

MINUTES - KANGAROO MANAGEMENT ADVISORY PANEL

MEETING #1

CASCADES MOTOR INN 147 COBRA STREET DUBBO

MONDAY 30TH MAY

PRESENT:

Stephen Wolter (OEH, Senior Team Leader, Kangaroo Management Section), Brad Purcell (OEH, Project Officer, KMS), Ray Borda (President, Kangaroo Industries Association Australia), Dr Tanya Stephens (Australian Veterinary Association), Ken Harrison (Regional Director Western, Department of Industry), David O'Shannesy (Chief Inspector RSPCA NSW), Dr Steven McLeod (Member, Australian Wildlife Management Society), Ray Scott (Representative Western Division, NSW Farmers), Dr Robert Mulley (Emeritus Professor, Western Sydney University), Jason Wilson (Aboriginal Community representative), Sandra Ryan (scribe, OEH, Kangaroo Management Section), Phoebe Ashe (OEH Policy Section) Monica Collins OEH, Director, North Branch)

WELCOME AND AGENDA OVERVIEW, INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM PLAN AND REPORTS, AND THE ROLE OF KMAP.

- Manager KMP gave a short review of the Kangaroo Management Program and how the Plan works. The Kangaroo Management Plan is an approved Wildlife Trade Management Plan which relates only to the commercial harvest of red kangaroos, eastern and, western grey kangaroos, and wallaroos.
The goal of the program is to maintain viable populations of these kangaroos throughout their ranges, in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.
- Triggers for the Advisory Panel to meet are :
 1. The Annual Report – due to the Commonwealth in March
 2. Quota Setting – due to the Commonwealth in November.
- Reports sent to KMAP monthly:
 1. Monthly Take report
 2. Monthly Allocation report
 3. Carcass Analysis

- Introduction From Panel members:
 1. David O'Shannesy (RSPCA)
The RSPCA's mission is to prevent cruelty to animals by actively promoting their care and protection. They are opposed to any killing of animals unless taken under a management program. The RSPCA support the Kangaroo Management program but do not support the non-commercial culling of Kangaroos.
 2. Dr Robert Mulley (Western Sydney University)
Robert is an Emeritus Professor, Dean's Unit –School of Science and Health. Robert has been involved in Kangaroo research and is an ex member of the Kangaroo Industries Association of Australia.
 3. Jason Wilson (DPI)
Jason is the Aboriginal Community Representative on this panel. Formally from Walgett Jason would like to know what the Program can do for aboriginal people.
 4. Dr Tanya Stephens (Australian Veterinary Association)
AVA's policy is the control of native and introduced animals causing damage to agriculture or habitat. Tanya is a veterinarian who has done research into Kangaroos. Tanya has spent time with a kangaroo Harvester and has no problems with harvesting of kangaroos.
 5. Ray Scott (NSW Farmers, Western Division)
Ray is a sheep and cattle farmer and has represented the NSW Farmers on this Panel for a number of years.
 6. Dr Steven McLeod(Australian Wildlife Management Society)
Steven is with NSW Department of Industry but is representing AWMS on this Panel. Steven has been involved in the ecology and sustainable harvest of Kangaroos for approximately 30 years.
 7. Ken Harrison (Department of Industry, Western Division)
DPI supports a viable commercial cull. Ken has a background in the kangaroo industry previously holding a Fauna Dealer Licence with the Tilpa Landcare Group.
 8. Ray Borda (Kangaroo Industries Association Australia)
Ray has been with the KIAA for the past 12 years and is the owner of Macro Meats the largest human consumption kangaroo company in Australia. Ray is the Food and Wine Ambassador to Australia and has a 30 year involvement in Kangaroos. He is an Advisor to Barnaby Joyce MP, who has a big interest in the Kangaroo Trade. Ray sits on all States' Management Advisory Boards.

Industry Update

- The Industry has been on a downward spiral since the collapse of the Russian markets in 2009. Most of Industry were under the impression that they could export any quality meat to Russia and Russia would pay. This was incorrect. At the time there were 18 exporters of meat – now there are three.
- Russia have asked that Macro resume trade but are still quite hot and cold. Macro will look to get re-listed but are not sure if they will supply.
- GMP have stopped production in Western Australia and Macro have been inundated with requests to keep up operations.
- Macro believe they have changed perception of the Industry by shooting male only animals. The main objection to female culling was the disposing of the joey. The opposition now challenge on hygiene matters and recently began suggesting that by shooting males only the family structure is being compromised.

- The ban on kangaroo product imports into California has caused some Industry disruption and has hindered development opportunities due to market uncertainty for manufacturers eg Adidas, but Industry is hoping the ban will be lifted at the end of year when the current US elections are over.
- The Industry feels improvements by making the dollar value of the kangaroo increase. This will in turn increase the return for everyone including the Harvester. He believes we need to keep the Kangaroo as a well-respected, high protein source within Australia. It costs more per kilo to process kangaroo meat than any other meat because of transport costs ie. Industry have to go to the animal.
- Industry still has high hopes that China will eventually come on board.
- Industry believes that to reinstate skin only shooting would be a giant step backwards for overseas markets. The Chinese and Japanese Governments approve of how strict the cull is in Australia. Red tape is what they like.

TERMS OF REFERENCE, OEH CODE OF CONDUCT AND NOMINATION OF A CHAIR.

- The Panel were given 2 documents:
 1. The Code of Ethics and Conduct; and
 2. The Terms of Reference for the Kangaroo Management Advisory Panel 2016-2020
- The Panel asked for a few changes to the Terms of Reference.

Action 1: Once the Terms of Reference have been updated Brad Purcell will circulate to the Panel for them to sign and accept.

- Dr Robert Mulley was elected Chair of the Panel. Moved Dr Tanya Stephens. Seconded Ray Scott.

OEH BIODIVERSITY REFORMS

- Policy Section gave a short talk on the new Biodiversity reforms, where they are up to and how they came about.
 - A review was done in June 2014 into a new approach to Land Management and Conservation in NSW.
 - 43 recommendations were made from the review in December 2014.
 - In March 2015 the new Legislation was drafted.
 - The Draft is now on Exhibition for comment, and will be until 28th June 2016
 - At the end of 2016 the new Bills will be introduced to Parliament.
 - The draft Biodiversity Conservation Bills protect our environment, and are backed by unprecedented investment in conservation.
 - There were three objectives
 1. To cut red tape
 2. To facilitate ecologically sustainable Development
 3. To conserve Biodiversity
 - A modern way to identify and protect threatened plants and species is being proposed, while a risk-based approach to managing wildlife interactions will

protect native plants and animals, establish minimum standards of animal care and maximise public safety.

- Under the draft Biodiversity Conservation Bill, wildlife activities will be assessed on perceived level of risk:
 1. *Activities that are exempt.* Low risk activities with no ongoing obligation
 2. *Activities authorised by a code of practice.* No licence is required for activities with a moderate risk. They are considered unlikely to harm wildlife populations, impact animal welfare or threaten human health and safety when a code of practice is followed
 3. *Activities that require a Biodiversity Conservation Licence.* High risk wildlife interactions will require a licence issued by the Office of Environment and Heritage.
- Kangaroo Management will fall into No 2 – Activities authorised by a code of practice. The code will be enforceable and is out for public exhibition until the 28th June. OEH are still talking to Stakeholders, with roadshows happening across the State.
- The Code will possibly have to go on public display again before there is a final decision made.
- Director North suggested that if anyone around the table had a strong interest they should make a submission. Industry requested whether there would be further consultation before the changes are implemented. Director North invited anyone who wanted further consultation to write to Manager KMP with this request and we will engage further. The Government is actively seeking feedback on everything. We genuinely want something that is going to work. Industry will write to Manager KMP to organise a meeting between KIAA and Director North for a more in depth talk.

Action 2: Project officer will send out Policy sections details to all Panel members, a copy of the presentation and detail where they can make a submission.

FUTURE FOR KANGAROO MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Director North gave a talk on the direction of the New Kangaroo Management Plan that commences in January 2017.
- Changes will be made to reflect new directions in regulating wildlife, including biodiversity reforms and the NSW government target for reduction in Red Tape.
- The objective of the Plan will remain the same – ecologically sustainable and humane harvest which is the heart of what we are doing now.
- The new Commonwealth Plan will have the same requirements ie Tags, Complying with the National Code of Practice for the humane shooting of Kangaroos for commercial purposes etc. These will also be retained under the new draft Code of Practice which is on exhibition. OEH are currently building a new portal to cope with registration needs. It is hoped that in time registrations will be able to be completed on line.
- The quota still needs to be monitored and tracked to meet Commonwealth requirements. The harvest is only 3% of the quota at the moment but we need to build a system that is robust enough to take into account if the harvest is ever again fully utilised.

- Industry feels the new registration process will be a “free for all” with the Harvester being allowed to buy, sell, import etc. He feels with the lifting of the Fauna Dealer cap it will make for a bad business decision if he were to continue to invest in New South Wales. He thought that every State who has removed the cap, have gone backwards. Director North explained that there will be a specific fee for registration depending on the intentions of your business’s interests and there will also be requirements each registration will need to meet.
- At the moment there are mixed opinions re skin only shooting, so OEH are inviting comments before any decision is made to include/not include it in the Plan.
- The new Code of Practice will require Landholders to provide consent to harvesters to allow Harvesters to shoot on their property. Harvesters will then be able to shoot the tags they purchase on any land as long as they have the consent of the owner. Harvesters will then advise OEH where they have used the tags. The quotas will still be managed within zones and population monitoring will still continue. Industry believes this will result in Harvesters shooting wherever is closest and easiest and that problem areas will not get shot.
- The current 14/15kg weight limit was raised. This weight limit is controlled by Industry not OEH. Regardless of the limit, kangaroos under 14kg would probably still not be culled. Biologically Steve McLeod thought the limits made no sense at all. It was decided to keep the limits as overseas markets and potential markets, respect the fact that the Kangaroo Industry is so heavily regulated.
- The Kangaroo Management Plan is a Commonwealth approved Plan that allows for kangaroo products to be exported overseas. The current Plan 2012-2016 will expire at the end of this year. It was initially hoped that the new legislation would align with the commencement of the new Plan, but this is unfortunately not going to happen. The 2017 Plan will reflect National Parks Act requirements. It will reflect regulation that is current and will need to be revised when new legislation is made.
- Industry asked if this was acceptable with the Commonwealth.
- Director North has talked to the Commonwealth. The new Plan must meet the requirements of the EPBC Act. The 2005 Administrative Appeals Tribunal trigger points for suspending a harvest that falls below the threshold also needs to be included. The new code doesn’t replace the Plan, the code will replace the requirements of Part 9 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act when the new legislation is passed.
- OEH has been consulting with the Commonwealth and is working towards having the new Plan in place by January 1 2017.
- Industry is concerned that, even though he is all for cutting red tape, while Industry is trying to tighten up on regulation because they want to see the right people in the business, we are loosening regulation. Macro have developed a refresher course on line to be done every six months by the Harvester. It is voluntary at the moment but they are looking to make it compulsory.
- Director North believes that we are still well regulated, this is just a more modern way of doing it.
- Compliance will be more of a risk based approach. We now have a specialised Compliance Team who will work together across the State.
- Non-commercial culling was discussed and issues were raised that people were doing the wrong thing and it was affecting the commercial industry. One of the biggest issues was buckshot in a carcass from an unsuccessful non-commercial shot. NPWS who run the non-commercial harvesting, plans to commence a review of the non-commercial program early in 2017.

AERIAL SURVEY REFORM – FREQUENCY, CORRECTION FACTORS, THRESHOLDS, LOGISTICS

- As part of the reforms, the aerial survey techniques will also be improved to reflect the latest knowledge on wildlife surveys.
- OEH has signed a contract with DPI to undertake the review of the methods.
- OEH are only reviewing the Cessna surveys and attempting to dispel the misconception with the public re correctional factors.
- New detection methods have been identified and most observers have recently been trained in using them.
- As yet the new transect lines have not been decided. So this year's counts (commencing 6th June) will follow the same transect lines as previously, but using the new counting techniques.

List of Actions:

Action 1: Once the Terms of Reference have been updated KMP staff will circulate to the Panel for them to sign and accept.

Action 2: KMP staff will send out Policy Scetions details to all Panel members, a copy of the presentation and detail where they can make a submission.