

S00127 – Ronald Fenwick

Comments on the proposed changes to wildlife licencing:

Firstly I would like to it noted that the form letter advising of the review and comments, for the licences granted under the act, was nor forwarded out in sufficient time to allow for full review and comments.

Secondly as stated throughout the discussion paper it continuously states to the effect that

“This discussion paper is not seeking comments on the commercial kangaroo management licensing.”

To provide comment on what appears to be within the paper I will firstly give a quick summary of my situation and any relative information:

I am 74 years old and have been dealing with animal control on the family property where I live. Our family property has been owned for over 100 years.

The property is now surrounded by coal mining on 3 sides and the Wollomi National Park on the 4th side.

The mining company land and the National Park are breeding grounds, and safe harbour, for all species of native and feral animals and neither the Mines nor Government actively make attempt to keep the animals within their boundaries.

Nothing is done to prevent these animals from entering our land, competing with our animals for food and water, damaging our fences and other property as well as occasional threat to persons and animals.

We have always dealt with invasion by all species as it arose in the past both humanely and within the requirements of State law.

With the creation of the National Park, the development of government controls and licencing we have had to hold many licences to perform our required operations abiding by the state controls.

Currently we are bound by firearms licencing act, as well as requirements under wildlife licencing and this imposes responsibilities and demands that are generally unnecessary.

We are currently also bound to follow the codes of practice, as listed within the document and put for consideration the following comment:

Both the DPI animal welfare code and national codes for humane shooting of kangaroos need to be brought into reality with genuine codes that reflect what is needed and the skill set required and the firearm types being taken into account. Consultation on this must be properly processed and not rely on the general misconceptions that are interlaid by anti- lobbyists.

Within the process, it needs to be noted that under no circumstance do we intend to harm these animals and this “ licence to harm” needs to be simply restated as “licence to control by shooting”.

It would be more appropriate that there be change to allow landowners with the invasive impacts by these animals, both feral and native to deal with them as was before the current status was developed.

The time and documentation taken for the issue of licences and recording of culls does nothing to benefit the landowner or the people having to deal with the issue.

The issue we currently face is the sanctuary for all ferals, native and otherwise, within many areas, National parks, mining leases and towns and villages including roadways with damages caused by these animals.

Kangaroos, wombats and emus cause untold damage throughout NSW with little done by the State to reduce this.

Currently I follow the item 4.2 Landholder’s licence to harm and find it almost impossible to estimated population of the target species on the property but diligently fill the forms.

Considering relevant consultation questions

- Should all nominated shooters be listed on the landholder’s licence to harm, rather than issuing nominated shooters a separate licence to harm, to reduce administrative effort?

This change alone does not reduce the burden on the landowner or the administrator and still relies on the shooter at all times to carry unnecessary paperwork to produce when required.

A more realistic approach would be to have this replaced with notice that all shooting is to be performed with the approval of the landowner and only by licenced shooters.

- Can you suggest any improvements to standard conditions of a landholder's licence to harm?

Ensure that the landholder is not bound by poorly worded links currently stated within the codes as to how and with what firearm the shooting is performed.

Common sense and appropriate usage practices need to apply to ensure that all is safe and the results are as required, quick and concise kill methods with respect to environment of the activity.

- Do you support the retention of licensing for harming protected birds?

Absolutely not!

The wildlife licencing process should be written to allow the landowner to use discretion and to take control measures on the land as necessary.

- Can you suggest any improvements to the licence conditions for harming birds?

As previously stated, there is generally no intention to harm, simply control the presence of all invasive species.

- Should codes of practice be developed for harming birds in specified circumstances as an alternative to licensing?

No! Codes of practice are simply another imposed series of conditions that may be interpreted to impose sanctions on one party by another, the latter being a person in power with a misinterpretation of the wordings of the code.

- Should licensing for harm to wombats and other protected animals be retained?

As previously stated, there is generally no intention to harm, simply control the presence of all invasive species.

If there is to be consultation regarding the proposed changes to the licencing procedures I would be happy to assist considering my realistic history and understanding of the requirements for safe and effective means within the requirement of the need to control by shooting.

I again stress that most landowners do not wish to harm the animals but simply control them in an efficient and humane manner.