistics**

### **Commercial take and tag allocation**

- DECC explained the commercial harvest to the new members and how the take figures are compiled. The redistribution of unused expired tags was also explained.
- Progressive figures have been posted on the DECC web site and are publicly available. Final figures for the take for 2006 are also available on the web site.

### **Issues faced with quota allocations/ Audit of ballot procedures**

- 2007 will be another year where essentially the full quota will be harvested by Industry.
- Trevor asked if there will be more quota left over this year than last year. Currently allocations are 91% or above in most zones.
- DECC have a number of systems in place to return expired/unused tags back into the quota as quickly as possible.
- KIAA commented that DECC could avoid over purchase of tags by individual shooters by reducing the licence period to two months. DECC said the result could be increase pressure on the admin staff and more extension requests from shooters. DECC also advised that reallocation of returned tags was working well and referred to the high proportions of quota that were harvested in 2006.
- An explanation of non-commercial tags and how special quota is allocated was given. Non-commercial culling in the commercial zone was around 5% in most years, with a lot of these landholders choosing to shoot non-commercially because they don't like the commercial industry or because

they have winter crops. We could not access special quota in every zone where the quota is taken because this would not be sustainable. Revised tag allocations including holding quota for winter were policies designed to reduce non commercial culling.

- The ballot process was also explained for the new Panel members.

### **3. Forums**

#### **Trapper forums and issues raised**

- DECC held a number of Trapper forums across the State. They were held at Armidale, Narrabri, Broken Hill and Griffith.
- A forum will also be held in Queanbeyan for Trappers in the SENSW zone on the 21<sup>st</sup> November.
- Panel members were given a copy of issues raised by the Trappers at the forums.
- DECC discussed the increase in minimum weights with all of the Trappers at the forums.

#### **Trapper Committee Co-ordinator**

- DECC has created a new position to help Trappers form an association to fill the vacant seat on the Advisory Panel.
- Brent Bryce was the successful applicant. He will travel extensively throughout NSW talking to shooters during late 2007 and early 2008.
- Panel members were asked to encourage Trappers to contact Brent and support formation of an association.

#### **Fauna Dealer forum and issues raised**

- A meeting was held between DECC and the Fauna Dealer Wholesalers on 19 October 2007 in Sydney. A number of operational and policy matters were discussed.
- The Fauna Dealer representatives present at the meetings discussed the role of the Food Authority. DECC said Trappers had also raised this issue.

*Action 1: Arthur Snook will discuss with the Food Authority.*

### **4. Minimum Weights Proposal**

- The Fauna Dealers have proposed to increase the minimum weight of dressed carcasses by 2kg.  
Some of the issues raised by the Fauna Dealers are:
  1. The collapse in the skin market for small skins, very difficult to sell and many are in storage.
  2. The cost of processing small carcasses is the same as processing larger carcasses.
- The Fauna Dealers said that other states may follow if this was implemented in NSW, and the increase was being considered in Queensland.
- The Trapper meetings could not reach consensus on the proposal with opposition from the majority but also support. The Trappers proposed a single weight of 14kg for Human Consumption and Pet Food dressed kangaroos as a compromise.
- Industry would probably favour at least 15kg if a single weight.

*Action 2: AGMPA/KIAA will check this with their members and report back to DECC.*

- Trapper said that on country where they refuse or are not able to shoot the smaller kangaroos, landholders will then seek to shoot these kangaroos with Non Commercial licences resulting in more animals being taken. Farmers ask the Trappers to shoot all kangaroos and disregard the size. Landholder representatives said that some landholders would be concerned if large and numerous kangaroos could not be harvested.
- It was discussed that Fauna Dealer can set their own weight limits.
- The Kangaroo Industry feels the community generally considers this a conservation issue and would like to see the proposal implemented with a review on a two year or annual basis.
- DECC is not sure if this can be ready for the 2008 mail out to Trappers as there will need to be a change in licence conditions if the proposal was implemented.

*Action 3: DECC will make a decision within two weeks.*

#### **5. Trapper Licences for 2008**

There was extensive discussion regarding trapper licensing. Organisations have provided submissions on the issue, these are attached to the minutes.

#### **6. 2008 Quotas**

##### **Review of population estimates**

- Panel members were given a copy of population/quota estimates for 2008. These are available on the DECC website.
- The final figures for the Northern Tablelands are not yet finalised, but should be available in the next few weeks. These will be sent to Panel members.
- Quotas no longer need to be approved annually by the Commonwealth, but it is still important to run the harvest within the provisions of the plan.
- Armidale's quota will be down next year and DECC feels quota management within this zone will be extremely difficult. The increase in Glen Innes and Upper Hunter zones may alleviate some of these issues.
- Because of the annual counts, NSW Farmers asked if this year was a wet year would the quotas be increased to compensate. DECC said this was unlikely under the terms of the management plan.
- Industry thought the weather would slow the take to such a degree that no increase would be necessary.

##### **Quota management methods available**

- DECC gave a background, particularly for new members.
- Up until 2007 the method was "first in, first served". This caused problems for the DECC staff and penalties for those Trappers who either had to work or who were not living within close proximity to the licensing office. Trappers would line up the day before licences were issued at some offices.

- For the 2007 year KMAP supported a ballot where each property could be successful once only, applications would need to be in the office by a set date, with full payment up front for an application to be accepted.
- The distribution of quota was 40% 1 January, 60% for June/July release (as 30% on 1 June and 30% 1 July).
- Some modifications to the above were discussed with relevant issues including DECC concern that 1 June was not early enough for winter crops, and the ballot process did not mean the process could be accelerated once the year commenced.
- The KIAA requested that licences be issued for 2 months rather than four. They were concerned about the 'glut' of product at the commencement and expiry of licences when quota was released at the start of the year and mid year.
- DECC then outlined the proposal for 2008 based on the experience of 2007.
- Trappers nominated for properties successful in the ballot can select a start dates of 1 January or 1 February for the occupiers licence.
- To address the winter crop issue and to a certain degree the concerns of the KIAA, an alternative for mid year was to have 3 commencement dates rather than the existing 2, that is release 60% of the quota in the following manner: 20% 1 May, 20% 1 June and 20% 1 July.
- Where a ballot was triggered, there would be one ballot that would determine which licences were issued on each of these dates, that is the first 20% in the ballot would commence on 1 May.

#### **Up front Payments in 2008**

- This has been a more significant issue for DECC. There have been issues raised by Trappers and DECC staff regarding the effect on Trappers of up front payments.
- The process is similar to the ballot for Olympic tickets, payments do not guarantee success but they do ensure the applicant is genuine.
- DECC has not been able to identify an alternative and raises the issue for consideration of KMAP and suggestion of any alternatives.
- Regarding refunds DECC now accelerates refunds through central processing.
- The panel discussed the issues including the number of applications that would be received if payments were not required, the Trapper representative raised that paying up front was a burden which the landholders acknowledged/supported.
- DECC explained that even with payments over 1,000 applications were received by Narrabri prior to 1 June issue of tags this year.
- Ultimately the Panel consensus was that no alternatives could be identified and up front payments continue.

#### **Timeframe of Occupier's Licences**

- The time frame of 4 month licences was again discussed with 2 months being the alternative proposal from the KIAA.
- DECC feels 2 monthly licences would cause a lot of problems with excuses for extensions and would increase the administration workload of DECC staff.
- DECC said that the proposed 3 licence commencement dates mid-year would also help to alleviate the problem.
- The KIAA said they would take this back to their members.

*Action 4: Panel members to be sent newsletter that is sent to the Trappers with their renewals.*

## **7. New zone proposal**

- Panel members were given a copy of the new zone proposal which includes the RLPB's of Mudgee-Meeriwa, Dubbo, Hunter, Forbes, Central Tablelands, Molong and Young.
- An aerial survey to determine the commercial harvest quota will need to be done before any final decision by DECC. These are usually done late Winter/early Spring.
- No decision will be made on this and it will not be considered by DECC until after the next KMAP meeting. Members were asked to read the proposal, discuss within their groups and come prepared to discuss at the March 2008 meeting.

## **8. Trial centralisation of licensing**

### **SE NSW zone, new zone**

- DECC are considering a trial centralisation of commercial licencing for the SENSW zone from the Dubbo office, commencing in February 2008. We do not have licensing staff in Queanbeyan and the costs are considerable in travel and accomodation.
- Trappers would be asked to mail or submit their forms to the Dubbo office. No over the counter or same day service will be available.
- A Trapper forum has been called in Queanbeyan for the 21<sup>st</sup> November to discuss this and other issues with the shooters.

*Action 5: Send summary of issues raised at Trapper forum from SENSW (21<sup>st</sup> Nov) to panel members.*

- The new proposed zone would also only be licensed through the Dubbo office.

## **9. Other Business**

### **Fees**

- There has been no consideration of fees or a review of fees within DECC.
- Fees were last increased in 1999/2000.
- While CPI increase in fees are due every three years DECC have not increased fees for seven years.
- The KMP is run as business from revenue received through licensing and the sale of tags.
- Because of increased costs including salaries, fuel, surveys *etc.*, new staff and a more onerous management plan the KMP is running at a loss.
- The last review of fees included a process where fees were increased but DECC also implemented more efficient systems, e.g. the import/export licensing process was modified and greatly reduced industry's costs.
- Centralisation / changes in client services must be considered in the future. DECC presently maintain staff in approximately 12 locations. Centralisation would significantly reduce this cost and minimize any fee increases.
- It is likely that under a centralized model KMP licensing would continue in Broken Hill to service the Far West, and the other location would be Dubbo.

*Action 6: DECC to supply members with Cost and Expenditure report*

## **Compliance**

- Compliance issues within the State have increased to the point that DECC have employed a third Compliance Officer on a trial basis.
- Due to the decrease in quota and the increase value of the product and demand there have been more compliance issues, and new compliance issues e.g. landholder signatures forged on application forms.
- There have been 97 Penalty Infringement Notices issued this year mostly to Trappers, some to Fauna Dealers. This is an increase from last year's 79.
- 340 carcasses have been seized relating to untagged and incorrect species.
- Four Court matters are pending. One for incorrect species – 160 seized in one chiller alone.
- Random chiller inspections will continue.
- There has been a review of licence conditions by DECC. They will be implemented in 2008.
- DECC have a number of compliance issues with Drive-through sites, the main one being no opportunity to inspect carcasses before they are taken over the border. To meet the requirements of the new KMP, DECC must be able to do this.
- A four day operation by DECC earlier in the year showed that no Trapper vehicles entered a drive-through site to record their kangaroos which is a legislative requirement. A plastic tie lock was put on the gate at the start of the operation by DECC and was not broken when the operation ended, so the gate had not been opened.
- Legal advice given to DECC is that there must be a structure on the registered site where the Fauna Dealer can undertake their business, and Fauna Dealers will be advised that in 2008 no drive-through sites will be registered.

## **Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos review**

- Nicole Payne is the DECC representative on the review panel.
- A draft of the new Code will soon be distributed for Public comment.

## **Other matters as raised by members**

- The wording “to harm” on licences was again raised. DECC have revised a proposal to change this terminology. The Panel will be kept up to date with its progress
- Marie Russell thanked Nicole for the presentation given to RLPB at Bathurst.

## **Next Meeting**

- The next meeting will be held in Dubbo on the 13<sup>th</sup> March at 8.30am
- There will be a dinner held the evening prior 12<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm, and an early morning walk at the zoo will be scheduled for the 13<sup>th</sup>.

## **List of Actions**

***Action 1: Arthur Snook to advise NSW Food Authority of issues raised by trappers.***

*Spoke with Glen Locke in week following meeting. Increased presence of NSW Food Authority officers since.*

***Action 2: AGMPA/KIAA to consult their members about a single weight limit.***

*Advice provided to DECC supporting two weight limit.*

***Action 3: DECC to decide minimum weight/s for 2008 after advice from industry.***

*DECC decided on 14/15 kg minimum weights and advised trappers with renewal information. Licence conditions updated for 2008.*

***Action 4: Panel members to be sent newsletter that is sent to the Trappers with their renewals.***

*Sent with draft Minutes #10 on 14 January.*

***Action 5: Send summary of issues raised at Trapper forum from SENSW (21<sup>st</sup> Nov) to panel members.***

***Action 6: DECC to supply members with Cost and Expenditure report***

*Provided and discussed at Meeting #11.*



## **SUBMISSIONS FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS REGARDING TRAPPER LICENCE MORATORIUM**

### **Australian Veterinary Association**

Greg's email really does confirm my feeling all along that I just do not have enough information to express an informed opinion on how many trappers licences are needed. I hope that further discussion is possible.

Regards

Tony English  
Australian Veterinary Association

### **Department of Primary Industries**

With regards to the cessation of trapper license issuing, DPI would express a preference that the industry and landholders should have sufficient access to trappers' services to take allocated the quota at critical periods. Allied to this is the need for the ongoing capacity of professional trappers to sustain their activities long term in the current situation where a lot of opportunistic entrants to the industry have taken up licenses and are taking quota. Those closer to the trapper sector would have a better feel for the scale and seriousness of this factor in the orderly conduct of the industry in the longer term and I would accommodate their opinion, notwithstanding the preference stated above.

I agree with the recollection expressed that the issue was to be further explored by DECC for consideration at the next KMAP meeting.

regards

GREG MARKWICK  
Regional Director  
DPI Relations

### **Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc.**

My only comment would be that we support the DECC proposal to support the idea of not issuing new Trappers licenses for a period while the legislation is being reviewed.

Regards

Patrick Medway  
Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc.

## **Australian Game Meat Producers Association (AGMPA)**

The Australian Game Meat Producers Association (AGMPA) comments as follows.

From the outset I would like to state that it was and is my opinion and belief that no absolute decision was made about restrictions on Trapper numbers at the last meeting of the KMAP. It is my belief that DECC would be seeking further legal advice and the matter would be up for further discussion at the next meeting of the KMAP in 2008 before any decision would be considered.

It is now nearly seven weeks since the last KMAP meeting and I would have liked to have been able to refer to the minutes of the meeting which I would trust would reflect the foregoing but I have not yet sighted a copy of the minutes, as at this time.

Referencing your letter again of 29 November it concerns me as a Panel member to read that DECC has informed Trappers that it supports not issuing new Trappers licences for a period of time whilst the licensing policy and legislation is reviewed, and ask if this now devalues the worth of the Panel overall in so far as what is the point of having a Panel if DECC takes such decisions in their own right.

DECC already acknowledges that a policy of not issuing new Trappers licences may be vulnerable to challenge and you confirm your own legal services supports this point, so I must ask why then does DECC now enforce such a policy that its own legal services do not support.

Whilst AGMPA acknowledges that from a numerical sense the current number of licensed Trappers would seem to be more than adequate to service New South Wales State at this time, there is still in our mind questions that remain unanswered and as such any change to policy that existed prior to the last KMAP meeting should not occur until all Panel members queries or concerns are tabled for general discussion.

- 1/ What are the guidelines for flexibility of any policy changes.
- 2/ How would the opening of new zones be covered under a capped Trappers licence policy.
- 3/ As Trappers drop out for what ever reason or simple decide not to renew their licence can those licences be made available to others wanting to enter the Industry.
- 4/ What is the minimum number of licensed Trappers the State needs to cover all requirements for managing Kangaroo numbers.
- 5/ How will a capped Trapper number policy manage specific licensed Trappers in specific parts of the State. In other words if there is an abundance of licensed Trappers in one zone but not enough in some other zone to manage numbers how will this be addressed.

These questions and others no doubt, need clarification for the Panel, and Panel discussion, before changes to existing policy should be considered.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment and I look forward to receive copies of any other submissions / comments made by other Panel members.

All the best.  
Michael Mulligan  
Australian Game Meat Producers Association.

## **Pastoralists' Association of West Darling**

*The Pastoralists Association of West Darling would like to thank you for this opportunity to comment on the suspension of the issuing of new trappers licences.*

*As were other members of the KMAP, I was under the impression that this matter would be further discussed at our next meeting, and give PAWD councillors time to consult with members and report back, so that our comments could be more representative.*

*The PAWD strongly opposes this move to suspend the issuing of new trappers licences. The points already discussed include:*

- Decreased numbers of licensed trappers would limit the landholders a choice of shooters available to work on their properties. It is essential that the landholder approve of the people they allow on their land.*
- Some landholders have been reserving their own applications for a trappers licence to manage kangaroos on their land until they had the time, previously given to managing drought. This move precludes them from earning much needed income at this difficult time.*
- Licensed trappers who wish to exit the industry within the time frame of the moratorium would find their equipment has little value, as a going concern, as there will be no new licensed trapper to sell to.*
- A decrease in the number of trappers would decrease the administration required for the program, is this why the NPWS attracted to the proposal?*

*The whole issue seems to raise more questions than it answers.*

*Best wishes to all for the New Year.*

*Sandy Bright  
PAWD*

## **Rural Lands Protection Boards**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the opinion of the Pest and Travelling Stock Reserve Committee of State Council of the Rural Lands Protection Boards on the proposed moratorium on issuing new trapper licences. The Committee at its last meeting discussed this issue at length.

The issues raised by the Committee included:

- A moratorium on issuing new licences would be discriminatory on those wishing to enter the industry.
- There will be a decline in the number of trappers as some will leave the industry.
- Decreased numbers of trappers limits the landholders ability to obtain the services of a trapper when needed.
- If new zones are established there needs to be sufficient trappers to establish in these zones and harvest the additional quota.
- The Moratorium would restrict landholders obtaining a licence to undertake their own harvesting.

- The Kangaroo Industry, like other rural industries, has variations in supply of services to landholders, but will find a balance, eg. shearing contractors, grain harvesters etc.
- The Industry will determine the number of trappers through the ability of trappers to remain viable.
- Costs such as fuel and ammunition are severely impacting trapper viability.
- The viability of fulltime trappers is being compromised by part timers.
- Trappers exiting the industry would have reduced ability to sell equipment.
- The number of tags being issued but not used or returned for re-issue.
- A high percentage of the quota in all zones should be taken.

The Committee believes that:

- The Kangaroo Industry like other rural industries should remain open for new trappers to enter as they wish.
- The cost of training and equipment is already an inhibiting factor.
- The issue of trappers not returning unused tags could be addressed through a condition that excluded them from the next ballot in the particular zone where tags are issued . This will ensure more tags are available for “fair dinkum trappers”.
- Price paid by industry will determine the viability of trappers into the future.

Our representative, Councillor Marie Russell looks forward to further discussions and other opinions of those involved in the Industry regarding this issue at the next meeting of the Kangaroo Management Advisory Panel on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

If you have any further queries please contact me on (02) 6391 3154 or email [tim.seears@rlpb.org.au](mailto:tim.seears@rlpb.org.au)

Yours sincerely

Tim Seears  
Pest & TSR Manager