

NSW Wildlife Council – Minutes (1) – General Meeting No. 44 – Tuesday 23 May 2017 – Room 1.04 OEH 43 Bridge St., Hurstville

These Minutes are to be read in conjunction with the File: 17 05 23 NWC GM44 Summary Report

Chair: Audrey Koosmen

MEETING OPEN: TIME 10.00 a.m.
Brief welcome by Chair Audrey Koosmen.

Attending:

Don	Eagleton	Australian Seabird Rescue
Meredith	Ryan	FAWNA (NSW) Inc
Lorraine	Vass	Friends of the Koala-Alt
Audrey	Koosmen	Hunter Wildlife Rescue
Jill	Dean	Hunter Wildlife Rescue-Alt
Peter	Graham	LAOKO Snowy Mountains Wildlife Rescue
Shirley	Lack	Native Animal Rescue Group
Shona	Lorigan	ORRCA
Leesa	Pratt	ORRCA-Alt
Carmel	Northwood	Port Stephens Koalas
Julie	Jennings	Port Stephens Koalas-Alt
Sonja	Elwood	Sydney Wildlife
Miriam	Hazel	Wildcare Queanbeyan
Suzy	Watson	Wildcare Queanbeyan-Alt
Jacky	Hunt	Wildlife ARC
Josh	Mesilane	Wildlife Carers Network Central West
Richard	Woodman	Wildlife Rescue South Coast
Justine	King	Wildlife Rescue South Coast-Alt

Guest Speaker 1: Beth Mott, BirdLife Australia – Powerful Owl Project

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Guest Speaker 2: Ron Haering, Project Officer Biodiversity and Wildlife Team, National Parks and Wildlife Service. See Summary Report.

Guest Speaker 3: (Following lunch) Robert Oliver, Implementation Manager, Wildlife Biodiversity Reforms, National Parks and Wildlife Service. See Summary Report.

Morning Tea 11.40 a.m.

Noon – Meeting recommences

Business of General Meeting No. 44 opens: (Time)

1. Confirmation of the Minutes (as amended) of the 21 February 2017 General Meeting No. 43

Motion: That the Minutes of the 21 February 2017 General Meeting is a true and correct record.

Proposed: M. Ryan; Seconded: Jack Hunt **Carried**

2. Business arising from that meeting. Action list update

Item	Action	Result
1	Attention All Reps – advise feedback on cruelty database	Should be ready for testing in a month. Trial test. Need to talk to NWC Webmaster re. access.
2	Secretary Enquire NPWS re. letter to IGLs	Letter sent – still questions about whether IGLs are covered by insurance. M. Giese OEH has been advised they are not. General discussion.
3	D&O Insurance Certificate of Currency to be sent to Reps Line – S. Lack	Completed. Separate Agenda item
4	Attention All Reps – encourage NWC link on your group's Website Home Page	No further action.
5	Secretary contact AWRC 2018	Advised Agenda Item 23/5/17
6	M. Hazel – Resources list continue preparation	See item 16
7	Secretary to invite ARC to speak at the next General Meeting on its online training modules	There are no on line training modules – no action
8	D. Henshaw to provide CWA details.	Was sent to Reps line

3. Correspondence

Letter from R. Oliver to groups read. Questions to be addressed to R. Oliver during his address to the meeting after lunch.

PG-SMWR recently heard that animals have been dropped from National Parks. RW-WRSC animals have been decoupled from NPWS operational matters. LV-FOK Threatened species seems to be main interest. RW-WRSC Groups need some agency to go to on compliance and animal welfare issues. If it is to be transferred to OEH responsibility needs to go to some Agency. SE-SW responsibility for protection of wildlife is still in the Act.

Request from Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference for sponsorship funding of 2018 Conference – AWRC is a separate Agenda item.

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Motion: That the Emails forwarded to Reps/Alt line are noted.

Proposed: M. Ryan; Seconded: P. Graham: **Carried**

4. Chair Report – A. Koosmen

The report was emailed to Reps Group.

Move: A. Koosmen that the Chair's report as appended to Minutes is accepted: Seconded: C. Lorigan **Carried**

5. Treasurer's Reports tabled: - S. Lack

NSW WILDLIFE COUNCIL

Balance Sheet Assets 14 05 2017

NSW Wildlife Council	115,453.45
Term Deposit	32456.25
Pay Pal Public Fund	134.99
NSW Wildlife Council Public Fu	1515.89
	-70
Total Assets	149,490.58
Liabilities	
Net Assets	149,490.58
Equity	
Retained earnings	68,531.27
Current Year Earnings	12,541.74
Historical Balancing	68,417.57
Total Equity	149,490.58

Profit and Loss Statement 1/07/2016 to 14/05/2017 and

Trial Balance created 14/05/2017 emailed to Reps line and appended to Minutes.

All claims for travel and accommodation need to be lodged by 31-5-2017.

Motion: That the Treasurer's Reports as presented are accepted. Proposed S. Lack, Seconded: P. Graham - **Carried**

6. Insurance Officer Report – J. Dean

No claims received

D & O Insurance – Insurance for Volunteers and Product and Public Liability is arranged through the Nature Conservation Council.

General debate included advice that Fair Trading NSW updated Legislation in 2016 which changed Personal Liability of committee members or persons acting under direction of a committee member when acting in "good faith". It was argued a legal challenge could still be mounted and D&O Insurance covers this, leading to the

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Proposal: J. Mesilane That NWC continues Association Liability insurance cover for all member groups on the condition that it covers Directors and Officers liability;
seconded: P. Graham – **Carried with one dissenting vote (M. Ryan).**

- 7. Media Officer Report – P. Graham.** Peter requested all groups to send information and articles of interest to the general public that could be sent out under the NWC banner to state-wide media outlets. Shona Lorigan reminded the meeting she is one of the 4 NWC people active on the NWC Facebook page and expressed disappointment at the small number of NWC groups that contributed stories of interest. - Animal rescue stories get the greatest reach. The difficulty is getting the resource material.

PG requests that all Reps and Alternates go back to group and ask that they share anything worthy of public airing with Pete.

Would the group like Media Officer to send links from various outside groups to the Reps line. Affirmative response.

- 8. Secretary and Public Officer Reports – M. Ryan**

Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers – Julia Rose replaces Colin Wood as Alternate

Email address changes noted for Port Stephens Koalas delegates

Move: M. Ryan that membership changes are accepted. Seconded J. Mesilane
Carried

- 9. Codes of Practice (COP)**

- a. **Update on Macropod Code of Practice – S. Lorigan** – awaiting independent review.
- b. **Next code of practice – A. Koosmen.** NPWS has indicated it wishes to review the Koala CP then develop a reptiles COP.
S. Lorigan asks can we set a schedule for these? There is a Reptile COP already underway for the Animal Keepers.
R. Woodman believes NWC does the COPs very well. Thanks specifically given to Shona for the outstanding success of NWC's COP development.
A. Koosmen – all COPs will be done jointly with NWC and Wires.
J. Dean noted there was no recognition in the documents of work of S. Lorigan and NWC and expressed dismay at this lack of official acknowledgment.

Lunch break 1305.- 1335

- 10. Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016:**

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Robert Oliver Update: Process with stakeholders meeting for BCAct. Looking at licence classes of all licences, as well as the rehabilitation licences. The aim of consultations is to prepare discussion papers for various groups e.g.:

Farmers
Birds
Reptiles
Frogs and Toads

Issues voiced included:

Concern about conflicts between people who hold multiples of Rehab, catch and release and animal keeper licences. RO at this stage there is no limit to the number of different licence categories an applicant can hold.

Increasing numbers of abandoned and surrendered pets
Seized pets/animals via Police, Fire brigades, etc. RO advised Round table meetings will be convened for surrendered/seized wildlife/pets.

Processes need to be put in place to manage these but the OEH management has put a stop to this process. Back to a holding pattern waiting for clarification from OEH about a new time frame – possibly not until after the commencement of the Act.

Licensing/accreditation reforms.

The Minister needs to be satisfied that consultations have taken place before any reforms are approved.

More consultations will take place with different licence classes, e.g. Catch and Release licences – possums, reptiles, etc. RO agreed that NWC will be involved.

Questions asked about the delay. Keeping reptiles and keeping birds – big logjam and “all too much”.

Consultation process revealed “no real details” in the draft Act for consultation on licensing reforms, same for Draft Regulations. This dearth of substance makes it difficult to provide any meaningful submission.

S. Lorigan advised the NWC was encouraged to contribute submissions to stakeholder meetings, as other animal keeping groups were encouraged. The other animal keeping groups did not include representatives from the rehabilitation sector in their interest group meetings. SL would recommend that these animal keeping groups should be encouraged to include Rehab representatives. Recommend that welfare groups be also included. RO there are no plans for this at this stage.

POCTA Code for Birds. Shouldn't NWC members be able to comment on Draft Animal Keepers COPs?

Comments or questions about the Regulations?

SL – **Marine Mammals** – Rescue Regulations. General animals not against the law to rescue or hold for 72 hours and notify OEH in writing. This could be construed as applying to all fauna. It needs to be made clear in the Regulations that this does not apply to Marine Mammals. RO suggests a submission needs to be made on this point.

Abandoned wildlife “pets”. It was suggested the regulation “Need to advise NPWS in writing and wait for direction”, is perhaps over the top and it would be good if someone could come up with some guidelines on how to deal with these situations, which in the main are urgent.

What options are available for an animal to go back to the wild? Pets can’t survive in wild – they are not predator-savvy, licences prohibit releasing animals whose encounter location is unknown. This covers reptiles, other fauna and birds.

Who decides what species come under a licence? This is controlled by NPWS under the species list that can be kept under a licence – there are 41 species of birds exempt from licensing. These are listed in the Regulations.

Cost of Licence for companion licence \$50 for 5 years. Other licenses go from figures in their \$60s to \$100+ These are listed on www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Stakeholder Meetings, Koalas and Animal Keepers – A. Koosmen, S. Lorigan
1st Animal Keeper meeting wanted licensing system to stay then by the 2nd Animal Keeper stakeholder meeting the bird and reptile people came back wanting the exempt lists to be expanded to include more species that could be kept as pets. They formed stakeholder groups with no representation from welfare or rehab groups. NPWS encouraged all rehab groups to put submissions – this process has now been delayed so it is important NWC does not lose the opportunity to comment. There seems to be no real understanding or acknowledgement that deregulation will make the problems we face even bigger. Focus on “taking from the wild” – this was not perceived as a problem – dumping back to the wild and problems of hybridisation were not acknowledged. 2nd meeting showed schisms between welfare and Animal Keepers. SL suggests a meeting with RSPCA and WIRES to show a united front.

It is important that groups provide data they may have on abandoned/surrendered fauna.

Agreed Action: NWC ask OEH to include on Data Sheet for Rehabilitators an encounter code “**Surrendered/Seized Fauna**”

11. Wildlife Rehabilitation Organisations’ role in retention of seized animals – R. Woodman – discussion paper provided with Agenda.

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It appears that this problem will increase and WRSC intends to pre-empt this problem by proceeding with ways to deal. The group's core business of rescue, rehabilitate and release is not going to be impacted by having to deal with seized animals without recompense.

P. Graham – how far do we go before the responsible party accepts financial and other responsibility for these animals?

J. Dean – this was raised with OEH over 12 months ago and the response was your role is rescue, rehabilitation and release if you go outside that it is your choice.

S. Lorigan – RO clearly stated at Stakeholders meetings that the rehab sector Constitutions are based on rescue, rehab and release and not these seized or surrendered animals. He then asked that rehab groups make a submission. It was suggested something like an additional \$5 could be levied on licence fees to cover costs of holding seized fauna.

S. Elwood - recommendations should be made for changes to draft document re. privacy (anonymity), record keeping and accountability for animals, equipment, visiting of premises.

J. Mesilane – more comments on accountability for person/group holding seized animal.

R. Woodman – a price per week to hold was raised – on a cost recovery basis. Where do we go from here? Does NWC adopt this? Or provide to OEH concerns expressed by one group and provide the Discussion Paper for OEH comment?

Proposal: R. Woodman That the NWC write to OEH to identify that there is an issue that a number of wildlife groups have in regards to seized animals and the cost of maintaining an appropriate welfare environment until the animals' fate is decided. The draft proposal that one NWC group has put together outlines the Policy Position on this matter that the NWC is currently considering. The NWC is seeking comment from OEH on this Draft Policy from one of the member groups in order to assist future consideration of the policy by NWC. Seconded C. Northwood **Carried.**

12. Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017 – NWC Submission? Discuss.

The lack of detail in matters affecting the rehabilitation sector in the Draft Regulation makes any submission difficult.

13. Wildlife Rehabilitation Grants 2017-18 – Discussion took place regarding the forthcoming Grants Program and it was

Proposed S. Lack That the Grants budget be increased to \$10,000 for 2017-2018
Seconded J. Dean **Carried**

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Suggestion: When summaries of Grants are prepared for Voting at the AGM the dollar value could be removed.

Another member wishes to see more details to determine Voting process.

Members to be advised we have increased the Grant budget total to \$10000 and individual grant applications can be to a maximum amount of \$2000. Secretary to send revised grant guidelines to committee for approval.

14. AWRC (Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Conference) 2018 – request for sponsorship

Much discussion took place regarding sponsorship options that might be available and it was

Proposed: J. Mesilane That NWC writes to the AWRC 2018 organising committee seeking their list of costed sponsorship opportunities that are available. Seconded: S. Lack – Carried (There was one abstention, and one vote against. R.Woodman asked that his dissenting vote to be recorded.)

The letter to the organising committee will include an intention of some form of sponsorship to the Conference.

15. Animal Cruelty Database Development update – M. Hazel (if present) See business arising Item 1 for comment.

16. Strategic Plan Review – Update - Sharing of Group Policies and resources for the purpose of helping groups support and enhance governance by having resources available on the NWC Webpage. A list of possible subjects to share is to be prepared. Sub Committee of Jacky Hunt, Miriam Hazel, and Audrey Koosmen to report.

It was acknowledged that many groups have done a lot of good work on various resources/documentation whether they cover governance, information, data retention, education/training, fundraising, and administration procedures or other matters. Some groups are struggling to update resources to the level that might be required for any future licence or accreditation process.

Reps need to go back to their groups and discuss what governance and administrative documents they are willing to share with other groups that do not have or need to improve their governance and administrative documents. It is envisaged the NWC Website could provide a restricted-access library of resources. It was suggested some groups might consider open-licensing their documentation (and were reminded that the author's permission is required).

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17. General and Other business:

- \$500 has been provided to both the Wombat Conference and the June Koala Conference.
- Port Stephens Koalas advise Port Stephens Council will provide \$2.8M for a Koala Hospital and tourism facility.

Dates of next general meetings:

Saturday 26 August	The Centre Randwick
Sunday 27 August Annual General Meeting	
Meeting	The Centre Randwick

Meeting

Time 16.10

Close:

Signed/ChairOriginal signed A. Koosmen..... Date ...26 August 2017.....

Report by Chair as emailed to Representatives and Alternates list

Welcome to our two new alternates to NWC Julie Jennings from Port Stephens Koalas and Julia Rose from Northern Tableland Wildlife Carers.

Biodiversity Conservation Act reform.

Much is happening with the stakeholders meeting I am pleased to say.

Shona attended the second meeting for the Animal Keepers Consultative meeting on NWC behalf as both Meredith and I could not attend. Shona recorded notes from that meeting which were passed onto you all.

The second meeting was indeed very different from the first and the feeling was very tense and concerns were shown by NWC rep, Wires and RSPCA as to the discussion on the day regarding reptile regulations and license changes by the reptile groups present. One major concern to wildlife groups is the number of seized, lost and abandoned reptiles presented to groups. Reptile groups say that not a problem and disagree but both CEO of Wires and NWC disagreed again with support of the RSPCA.

Mammals Pet Industry would like to see sugar gliders added to selling and keepers license in NSW again this was disagreed by NWC, Wires and RSPCA.

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Koala Stake holders meeting.

On Wednesday 24th May 2017 all groups involved in rescue and care of koalas are invited to the second workshop to be held at the Australian Museum on koala genetic sampling protocols. Then in mid-June a third workshop will be held in Lismore to discuss protocols and Code of Practice for the triage and treatment of sick, injured and orphaned koalas. I believe from speaking with NPWS there will be further workshops and then the current Code of Practice for Koala in NSW will be reviewed before the end of this year.

NPWS have requested the NWC take the lead in the review of the koala code with Wires of course involved. NPWS have requested Shona conduct that process and she has agreed thank you Shona.

Speaking with NPWS team they would like to see us progress onto Reptiles as the next COP after Koala review is done, that of course will be conducted by NWC and Wires and consulting with RSPCA.

I attended the National Wombat Conference in March 2017 can I say this conference was wonderful. I must congratulate Wombat Society for the hard work they did bringing this conference together so well. It was a weekend of great speakers who covered many topics regarding wombat care, mange, work been done in field by many researchers, work been done in schools with saving our wombats. An out standing weekend I feel was felt by all who attended. I did indeed like networking and saving time throughout the weekend with all whom attended.

At last communications have taken place between NWC and NPWS to seek representation back to the NWC from General License Holders in NSW to hold two positions on the NWC.

A letter has been sent to all people holding a general license from NPWS we now await a reply. I do hope we can see representation back on NWC very soon.

Regards

Audrey Koosmen
Chair NSW Wildlife Council