



Minimising the animal welfare impact of kangaroo management

NSW Commercial Kangaroo Management Program

Kangaroos are a protected Australian native species. They are protected in New South Wales under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. The Act includes provisions for people to harm or harvest kangaroos only if certain conditions are met. This includes issuing licences to harvest kangaroos for commercial purposes, and to cull or otherwise manage kangaroos in cases where they may be damaging property, posing safety risks, or causing economic hardship.

Whether commercial or otherwise, all licensees must comply with nationally agreed codes of practice to ensure that when kangaroos are killed, it is done in a way that minimises pain and suffering.

Regulating commercial kangaroo harvesting

Kangaroos have been commercially harvested under the NSW Commercial Kangaroo Management Program since 1975. The program works to maintain ecologically viable populations of the 4 commercially harvested kangaroo species (wallaroos, eastern grey, western grey and red kangaroos) and ensure that when kangaroos are harvested, it is done as humanely as possible.

In New South Wales, commercial harvesting is strictly monitored and regulated. Wildlife trade management plans permit the export of kangaroo products and are assessed and approved by the Australian Government.



All wildlife trade management plans require commercial kangaroo harvesting to comply with the *National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes* (2020). The national code outlines the most humane ways to harvest kangaroos based on the latest scientific research into kangaroo behaviour and ecology. It ensures the shooting of kangaroos for commercial purposes is carried out in a manner that minimises pain, distress and suffering.

The majority of harvested kangaroos are male, with females typically making up less than a third of harvested kangaroos. Therefore, most kangaroos that are commercially harvested do not have dependent young. The national code requires dependent young of harvested female kangaroos to be euthanased quickly and humanely to minimise animal pain, suffering and distress.

In addition to compliance with the national code, NSW harvesters must meet rigorous licensing and accreditation requirements that contribute to better animal welfare. All harvesters must hold a firearms licence that permits them to possess and use a firearm of the appropriate type and calibre required to harvest kangaroos humanely (as outlined in the national code).

All harvesters must complete firearms accuracy assessment and accreditation before being granted a harvester licence, and they must renew the accreditation at least every 5 years. Suitably qualified registered training organisations, such as the Firearms Safety Training Council, undertake the assessments and accreditations.

All new harvesters must also complete and pass a commercial kangaroo harvester knowledge course and exam that covers all aspects of

commercial kangaroo harvesting. In relation to achieving humane kangaroo harvesting, the course includes a section dedicated to compliance with the national code and minimising the risk of poor animal welfare.

NSW kangaroo harvester and animal dealer licence conditions state that harvesters cannot possess or sell any kangaroo with a gunshot wound anywhere other than its head. Animal dealers must report carcasses they receive that contain a bullet wound to the body. Appropriate compliance action is taken against harvesters reported for non-head shots, which may include a warning, fine or prosecution depending on the circumstances and in line with relevant compliance policies.



Regulating commercial kangaroo harvesting

Kangaroos are a protected Australian native species. They are protected in NSW under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*

1



Kangaroos are **protected** in NSW under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and can be **managed** if they damage property, pose safety risks or cause economic hardship

4

Commercial harvesting is strictly **monitored and regulated** by the *National Code of Practice* to ensure **good animal welfare** outcomes. The code is based on the **latest scientific research** into kangaroo behaviour and ecology

2



Research shows the most **humane** management approach is for skilled, professional and trained kangaroo harvesters to shoot wild kangaroos in a well-regulated **commercial harvesting program**

5



Harvesters must kill kangaroos via headshots only. A **prosecution, fine or warning** is given to harvesters responsible for non-headshots

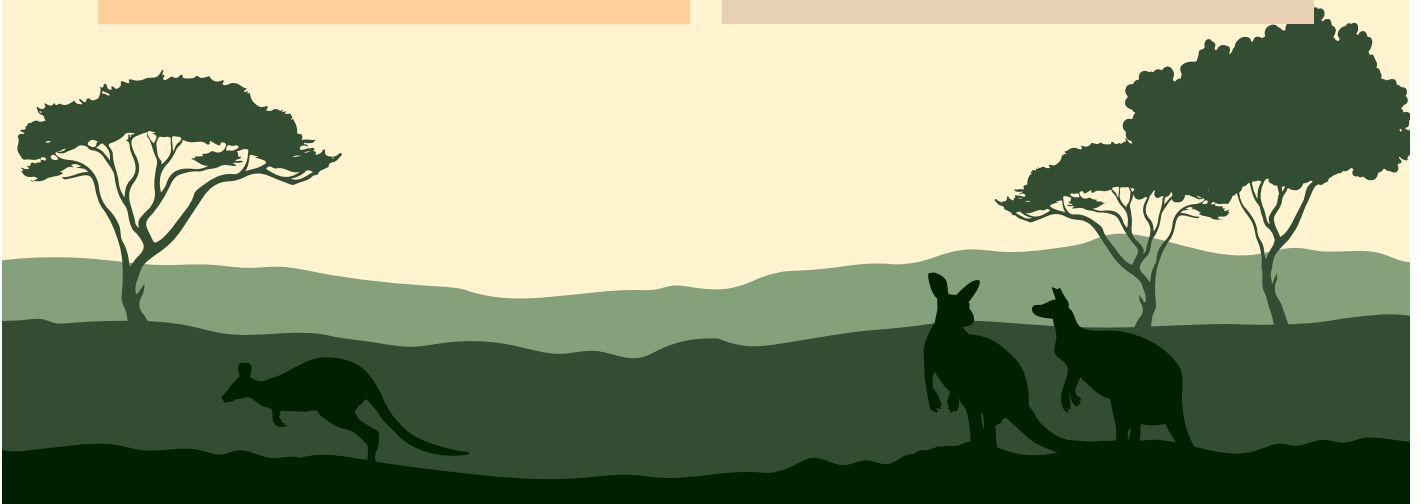
3

All harvesters must hold a **licence** and complete accuracy **assessment and accreditation**, which they must renew every 5 years

6



Most kangaroos harvested are male and do not have dependent young; dependant young are euthanised **quickly and humanely**





Measuring the impact of management strategies

The 'humaneness' of an animal management strategy relates to the overall welfare impact it has on an individual animal. Humaneness refers to what happens to the animal before it is killed, as well as the consequences for it if non-lethal management methods are used. For example, during severe drought, it is more humane for an animal to be quickly euthanased than for the animal to be left to slowly die of thirst or starvation. The level of humaneness of a control method can be assessed on the basis of 5 key considerations: thirst/hunger/malnutrition; environmental challenge; injury and disease; behavioural/interactive restrictions; and anxiety/fear/pain/distress.

If kangaroos are culled, for example to reduce damage to property or the environment, the person undertaking the culling must comply with the *National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Non-Commercial Purposes*. When compliant with the national code, non-commercial culling is humane.

How can I find out more?



Online:

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/wildlife-management/kangaroo-management

Email:

kangaroo.management@environment.nsw.gov.au

Phone: 1300 17 33 76

Cover photo: Eastern grey kangaroo (John Spencer/DCCEEW); Page 2: Kangaroo (John Spencer/DCCEEW), Red kangaroo (John Spencer/DCCEEW), Eastern grey kangaroos (Rob Cleary/Seen Australia), Red kangaroo (John Spencer/DCCEEW); Page 4: Eastern grey kangaroo (John Spencer/DCCEEW).

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