

MINUTES - KANGAROO MANAGEMENT ADVISORY PANEL

MEETING 27

CASCADES MOTOR INN 147 COBRA STREET DUBBO

Tuesday 15th November, 2016

PRESENT:

Stephen Wolter (OEH, Senior Team Leader, Kangaroo Management Section), Dr Brad Purcell (OEH, Project Officer, KMS), Ray Borda (President, Kangaroo Industries Association Australia), Michael Banyard (President, Australian Veterinary Association Wildlife Group), Ken Harrison (Regional Director Western, Department of Industry), Dr Steven McLeod (Member, Australasian Wildlife Management Society), Ray Scott (Representative Western Division, NSW Farmers), Dr Robert Mulley (Emeritus Professor, Western Sydney University), Greg Bates (President, Australian Game Meat Producers Association), Sandra Ryan (scribe, OEH, Kangaroo Management Section), David Minehan (Team Leader, Compliance, OEH Regional Branch North)

WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

Apologies: Dr Tanya Stephens (Australian Veterinary Association); Jason Wilson (Aboriginal Community Representative); David O'Shannesy (Chief Inspector, RSPCA NSW),

- **Introduction new members:**

1. Greg Bates was part of the previous Kangaroo Management Advisory Panel representing AGMPA. Greg has been in the kangaroo industry for 30 years both Human Consumption and Pet food based. AGMPA represent smaller producers who source kangaroos from NSW. Those processors who do not want to be part of KIAA.
2. Michael Banyard represents the Australian Veterinary Association and is filling in for Dr Tanya Stephens. Michael's family has been on the land for approx. 50 years. He has been a Veterinarian for 45 years and the President of the AVA Wildlife Group since 1992. Michael is aware this Advisory Group needs to tick all the boxes and will fill in as proxy whenever necessary.

Action 1: KMP will circulate a KMAP member list to the Panel

- **Previous minutes and business arising:**

Previous minutes were ratified after a few minor changes and will be added to the OEH web page.

Actions from last meeting:

1. Once the terms of Reference have been updated KMP will circulate to the Panel for them to sign and accept. **Completed – all members to sign at today's meeting**
2. KMP will send out details of policy division to all Panel members, a copy of the presentation and details of where they can make a submission. **Completed**

Outline of Agenda and call for additional agenda items from Panel members:

1. Proxies
2. MOU with DPI
3. Conversing with Industry reps on the impact of the recent floods

QUOTA REPORT:

- The take for October 2016 stands at 244,000 and the allocation to date is 355,000 tags.
- Number of Harvesters for the year -322. This has increased by 100 since 2015.
- Chiller Premises have increased from 68 in 2015 to 85 in 2016.
- The rainfall in the last few months has slowed tag distribution considerably.
- The 2016 quota Report was discussed and the quota for 2017 is over 3,000,000 kangaroos.
- Population numbers for Red and Eastern Grey kangaroo species are up from last year. Western Grey – not much change
- We have had a change in Survey methods this year using Mark Recapture Distance Sampling method (MRDS). This is the third change in methods since the beginning of the Program back in the early 80's were we used 200 metre strip transect sampling and later in 2000's this changed to 100 metre strips.
- Northern Tableland were surveyed this year in the three yearly rotation. Next year the Central Tablelands will be surveyed.
- Species counts were up in the Northern Tablelands.
- The big population increase in the Western Plain surveys are due to the change in methods plus the favourable climate conditions. It is thought the correction factors in the previous survey method were underestimating the Eastern Grey population count.
- The Panel feel there should be a foot note to explain the increase in population counts. ie seasonal factors + methods + difference in correctional factors. Also needs to be a new link to the new methods in the 2017 Quota Report.
- Kangaroo Management will add a paragraph above the final quotas to explain the increases and will have it reviewed before sending quota report to the Commonwealth.
- KIAA believes we will attract more attention from the decrease in the Red kangaroo population in Tibooburra than we will for the populations that have increased.
- The increase in Northern Tablelands figures are not as alarming, as these counts are three years apart. Survey methods in the Tableland zones have not changed.
- There are no issues with "thresholds" –all areas are above the threshold.

- The take is always male biased. The question was asked if the male only take by some Wholesalers would increase the vulnerability of the quotas.
- More research is required in relation to sex bias.
- Figures for allocation will be double checked to make sure the quotas are correct.

Action 2: Send the completed Quota Report to the Panel with a due back by date.

KMAP BUSINESS:

Correspondence received or sent:

Nil

Draft Kangaroo Management Plan:

- The 2017-2021 Plan was not accepted by the Commonwealth because it referred to proposed legislative changes. The plan needed to be compliant with current effective legislation (ie NPW Act 1974).
- All public comments regarding the exhibited Plan were addressed. The disclaimer plus the reference to new Legislation confused people, so was removed. The Plan is all about keeping populations viable, not reducing numbers. The new Plan is similar to the current Plan. It now has only 18 performance indicators instead of 75. Compliance is risk based and targets are now: Chiller premises inspected at least once per year and processing plants three times per year. It has been pitched as a five year Plan but will need to be changed in line with the Biodiversity Review legislation taking affect. The new Plan is consistent with the National Parks Act – the current legislation. When new legislation is passed the Management Plan will need to be rewritten to tie in with new legislation and the Code of Practice
- The new Plan has gone to public submission. There were six submissions received. Most comments were aimed at the Program – not the Plan. ie. RSPCA instigated the Male only harvest but now think we need to reconsider, the plan does not approve of male-only harvesting and it is an industry decision.
- The wheels are already in motion for more research into ‘Male Only Shooting’. RIRDC have accepted the contract to do the research and it will commence in 2017. KIAA will report back to KMAP with the results.
- A new MOU needs to be organised with AQIS before the end of 2016. This MOU will provide the Commonwealth with the power to revoke the Plan if we are not complying
- The Plan needs to be approved, signed off by the Chief Executive and sent to the Commonwealth. Kangaroo Management are not looking for any further input from KMAP.
- The Plan will go to the Executive without KMAP endorsement. Time restraints did not allow for this to happen and as KMAP are only an advisory committee, the Plan does not need their endorsement.

Biodiversity and land reforms package:

- The new Bill was tabled on the 19th October 2016
- Debated on the 15th November 2016
- The new Management Plan, to come in line with new legislation, needs to be in place before July and the Panel will have the chance to comment on the Code and endorse the new Management Plan.

- The Code will be exhibited in 2017. The Bill will allow the Code to be enforced.
- The new Wildlife Portal should be built to come into practice at the same time as the new Plan.
- OEH will organise a specially convened meeting of KMAP in March 2017 so the Panel can comment on the Code before it goes on public exhibition. The usual meeting to discuss the Annual Report will be delayed until March and the Annual report will be distributed to the Panel for comment.

Action 3: OEH will write a letter to the Chief Executive before Friday 25th November 2016 for the Panel to review the Code and submissions before they go on public exhibition. OEH will recommend that someone from Policy attend. KMP will draft the letter and the chair person will review.

Compliance Checks:

- Kangaroo Management compliance is now carried out by separate Compliance Units.
- There are six separate units in the State, four of which are in areas where harvesting is licenced.
- North Branch (Dubbo) covers 52% of the State
- Compliance deal with all matters relating to the Native veg Act; The National Parks Act and Cultural Heritage.
- North Branch and North West Branch increased kangaroo related compliance inspections in June
- South West region are just increasing compliance inspections
- Since commencing compliance North Branch:
 - 50% of all chillers have been inspected
 - 3 advisory letters have been issued
 - 1 warning letter
 - 8 tickets issued for non-head shot (only issued if absolutely certain that the evidence will stand up in court)
 - 2 caution letters sent to dealers for failing to send in returns
 - 1 ticket for not attaching tags
 - 1 ticket for not shooting on correct property
- No negative feedback from the Harvesters re compliance and they are now providing the Compliance Officers with information about illegal activities.
- Reports coming into OEH are very important to the compliance role and by using Enviroline it ensures reports are filtered to the correct area.
- Minor matters can be corrected straight away. If Wholesalers let OEH know when there is a change of Manager at a Processing works compliance can advise them of their obligations.
- Compliance Officers can see the benefits of doing compliance checks with Food Safety Officers and feel the MOU needs to spell out arrangements and who should be doing what.

COBAR KANGAROO MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP OUTCOMES:

- The workshop was commissioned by the Western Plains Advisory Council
- The workshop included Commercial Licencing; Non Commercial Licencing and non-lethal methods. The workshop was very successful.

- KIAA suggested there should be an Independent Scientific Panel formed to answer all kangaroo related issues to give a balanced view. The Government are tied to what they can and cannot say.
- The broader report from the Workshop has to be approved for distribution.

Action 4: DPI will seek approval of the Executive for the summary of the results of the Cobar Workshop to be appended to these minutes.

INDUSTRY REPORTS

KIAA

- KIAA rep and owner of Macro Meats, sits on all other State Advisory Boards and believes NSW have the best Management Plan and the best counting methods.
- Weather conditions and the large rain event has not been sustainable for Industry and they can never catch up. People just buy other products
- Whether you are for or against male only shooting – criticism from pro groups has decreased because of it.
- Australian domestic markets are tough as there is just not enough product in Supermarkets.
- Overseas markets are sustaining not growing and KIAA believe it is up to the Wholesalers to stimulate.
- Europe: Difficulties, not so much with meat but leather sales are down. There are not enough people making new things out of kangaroo leather.
- China: The Chinese Government is disjointed, disorganised and difficult to deal with. After twelve years of looking at China, Macro Meats do not feel they are any closer but do still believe they will come on board.
- California: Australia was advised not to push this issue before the American election, so now feel as though it has taken a step backwards. Pressure will be increased again next year.
- Paris: Macro Meats have an opportunity to launch their product in Paris

AGMPA

- Leather has been in decline for a number of years and possibly will not get any better.
- Now the Greyhound ban has been reversed the domestic market should be steady. The ban had the opportunity to have a huge adverse impact.
- Domestic Markets: Human Consumption – small end –stable. Pet Food – big end - stable
- More Wholesalers is not the answer.
- Singapore: Should be coming on board in 7-14 days
- Thailand: Thailand have taken their first shipment
- Indonesia: Small markets

AERIAL SURVEY REFORM PROJECT:

- The first count conducted with the revised methods was very successful and the surveyors adapted well.
- The previous method was based on strip counts. A method that should be used only when you have no other.

- The new 'mark recapture' method leaves fewer assumptions ie that the counter detects everything on the line – not always the case in the air.
- The data comes in quickly. A small computer + GPS means the data is automated. Large amounts of data are captured and analysed very quickly. Within half hour of flight data is analysed and there is a check on counters as to how they are performing.
- The Code for analysing data is correct now, so next year's whole survey can be analysed in two hours.
- The initial \$10,000 cost is not a large layout. Cost savings are on not spending weeks entering data. Data counts are instantaneous.
- Data methods are used to count animals around the world and there is no reason for the other States not to come on board.
- There will be another workshop at Fowlers Gap next year to fine tune the skills of counters.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Terms of Reference:

- The issue of an 80% quorum was raised. Most members thought it was too high if people have travelled and other members have issues on the day and cannot attend at the last minute.
- OEH collected signed copies of acceptance of the Terms of Reference from all members present.

Sitting fee (chair):

- Chairperson feels that non-government members of the Panel need to be compensated for their time spent attending meetings.
- KMP explained that there was no precedence for Advisory Panels to receive sitting fees – only Panels that have direct responsibilities. That is, Boards of Management and those who make direct decisions on what is done within Parks. KMP manager is not sure how OEH will respond to the request, but suggested the Panel put their case to the Chief Executive.

Action 5: Chairperson will put case to the Chief Executive as to why Non-Government members should receive a sitting fee.

Proxies:

- Members who don't have proxies need to supply OEH with one

MOU with DPI:

- Currently have MOU with Meat Exports – will edit and send back
- Safefood – DPI suggested – draft and circulate – get OEH compliance involved

Flood impacts:

- The floods have costs the Industry millions. There were weeks with minimum or nil supply. Sometimes nil supply is better than small supply because of the costs involved in maintaining a small supply.
- It is hard and costly for Industry to move infrastructure around and set up new sites.

- Animals dying. OEH have had calls from Tibooburra, Broken Hill and Griffith areas to report animals dying after the rain. The reports have been pushed up the line but there is no confirmation yet as to the cause. The event was not as big as previous years.

Date for next meeting:

Next March

List of Actions:

Action 1: KMAP member list will be circulated to the Panel

Action 2: Send the completed Quota Report to the Panel with a due back by date.

Action 3: OEH will write a letter to the Chief Executive before Friday 25th November 2016 for the Panel to review the Code and submissions before they go on public exhibition. OEH will recommend that someone from Policy attend. KMP will draft the letter and Chairperson will review.

Action 4: DPI will seek approval of the Executive for the summary of the results of the Cobar Workshop to be appended to these minutes.

Action 5: Chairperson will put case to the Chief Executive as to why Non-Government members should receive a sitting fee.

Action 4 – Outcomes of Cobar Workshop available:

<http://western.lis.nsw.gov.au/resource-hub/publications/kangaroo-management-workshop>