

**NSW Wildlife Council, Inc.
Meeting Number (10)**

**Tuesday 20th May 2008 at 9.30am
Dept Environment and Climate Change
43 Bridge Street – Hurstville NSW Sydney**

Minutes

Meeting Opened: 9:45am

1.0 Opening of Meeting & Welcome:

1.1 Present: Sonja Elwood Syd Wildlife, Lorraine Vass FOK, Audrey Koosmen NATF, Julia McConnell IGL, Steve Amesbury NANA, Gwen Seznec NRWC, Don Gowing Wildlife ARC, Philip Machin NARG, Shirley Lack NARG, Bruce Mulligan WLA, Marny Bonner ASR, John Donnelly NTWC, Ilona Roberts TVWC.

Guest(s): Ron Haering; Manager, Wildlife Licensing and Management Unit, Dept. Environment and Climate Change.
Kevin Roberts, Senior Environmental Specialist, Biodiversity Environment Branch, RTA.

1.2 Apologies: Stan Wood WIRES, Caroline Enfield WIRES, Cheyne Flanagan KPS-NSW, Peter Schulties KPS-NSW, Paul McLeod KIC, Barbara Witham KIC, Rhonda Bradford WCN-CW, Andrew Hudson WCN-CW, Margaret Squire Cudgegong, Rachel Knowles Cudgegong, Paige Sinclair PPP, Greg Pickering PPP, Ronny Ling ORRCA, Gwen Parry-Jones Wildlife ARC.

1.3 Teleconferencing: Jill Taylor HKPS

2.0 Register of Proxies: Nil

3.0 Agenda Items Brought Forward:

3.1 Motion: To ratify Membership of Pet Porpoise Pool Pty Ltd (Coffs Harbour)

Proposed: Sonja Elwood (Sydney Wildlife)

Seconded: Julia McConnell (IGLs)

Passed: Unanimous

4.0 Presentation:

In line with recent discussions between the NWC Executive and the RTA, the NWC were pleased to welcome Kevin Roberts, Senior Environmental Specialist, Biodiversity & Environment Branch, Roads and Transport Authority, who kindly presented a cheque for \$20K towards NWC's ongoing operations.

In his presentation, Kevin commented that the Regional Environment Officers in all NSW RTA offices would be useful contacts for member groups and contact details can be made avail to NWC members. These include amongst others Parkes, Wagga Wagga, Grafton and Wollongong. He went on to say the RTA has really turned a corner in last couple of months, with a new corporate plan that included biodiversity protection. This will also include a closer liaison with the DECC. The plans include some very positive environmental initiatives and it is good to see these recognised at a corporate level. The RTA is currently investing a great deal in fauna management, for example, along the Pacific Highway. This is a new area of management for all parties and needs ongoing

research and feedback to ensure its effectiveness and to improve designs. The RTA are also involved in preparing Biodiversity Guidelines for those parties that undertake contract work for the RTA such as Abigroup. These types of arrangements need to be formalised to maximise the outcomes for both wildlife and volunteers.

The RTA is very pleased that the wildlife rehabilitation community have established a group such as the NWC and have wanted such an avenue of communication for some time. This move has made it very easy for the RTA to provide support for the wildlife community and the RTA are more than happy to provide ongoing support for a period of 3 years.

Also present, Ron Haering, Manager, Wildlife Licensing & Management Unit, Dept. Environment & Climate Change who confirmed that the DECC have recently provided payment of a similar amount for insurances for all wildlife rehabilitators across the state. Ron confirmed also that the DECC were happy to provide support for a period of 3 years. Ron also stated that he has written to the Department of Primary Industry regarding a similar funding contribution.

Jill Taylor of HKPS queried Kevin regarding the floppy top fencing at Raymond Terrace. Kevin committed to following up on this and any other areas where NWC members felt RTA fencing required feedback and/or maintenance.

The NWC sincerely thanked both Kevin and Ron for their contributions to the NWC and ongoing funding commitment.

- Actions:**
1. Secretary to prepare letter of thanks to both the RTA and DECC.
 2. NWC Executive to follow up with Ron Haering and Kevin Roberts regarding the development of a written MOU between all parties as to the 3 year funding and performance agreement.

5.0 Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting (9) Feb 26th 2008

5.1 Amendments:

Title to be changed from Agenda to Minutes.

John Singleton listed in Item 7.4 to be changed to John Donnelly
Reimbursement and Expense Details added to final item .

Motion: That the February 2008 Minutes be accepted with above amendments.

Proposed: Lorraine Vass FOK

Seconded: Don Gowing Wildlife ARC

Passed: Unanimous

Action: Secretary

- (i) Final Minutes to be submitted to website as soon as possible.
- (ii) In future, draft minutes to be placed onto NWC website prior to following meeting.

Notes from Executive Meeting Monday 11th May 2008

1. MOU with DECC

The Executive felt we need to approach DECC in writing with a view to discussing the content and terms of a MOU.

2, .
Deferred to Other Business Item 8.2 (see also 4.0 Presentation , Action)

2. Contact with Minister Verity Firth

Despite best efforts no further progress has been made getting into the Minister's office. This remains a priority for the Executive.

Action: Secretary to pursue.

It was also agreed in future the NWC should also try to contact Peter Garrett (Federal Environment Minister).

3. Council Funding

This is a very important issue and must be pursued as a priority. It is also a key theme in the Strategic Plan.

Deferred to Item 7.1 Strategic Plan.

4. 2008-9 budget

The Executive were presented with the draft 2008-9 Budget by the Treasurer, Julia McConnell IGLs and an outline provided of our current position. Ongoing funding for the NWC remains a very important issue. Deferred to Item 6.1 Treasurers Report.

5. Insurance

The Treasurer, Julia McConnell IGLs, confirmed payment has been made for member insurance. The Treasurer also suggested Directors and Officers insurances should be sought for the NWC. It was felt the member groups needed to comment on this issue.

Deferred to Item 6.2 Insurance Report.

6. Progress on Local Agreements template

Steve Amesbury had proposed developing a draft template for circulation and had requested copies of any local area agreements already in place. Steve confirmed that no further progress has been made at this stage.

7. Telstra / Ombudsmen

The executive are aware that this is an ongoing issue for some member groups and that obtaining support from Telstra is very difficult. It was felt further discussion is needed to determine NWC member feedback and next action.

Deferred to Business Arising Item 5.2.1.

8. Proposed Sale of Reptiles through Pet Shops / NAKCC

As neither John Gorham nor Stan Wood is present this item can be followed up online and progress reported at next meeting.

End of Executive Meeting Report

5.2 Business Arising:

5.2.1 Telstra phone options (Audrey Koosmen (NATF))

Representatives from NATF and Wildlife ARC have spent a great deal of time seeking alternative numbers for their groups. It has been time consuming and frustrating.

Lorraine Vass of FOK felt everyone has had different experiences with Telstra. DECC have written to Telstra and the Federal Minister for Communications expressing concern that wildlife care groups will be negatively impacted without assistance. NWC should follow his example to add pressure.

John Donnelly stated that his group, NTWC, approached their local Telstra Area Manager who eventually came onboard to assist. The NTWC now have a new 1800 number. Could NWC approach Telstra to get one state-wide number that directs the call to the local area group or carer? The call is free to the caller as Telstra are paying for the MOP to call. Subsequent calls could then be charged at a cheaper rate as so many calls are generated for each rescue.

Gwen Seznec of NRWC stated that after discussions with NTWC, the NRWC approached their local Telstra office with the same idea. In this instance, the Telstra Area Manager was not agreeable. Further, the idea of a one state-wide number idea has been discussed before and has not been pursued further as it has proven problematic in areas such as Northern Rivers where multiple groups border or overlap rescue areas.

Steve Amesbury of NANA felt that the NWC need to take action. We all have had different approaches and a centralised approach may now prove more beneficial.

Julia McConnell IGLS felt building on John Donnelly's idea perhaps NWC members could combine our call costs and seek sponsorship in the form of calls/lines. Gwen Seznec NRWC agreed. John Donnelly NTWC would like a census from all the different organisations, and with this information, then approach Telstra for a corp. deal. Gwen Seznec NRWC copied a survey form for this purpose to the Secretary at the end of the meeting.

Jill Taylor HKPS felt each area should approach their Communications representative or local MP. Lorraine felt that it was most likely a Federal matter. Perhaps this level of government might listen to us.

Phil Machin NARG queried as to how many groups this issue affects? Have they now moved on? Should we not approach Telstra for overall sponsorship? Lorraine Vass FOK agreed that that was part of the intent

Marny Bonner, ASR, agreed with Jill Taylor's idea, but felt it would be a lot of work for already overworked groups to individually reproduce. She suggested the NWC produce a template that can be picked up by those member groups that wish to use it.

Phil Machin NARG felt there we are talking about two separate issues. Many groups have already got a system in place and thus the 0500 people are a minority that have had to move onto other plans. Now we need to look at how Telstra can help all wildlife groups in NSW.

Gwen Seznec agreed that the 0500 issue is now dead and that we should look at some sort of overall sponsorship from Telstra.

Motion: That the NWC contact Telstra with a view to brokering an overall deal for wildlife groups
Proposed: Steve Amesbury NANA
Seconded: Ilona Roberts, TVWC
Passed: Unanimous
Action: Secretary

5.2.2 Primary Lyssavirus Innoculation (Audrey Koosmen NATF)
No further action taken at present. Item to be removed as an agenda item.

5.2.3 Education / VTAB Accreditation (John Donnelly, NTWC)
John Donnelly NTWC has made a few calls and has approached VTAB re the WIRES Training Manual. This and accreditation fall under Item 5.2.8, Minimum Standards. This Item now complete.

5.2.4 Conflict Management Guidelines (Steve Amesbury NANA)
Response from Ron Haering of DECC distributed via online forum prior to meeting.

The DECC feel this document does not provide enough in terms of management of disputes. NWC would like to respond to this letter. The Conflict Management Guidelines will be reviewed in time and being a democratic body with no authority over the operations of member groups the NWC cannot insist these guidelines be adopted.

Julia McConnell IGLs reminded NWC that DECC wanted something measurable with more substance to it. This could be incorporated into a future document. Steve Amesbury NANA commented that this type of thing was provided in the original draft document but that it had gradually been stripped out.

Gwen Seznec NRWC agreed that we cannot force member groups to adopt this document.

Lorraine Vass FOK reminded NWC that Ron had also recommended a review period of 12-18mths to ascertain members' uptake and use of the Guidelines. Is it workable? Have any groups used it? Was it effective? Then it becomes measurable. This could then be compared with numbers of complaints received by DECC over the same period. Are they still receiving as many complaints? All this could be built into the review.

Ilona Roberts TVWC queried as to whether DECC required NWC members to adopt these standards.

Marny Bonner, ASR, felt it should be viewed as a guideline and that we must be consistent as to how we use it. Suggested that we may need more consultation with the DECC.

Steve Amesbury NANA felt the NWC don't need a policy but produced the 'guideline' for each member group should they wish to use it or not. In future disputes however the DECC may choose not to provide an audience to a member group if they are not utilising this guideline.

Motion: That the NWC respond to Ron Haering's comments, outlining our discussions and intention to review these guidelines in 12 or so months and to ascertain feedback from member groups as to its effectiveness. The NWC also need to reiterate that these guidelines cannot be forced on member groups but offered as a tool which may be useful to them.

Proposed: Gwen Seznec NRWC

Seconded: John Donnelly NTWC

Passed: Unanimously

Action: Sonja Elwood (Secretary)

Other Business Brought Forward:

7.5 Koala Management and Conservation Issues

(Lorraine Vass FOK) Background document distributed via online forum prior to meeting. Lorraine reported that the government is showing no leadership at all in regards to koala conservation and related issues. At a federal level, a review of the 1998 National Koala Conservation Strategy has commenced however its parameters, purpose, etc. are unknown by volunteer rehab groups working with koalas.

Within NSW, the Koala Recovery Plan is still not signed off. The NWC was told 12 months ago that internal difficulties have prevented it being finalised. Writing up of the Koala survey undertaken in 2006 is now nearly complete and is expected to be published in the coming months in a scientific journal.

It may be beneficial for the NWC to offer its services to speak on behalf of rehabilitators on the Steering Committee established to review the National Koala Conservation Strategy.

Motion:

a) That NWC writes to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, expressing its interest in participating in the review of the 1998 National Koala Conservation Strategy.

b) That the NWC writes to the Minister for Climate Change and Environment requesting her immediate attention to progressing koala management and conservation in NSW.

c) That the NWC seeks the assistance of the NCC of NSW Inc., the WPSA Inc and similar orgs in promoting attention to these and related koala management and conservation issues.

Proposed: Lorraine Vass FOK
Seconded: Sonja Elwood
Passed: Unanimous

Motion: That Lorraine Vass of FOK be put forward as the NWC representative to this steering committee.

Proposed: Jill Taylor HKPS
Seconded: Steve Amesbury NANA
Passed: Unanimous

Lorraine expressed her thanks to Jill Taylor HKPS.

Action: Lorraine to draft letters to the Federal and NSW ministers for the environment and circulate to Executive members.

5.2.5 Belconnen ACT Defence Site - Macropods (Coralie Tarlinton Wildcare Q.)

Coralie Tarlinton of Wildlife Queanbeyan not present as currently attending Belconnen site. Culling has commenced this week.

The following points were made from the ensuing discussions:

- Bushland corridors are a vital component to future planning for native wildlife.
- Planning for future situations must be made, as these issues may well occur again at other sites.
- With many situations like this the NWC need to develop a coordinated and proactive approach not reactive constantly trying to put out spot fires.
- The NWC need better management internally to act on these matters more effectively and promptly. There is a need perhaps for someone to take this on and flag campaigns relevant to NWC as they arise and drive them.
- This really brings into focus the future direction of the NWC and working out how this can be achieved. This sort of thing also highlights the need for some sort of permanent salaried secretariat.
- Position statements also need to be developed by NWC in regards to this and other related issues.
- These should be incorporated into the Strategic Plan.

Action: All representatives are asked to please think about these points in the coming weeks to start looking at the bigger issues this has raised. These will be reviewed again at the next meeting with a view to developing a better strategic 'issue' management procedure for the NWC.

5.2.6 NWC Business Cards

Received and distributed to Executive members present.

Action: The Secretary offered to procure generic business cards free of charge for distribution to all NWC representatives for their use. To avoid inappropriate use by non NWC members, these cards will be laid out in such a manner that there is no room for anything further to be written on the face.

5.2.7 Constitution – Nomination of Public Gift Fund Administrators
Caroline Enfield WIRES / Sonja Elwood Syd. Wildlife

The Constitution has now been completed. As Stan Wood is not present, it is unclear as to whether documentation has now been submitted.

ACTION: Audrey Koosman NATF will follow up with Stan Wood WIRES to find out if this has been submitted.

The Public Gift Fund will need Administrators.

Action: Sonja Elwood Syd. Wildlife and Caroline Enfield WIRES to put forward a list of 'responsible persons' to be approached by the Council as a matter of priority.

5.2.8 **Minimum Standards for Wildlife Care in NSW**
(Audrey Koosmen NATF / Steve Amesbury NANA)

Steve Amesbury NANA explained that he and Stan Wood of WIRES have made contact with the DECC with regards to establishing a working party to progress this item. This working party was established with Ron Haering and Brendon Neilly of the DECC. To date three meetings have taken place. These meetings are designed to prepare a framework that can be used by an independent consultant to develop a Minimum Standards document.

Audrey Koosmen confirmed that members of the executive had met with DECC over 3 meetings and that the working party has expanded to include Libby Hall of Taronga Zoo, Dan Lunney of DECC, Brendon Neilly DECC, Ron Haering DECC and that NWC representation has expanded from Steve Amesbury NANA and Stan Woods WIRES to include Julia McConnell IGLs, Sonja Elwood Syd Wildlife, Lorraine Vass FOK and herself.

John Donnelly informed NWC that he is currently working on OH&S policy. Feels that OH&S issues are relevant and important to wildlife rehabilitators.

Audrey Koosmen, NATF agreed and stated that NATF already have OH&S policies in place.

Audrey Koosmen further explained that Stan Woods WIRES had also submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the Environmental Trust's Environmental Education Program in order to seek grant funding for this project. Audrey Koosmen expressed a note of thanks to Stan on behalf of members as it was necessary to put this document together within a very short timeframe.

In future the working party may expand further to include other veterinary authorities.

5.2.9 Native Animal Keepers' Consultative Committee (NAKCC) /
Native Reptiles in Pet Shops (Stan Woods WIRES / John
Gorham)

As neither representatives are present to update this Item, it was deferred for discussions online and next meeting.

5.2.10 RBG / DECC Flying Fox Camp Management Policy
(Stan Wood WIRES, Sonja Elwood Syd. Wildlife, Steve Amesbury
NANA)

A response to the NWC's letter has now been received. The RBG have replied indicating a steering committee has now been formed and a wildlife officer employed by the RBG to manage this and other wildlife related issues. DECC are already members of this committee (Kylie McClelland). The NWC have also been invited to join. This committee have met already in Dec 2007 and March. They meet on an 'as-needs' basis. Travel reimbursement will be considered by the RBG for the NWC rep.

Motion: That Ilona Roberts be nominated as the NWC representative to the RBG Flying Fox Steering Committee.

Proposed: Lorraine Vass FOK

Seconded: Steve Amesbury NANA.

Passed: Unanimous

Action: Sonja Elwood (Secretary) to write letter of introduction to RBG and to provide copy and RBG details to Ilona Roberts TVWC.

5.2.11 Engagement & Contribution to NWC by Reps (Audrey Koosmen)

Audrey Koosmen reported that she had contacted Jill Taylor of the HKPS and was pleased that Jill was teleconferencing today. Unfortunately, without a computer, it is very difficult to keep up with online discussions.

Gwen Seznec reported that it was likely a new alternate would be coming on board for NRWC, Cheryl Cochran. Cheryl is also email connected.

Audrey Koosmen as Chair thanked all members for their ongoing participation.

6.0 Reports:

6.1 Treasurer's Report (Julia McConnell IGLs)

6.1.1 Statement of Accounts Circulated and Reimbursement Forms
Julia McConnell tabled and circulated to all members a Budget for the period 2008-09. Overall, with the recent contributions from DECC and the RTA the NWC should be financially secure to the end of year.

Motion: That the Treasurer's Report be accepted.

Proposed: Julia McConnell IGLs

Seconded: Don Gowing Wildlife ARC
Passed: Unanimous.

Lorraine Vass FOK queried as to where in the budget was the \$5000 that was donated by the former Environment Minister Debus. This money is earmarked for the development of a shared database.

Action: Julia McConnell IGLs will readjust to highlight this amount.

6.1.2 Expenses for Approval

Expenses for reimbursement:

Marny Bonner	ASR
Lorraine Vass	FOK
Iona Roberts	TVWC
John Donnelly	NTWC
Julia McConnell	IGLs
Gwen Seznec	NRWC
Bruce Mulligan	Wildlife Aid

Motion: That the above requests for reimbursement be approved for payment.

Proposed: Julia McConnell IGLs

Seconded: John Donnelly NTWC

Passed: Unanimous

6.2 Insurance Officer's Report (Julia McConnell IGLs)

6.2.1 Accident Insurance and Public Liability

Thanks to recent contributions from the DECC, a cheque for \$19339.69 will be posted today to AON Insurance for NWC member group's Accident and Public Liability insurances.

Don Gowing Wildlife ARC enquired as to when Certificates of Currency could be expected? These are important for upcoming Wildlife ARC events. Sonja Elwood of Syd. Wildlife and Audrey Koosmen NATF agreed that their groups were also holding events shortly and these would be necessary.

Julia replied that there have been a lot of errors in the issuing of these Certificates and that she was still following these up. Julia will send the interim Certificates to Don Gowing, Audrey Koosmen and Sonja Elwood who require this for activities that are coming up very shortly. They are correct in as much as all the groups have been listed. The IGLs however have been overlooked and this needs to be corrected.

6.2.2 Directors & Officers Insurance

Julia has sought legal advice from a Solicitor, David Brown, who felt that it was very much a 'must have'. Certainly, from a corporate view it is absolutely essential. Julia queried NWC representatives as to their opinions.

LorraineVass FOK feels it may well not be necessary from contrary reports , she has received from the Environmental Defenders Office.

Don Gowing Wildlife ARC and Sonja Elwood Syd Wildlife reported that Directors & Officers insurance is maintained for their group.

Motion: That Directors & Officers insurance be sought for the NWC.

Proposed: Jill Taylor HKPS

Seconded: Steve Amesbury NANA

Passed: Unanimous

Jill Taylor HKPS thanked Julia for all her efforts on behalf of the NWC.

6.2.3 Insurance Broker

Julia has investigated other brokers Leroy Bowmaker of All Class Insurance Brokers P/L who was introduced by Don Gowing and Local Community Insurance Services (LCIS) who was recommended by Jennie Churchill the Policy Advisor for the Office of Linda Burney, Minister for Fair Trading, Youth & Volunteering. Julia would be happy with either of these brokers.

6.3 Media Officer's Report (Lorraine Vass FOK)

Report tabled. Apology for late distribution.

Glossy colour *Wildlife Watch* issues one and two tabled for Council to see printed product.

The third issue is planned for June printing and distribution in July. Suzanne Medway, Secretary of WPSA has invited the NWC to maintain a regular spot in their publication, *Australian Wildlife*. Lorraine tabled the first column. WPSA have also requested member group's details, links and logos.

Motion: That the NWC formally join Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia (WPSA).

Proposed: Marny Bonner ASR

Seconded: Sonja Elwood Syd Wildlife

Passed: Unanimous

Action: (i) The Secretary to pursue membership of WPSA.
(ii) Steve Amesbury NANA to respond to WPSA regarding establishing a link to the NWC which will provide access to all member groups.

Lorraine also reported she has provided feedback on DECC's proposed Press Release regarding the 3 year funding agreement between the NWC, RTA and DECC.

Motion: That the Media Officer's Report be received and noted.

Proposed: Lorraine Vass FOK

Seconded: Sonja Elwood Syd Wildlife

Passed: Unanimous

6.4 Nature Conservation Council of NSW (Lorraine Vass FOK)
The NWC have been invited to the NCC Environment Day Dinner (\$85/head) and has called for nominations for their environment day awards.

6.5 Secretary's Report (Sonja Elwood Syd Wildlife)
Incoming and Outgoing Correspondence Report.
Tabled.

7.0 General Business

7.1 NWC Strategic Plan – Progress on 2008 Workplan (Action All Officers)

Audrey Koosmen NATF has spoken to Jenny Churchill, Policy Advisor for Minister for Volunteering. Linda Bernie would like to make a presentation to the NWC at a future date. Audrey will follow this up. Further the Public Gift Fund and Constitution are progressing as discussed.

The ongoing issue is seeking funding for the NWC from other sources. This is something the DECC also feel would be worthwhile pursuing.

Julia McConnell IGLs stated that although she has taken on the role as temporary Treasurer. Her scope does not extend into seeking sponsorship or funding.

Lorraine Vass FOK suggested that an ad be placed in the SMH's Helpdesk Column which is based on The Centre for Volunteering database, Fido and that the NWC register with ourcommunity.com to attract a fundraiser.

Gwen Seznec NRWC suggested that seniors or retirees might be useful in this regard.

Motion: That the NWC place ads in the Sydney Morning Herald as above and also the website 'community.com' for a potential fundraiser for the NWC.

Proposed: Lorraine Vass (FOK)

Seconded: Steve Amesbury (NANA)

Passed: Unanimous

Action: Steve / Lorraine to pursue.

Lorraine Vass FOK felt the NWC need to establish how much funding we need and for what types of things. This needs to be developed into a plan specifying essential vs. desirable items and then let's see how we go from there? We should definitely continue trying to see the Minister's to perhaps seek funding there also.

Having already introduced the NWC to the EDO regarding advice on our insurances, Lorraine would be more than happy to do so again with a view to establishing a more formal relationship. Only introductions and informal discussions have taken place thus far.

The Minimum Standards project is now underway in conjunction with the DECC and the Conflict Management Guidelines have been recently finalised.

7.2 Authorisation of Signatories for Banking Facility (Julia McConnell IGLs)

Motion: That Audrey Koosmen (Chairperson), Stan Wood (Vice Chairperson), Sonja Elwood (Secretary), Julia McConnell (Treasurer) and Lorraine Vass (Media Officer) be authorised as signatories for the NWC's banking facility.

Proposed: John Donnelly NTWC

Seconded: Ilona Roberts TVWC

Passed: Unanimous

7.3 NSW Wildlife Rehabilitation of Fauna Policy Review (Shirley Lack / Phil Machin NARG)

Phil Machin outlined the situation for NARG in the area of Braidwood. This is a small area that is wildlife rich but poor in rescuers. NARG wish to utilise members that reside outside the area specified in the General License and feel this is necessary to ensure the wildlife rescue service in the area.

NARG has sought permission from the Minister's office in regards to this situation and in recent correspondence have been referred to the NWC in terms of providing input into the current review of DECC's Fauna Rehabilitation Policy. Phil queried the status of this review and whether the NWC had provided input to this.

Audrey Koosmen NATF explained that the NWC were also confused as to the status of this review and went on to explain NWC's history to-date. This began a couple of years ago when the newly formed NWC answered a questionnaire, which at the time, were lead to believe formed preparatory work for the review scheduled to commence last year.

Recent discussions, in February 2008, with Dr Miranda Gott of DECC revealed that she is responsible for another component of the review, those related to the licensing of native animal keepers. This was not what the Executive were expecting to discuss. However it did provide the NWC with an update in terms of the potential for native reptiles to be sold through the commercial pet industry and related licensing issues, which is the area currently under review.

Phil Machin NARG felt that the current licensing system is discriminatory in that it does not permit people to volunteer where they wished. In fact in NARG, some people belong to 3 groups. This type of competition could indeed raise standards within the wildlife community. The current license is quite stringent and should this be changed it may well be beneficial to wildlife and wildlife rescue.

Gwen Seznec NRWC felt that this issue had been discussed at length previously and that licensing issues with the DECC were not a line of business the NWC wished to become involved in.

John Donnelly NTWC reported that his group were also awaiting a response from the DECC regarding boundary queries.

Ilona Roberts TVWC felt you should be able to join other groups but not rescue for them.

Marny Bonner, ASR, felt that this may relate to fraud issues experienced in the past. The NWC should be careful at this stage not to offend Ron Haering of DECC regards the Rehab review as the NWC do want to provide input into these.

Sonja Elwood, Syd Wildlife, queried as to whether the development of MOUs as proposed in an earlier meeting by Steve Amesbury NANA might be able to cover some of these issues.

John Donnelly NTWC felt that in his region the movement of animals across boundaries for buddying purposes went ahead quite well. Audrey agreed that this has also occurred happily in her region.

Action: The Executive to ascertain from Ron Haering when the review will take place and how the Council will be involved.

7.4 Recent correspondence from DECC to all Rehabilitation Groups Requesting Declaration of all Permanent Care Animals, Education Animals and Animals Currently Held For Long term Rehabilitation (John Donnelly NTWC)

The issue of permanent care education animals was introduced by John Donnelly who holds two unreleasable Tawny Frogmouths under his group licence. John is interested in other groups' experiences in managing these types of issues.

Audrey Koosmen reminded members that licensing requirements are a matter between their groups and DECC.

7.6 Companion Animal Management Act (Julia McConnell IGLs)

Julia McConnell IGLs introduced the topic of the Companion Animals Act and spoke about the level of restriction placed on domestic dogs in the Act but pointed out that to-date, cats had very few restrictions, and were largely free to roam. Julia's work with her local Council on Companion Animal Management has highlighted that the Act is not strong enough.

Ilona Roberts, TVWC, agreed and felt domestic cats should be curfewed, collared and kept within their property. Further, local councils need to promote and enforce Wildlife Protection Areas.

Action: That NWC write to Paul Lynch, Minister for Local Government requesting amendment to Companion Animal Management Act in regard to domestic cats.

Proposed: Julia McConnell IGLs

Seconded: John Donnelly NTWC

Passed: Unanimous

Action: Julia McConnell IGLs to prepare draft letter to Minister and cc EDO and WPSA and NCC to endorse our action, for circulation to the Executive.

8.0 Any Other Business:

8.1 Culling of Wombats (John Donnelly NTWC)

John Donnelly NTWC has a clever and useful design that allows wombats access way under fences. It is something he would like to make the DECC aware of.

8.2 MOU with DECC / RTA and 3-Year Funding Agreement

NWC members must consider what the NWC wants from this agreement both for the NWC and conversely from the DECC?

Agreements between the Qld Wildlife Rehabilitators Council (QWRC) and the NPWS and between the QWRC and the QLD RSPCA have already been circulated electronically.

Motion: That a request be made in writing to Micheal Wright of DECC urging the formalisation of a MOU between the NWC and DECC before 30th June 2008.

Proposed: Lorraine Vass FOK

Seconded: Sonja Elwood Syd Wildlife

Passed: Unanimous

Action: Lorraine Vass FOK / Sonja Elwood Syd Wildlife to draft letter.

Action: All representatives to read MOUs distributed and to provide feedback as to what the NWC require from such an agreement.

8.3 Wombat Protection Society

The Wombat Protection Society is currently mapping the extent of mange infection in wombats. Accordingly it is requested that representatives please ask their groups (and IGLs) to report all infected wombats to NARG or the Wombat Protection Society with the exact address / location of the animal.

Action: All representatives please follow this matter up with their respective groups and IGLs.

9.0 Next Meeting Dates and Venues: Tues 12th Aug 2008 DECC Offices Hurstville, Sydney
Sat 8th – Sun 9th Nov 2008 The Centre, Randwick, Sydney

Meeting Closed: 4:00pm

DRAFT