

S00129 – Nancy Agius

Do you support the proposed staged approach to implementing a risk based approach to regulating native animal keeping?

In my opinion I believe licensing should stay in place licensing has been in place for a very long time without any issues and OEHL has an idea of what species are at which premises if licensing is moved to a code there is no paper record or trail for what species are where and if a species is becoming extinct. It will also increase the amount of animals caught from the wild and sold and no way to prove if they are captive bred or caught from the wild.

I have personally kept and successfully bred reptiles and amphibians for 17 years under My own licence before this time I helped my father bred and keep his reptiles as I was under age for a licence as you needed to be 12 years old in this time I have housed class 1 and class 2 reptiles and amphibians with a great success rate.

I believe amphibians should still require a licence however I also believe that pet shops should be able to sell the recommended amphibians if there is experienced keepers in store eg green tree frogs, red eyed tree frogs, eastern dwarf tree frogs etc..

Pet shops should also be able to sell mammals as the species on the list are types of rat and the other a mouse. Both are easy to care for and not many people are aware they can be kept as pets.

Can you suggest any changes or improvements to the licensed dealers and expos?

Dealers licence should still be able to apply for a temporary dealers licence and attend an expo however I strongly believe that dealers and private sellers should have the same conditions to trade at expo eg

- a copy of licence must be displayed.
- Reptiles held under the licence must only be kept at the licensee's registered premises.
- The licensee must not have any species of reptiles which cannot be bought or sold under the licence at their registered premises.

All licenced keepers trading of animals under an akl or dealer licence should have the same Animal welfare conditions I have been to many expos over the years where animals are sold in small cardboard boxes and Chinese containers. Also they have heat run to them which are not thermostatically controller.

- All reptiles must be placed within reptiles enclosures prior to the expo opening times.
- Reptile enclosures must provide reptile with sufficient space to rest, stand, stretch, swim or move freely as appropriate to the species.
- Reptile enclosures containing reptiles must be securely closed at all times unless the reptile is being accessed by the licensee or their staff for feeding, cleaning, husbandry or sale purposes.
- Reptile enclosures must have vents to allow air circulation
- If heat source are provided they must be controlled by a thermostat and thermometers must be placed in different parts of the enclosure so that the licensee or staff can monitor the temperature range.
- The base of the reptile enclosure must be lined with absorbent disposable material that can be readily removed and replaced and which is suitable for the species being housed in the enclosure.
- Freshwater turtles must be provided with a pool of water deep enough for the animal to completely submerge and a totally dry haul-out area large enough for the entire animal to be out of water. The edges of the haul-out area must be a shallow gradient that allows easy access and will not abraded the turtles bellies.
- Water changes must be adequate to maintain good water quality in turtle enclosure. Nitrogenous waste must not be allowed to build up.
- Filter action equipment must be adequate for the turtle species and number of individuals turtles being housed and be effective at all times.
- We are also aloud to have 1 viewing panel but at expo all keepers except have 4 viewing panels.

Should licensing also be required for persons undertaking the business of sell native animals over the internet or from their homes?

Yes anyone conducting a business selling native animals from home should be licensed and criteria they should meet is

- Council zoning
- Have an ABN
- Website

- Pay for advertising on commercial business websites
- Should meet the same criteria as a pet shop eg code of practice

Do you support the retention of import and export licences to monitor interstate movements of native animals

Yes I believe import and export should stay in place but at no additional cost to the keeper sending or receiving.

Do you support the retention of licensing for pet shops that sell native animals and expanding the list of species they may sell?

We strongly support the retention of licensing for pet shops that sell native animals and expanding the list we may sell. We strongly suggest all class 1 animals be allowed to be sold through a pet shop also some class 2 animals pet shops should have the opportunity to apply for an advance licence for their stall to enable more variety of species.

As a fauna dealer we are a point of sale we have experience in keeper and breeding reptiles. When we applied for our fauna licence we had to provide evidence about our keeping history, we also had to provide evidence about our skills and experience in reptile identification husbandry and handling. We had to provide a floor plan outlining the location of our reptiles, off display areas, food preparation and storage areas as well as emergency procedures.

At time of sale we provide a complete feeding chart with all reptiles which also states the DOB of the animal, species code, when it shed last etc. we also provide our full licence details with all contact numbers including after hours contact and a care sheet on the species purchased. It is a regular occurrence that we have customers contact or come in store that have purchased animals from private keepers and have not been given any information in regards to the sale or animal in question.

At extreme pets we have 6 staff that have experience keeping reptiles And always have great feedback on how our animals are kept in store and at expo. We also have pleasure of welcoming new faces to the reptile hobby on a daily bases. At this years Hawkesbury Herp expo there was such a great turn out we gave out more then 1000 reptile information packs. All staff are dedicated to helping any reptile enthusiast by providing all the knowledge that we possibly know. As reptile keepers we understand the importance of good quality products and the correct information.

As a private keeper when applying for a licence you need to tick the link saying you agree to the terms and conditions and there is a link for the code of practice which I have helped hundreds of customers apply for their licence and they scroll straight past it without acknowledging it what's so ever. In 2013 the minister Robyn Parker approved the laws for pet shops to sell reptile With a restricted list of species however in the 5 years we have been able to sell reptiles we are finding so many customers coming in saying they would like to by all their reptiles from us however with the species we can sell we are having to refer customers to online dealers and private keepers to which not all are ethical and some keepers and having issues with not receiving licence details from private breeder or animal not feeding and breeder not interested in helping.

We at extreme pets pride ourselves on having the best possible review and feed back possible which is why we offer an after service if we could sell a larger range of species it will slow down the car park sale eg mc Donald's sale and bring people to a repatriable business that they can leave reviews and feedback all pet shops in NSW have had to meet a criteria to be able to sell reptiles. We also get inspections from rspca animal welfare league etc and we are in the public's eye so we are more inclined to keep our animals in the best possible conditions also as part of the code of practise pet shops have to give a life time quarantine on return of our reptiles.

I think cage sizing should also be revised and some cage sizes are extremely big for some animals requirement

Reptiles have bought my family together as we are a family owned and run business that care so much for the industry and would love to see a much bigger variety of species to sell so people can appreciate as we do in our own personal collections. All pets play a major part in any family home and reptiles are being the new easy pet not only for people who live on units but also people with busy life styles. If reptiles are set up correctly they are very easy to maintain and care for. In today's day of age so many children and adults have allergies to most animals but no known allergy to reptiles. Reptiles are not only suitable for a house with a backyard but also a unit as they don't take up much room.

I Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the changes the OEH are proposing.