

Animal

ROUNDAABOUT



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Produced for people with an interest in the exhibition of animals in zoos, circuses, mobile farms, fauna and wildlife parks in NSW.

National Standards for Zoos and Fauna Parks

A hurdle to the progress of national standards for zoos and fauna parks was removed in May 2009 when it became clear that the Primary Industries Ministerial Council would be the Council of Australian Governments body to ratify the implementation of national welfare standards for non-livestock animals. The Exhibited Animals Standards and Guidelines would be the first non-livestock welfare standards considered if funding could be found to pay for a national regulatory impact statement and public consultation. The document being drafted referred to taxon-specific standards for matters that did not apply to all animals. Unfortunately preparation of taxon standards had not been budgeted for in the initial stage of the project. Thankfully, in August 2009, the Zoo and Aquarium Association (ZAA) offered to fund the drafting of several taxon-specific standards if the State and Federal governments funded preparation of a national Regulatory Impact Statement for the general and the taxon-specific standards proposed. Drafting of Standards and Guidelines for anurans, crocodiles, macropods, wombats, koalas and ratites commenced in early 2010. By the end of 2010 the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy Standards Writing Group had successfully reviewed all of the completed drafts. The process revealed that several clauses in the general document did not apply to all groups of animals. Conversely, some of the proposed taxon



Tiger

Photo Credit Stephen Jackson

standards were promoted to general standards. In December the Writing Group sent the endorsed drafts to a legislative drafting consultant for assessment. Following receipt of his advice a consultant will be selected in early 2011 to draft the national Regulatory Impact Statement and conduct the public commentary phase during the first half of 2011. National standards are hopefully not far away!

Matthew Crane
Leader Exhibited Animals

NSW FMPA Update

Matthew Crane and Stephen Jackson from Industry and Investment NSW visited Featherdale Wildlife Park to assess the Husbandry Welfare Assessment for Reptiles Held in Captivity. The aim of this visit was to assess the effectiveness of the document in determining the appropriateness of enclosures for reptiles.

The last NSW Fauna and Marine Parks Association meeting was held at the Richmond TAFE, on 15 December 2010. This meeting also offered the opportunity to finalise the details for the first "Master Class" on euthanasia which will be conducted with both an online and practical component. The online component will commence in January 2011 and the practical component will be held at the first general meeting in 2011.

We are currently commenting on a national zoo biosecurity document that has been prepared by the Zoo and Aquarium Association and the Federal Department of Agriculture, Fish and Forestry. There are currently a variety of issues with this document that are being worked through.

Considerable effort has also been spent commenting on the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines: Exhibited Animals (zoos) and various taxon standards include those for anurans, crocodylians, ratites, koalas, wombats and macropods. These documents are being developed as part of a program to develop national standards.

Lisa Christie

Secretary - NSW Fauna and Marine Parks Association



Goodfellow's Tree Kangaroos

Photo Credit Stephen Jackson

Geriatric Zoo Animals

The availability of veterinary care and routine availability of food and shelter typically results in zoo animals living longer than their wild counterparts.

As a result of their increased longevity zoo animals often suffer from age-related diseases, which may reach the point where they can cause significant discomfort and result in a poor quality of life.

In order to adequately assess the health status of aged animals various techniques can be used. One such system has been developed by Follmi et al. (2007, *Animal Welfare*, Volume 16, pages 309-318) and may prove useful to zoo managers. It comprises five parts: 1) an assessment that determines the clinical symptoms that can include vomiting, anorexia, apathy and lameness; 2) an assessment of the response to therapy; 3) an evaluation of pain discomfort and quality of life; 4) a radiographic assessment to check for osteoarthritic changes to the joints, and 5) an assessment of breeding interest, gender and ability to reproduce. The results of these different assessments are then scored to evaluate the general condition and quality of life of geriatric zoo animals.



Camel

Photo Credit Stephen Jackson

Reducing Escapes and Thefts

In order to gain an indication of the escapes and thefts of animals from zoos and fauna parks over the last 10 years a review was undertaken based on advice Industry and Investment NSW has received from exhibitors that these events have occurred (as required by Clause 27 of the *Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986*). Though the numbers obtained are likely to be an underestimate it is hoped that the general trends may prove insightful to exhibitors and allow better planning to minimise such events.

In the last decade many animals have been reported stolen or escaped from zoos and fauna parks in NSW. These include a total of 82 exotic animals being stolen during 21 different theft events and 29 exotic animals escaping during 19 different escape events. In comparison over the same period 101 native animals were stolen during 24 theft events with a total of 533 animals escaping during 47 escape events. This is a total of 745 animals escaping or being stolen over the decade.



Photo Credit Stephen Jackson

Cotton-top Tamarin that has been targeted by thieves

Thefts and Escapes from Zoos and fauna Parks in New South Wales from 2001-2010.

Exotic Species	Reptiles	Birds	Mammals	Total
Theft Events	10	8	3	21
Animals Stolen	17	55	10	82
Escape Events	2	7	10	19
Animals Escaped	2	16	11	29

Native Species	Reptiles	Birds	Mammals	Total
Theft Events	19	5	0	24
Animals Stolen	38	63	0	101
Escape Events	8	16	23	47
Animals Escaped	8	477	48	533

Though the number of native animals that escaped is considerably more than that for exotic animals there has been an increasing trend toward the theft of exotic species in recent years as they have become more widely held by exhibitors. In particular exotic reptiles, birds and small primates are proving to be increasing targets for thieves. Therefore particular attention needs to be paid by those who hold these types of animals. The number of native species escaping is also of great concern though it must be noted that a majority of these were the result of releases of birds as a result of storm damage. Nonetheless it highlights the need for the construction of sturdy enclosures and ongoing attention to lopping and/or removal of large trees near exhibits to minimise the damage they may cause during storms.



Parliamentary Inquiry Into Waterways Wildlife Park

A Parliamentary Inquiry was undertaken to report on matters associated with the RSPCA raid on the Waterways Wildlife Park, Gunnedah, on 3 February 2010. The final report of the inquiry was released on 9 September 2010 and makes it clear that the decision by RSPCA Inspectors to remove animals from the Waterways Wildlife Park was motivated by genuine and valid concerns about the welfare of the animals. The report also noted that there is evidence that these problems may have existed for some time before a complaint was made to the RSPCA. The report makes a number of recommendations to the RSPCA, Industry and Investment NSW and the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water to improve the regulation of facilities licensed under the respective legislation that each enforces. The report also recommends that the RSPCA review its agreement with the television program "Animal Rescue" to ensure that written consent is obtained from property owners before any filming commences.



Eastern Water Dragon
Photo Credit – Stephen Jackson



Photo Credit Stephen Jackson

Exhibited Animals Advisory Committee's visit to Potoroo Palace.
Left to right Alexandra Seddon (Potoroo Palace), Rick Webb (EAAC), Alan Morgan (Potoroo Palace), Linda Crawley (EAAC), Andrew Kelly (EAAC), Karen Johnson (Potoroo Palace) and Matthew Crane (EAAC), outside the koala exhibit at Potoroo Palace.

As part of its latest meeting at Merimbula the Exhibited Animals Advisory Committee undertook visits to both Potoroo Palace and Merimbula Aquarium. These visits offered a great opportunity to visit the staff and managers at these facilities and discuss the issues that have been affecting the industry and their parks in particular.

Temporary Removals

A reminder to all exhibitors that applications for the temporary removal of animals from animal display establishments requires a Form H – Application to Remove an Animal from Authorised Premises. Note that unless this application is supplied at least 7 days before the removal is to occur (as required by Clause 32 of the *Exhibited Animals Protection Regulation 2010*) we cannot guarantee that the form will be assessed.

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Animal Roundabout is complimentary

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up-to-date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of Industry and Investment NSW or the user's independent adviser.