**Chair: Audrey Koosmen Meeting Open:** Time: 10.06 a.m.

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|  | ***First*** | ***Surname*** | ***Group*** |
|  | *Present* |  |  |
| 1 | Meredith | Ryan | F.A.W.N.A. (NSW) Inc |
| 2 | Ros | Irwin | Friends of the Koala |
| 3 | Audrey | Koosmen | Hunter Wildlife Rescue-NATF |
| 4 | Kate | Randolph | Hunter Wildlife Rescue-NATF - Alt |
| 5 | Shirley | Lack | Native Animal Rescue Group |
| 6 | Sandra | Norris | Northern Rivers Wildlife Carers |
| 7 | Jacquie | Maisey | Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers |
| 8 | Jacqueline | O'Neill | ORRCA |
| 9 | Leesa  | Pratt | ORRCA - Alt |
| 10 | Carmel | Northwood | Port Stephens Koalas |
| 11 | Brendan  | Diacono | Snowy Mtns Wildlife Rescue-LAOKO |
| 12 | Sonja  | Elwood | Sydney Metropolitan Wildlife |
| 13 | Chris | Thompson | Sydney Metropolitan Wildlife |
| 14 | Suzy | Nethercott-Watson | Wildcare Queanbeyan |
| 15 | Kerryn | Parry-Jones | Wildlife A R C |
| 16 | Linda | Stoev | Wildlife Carers Network Central West |
| 17 | Justine | King | Wildlife Rescue South Coast-Alt |
|  | *Apologies* |  |  |
|  | Cathy | Gilmore | Australian Seabird Rescue |
|  | Don | Eagleton | Australian Seabird Rescue-Alt |
|  | Rod | Miller | FAWNA (NSW) Inc |
|  | Julia | Rose | Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers |
|  | Libby | Hall | Taronga Wildlife Hospital |
|  | Garry  | Gnapp | Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers-Alt |
|  | Jenny  | Weston | Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers-Alt |
|  | Colin | Hall | Wildcare Queanbeyan-Alt |
|  | Lorraine | Yudaeff | Wildlife in Need of Care |
|  | Richard | Woodman | Wildlife Rescue South Coast  |
|  | *Visitors NPWS* |  |
|  | Ron | Haering | Senior Project Officer, Biodiversity & Wildlife Unit |
|  | Amanda | Hughes | Project Officer |
|  | Hannah | Lloyd | Project Officer |
|  | Shona | Lorigan | Project Officer |
|  | Robert | Oliver | Manager, Wildlife Biodiversity Reforms |
|  | Peter  | Stathis | Manager, Biodiversity & Wildlife Unit |

Welcome by Chair Audrey Koosmen and introduction of new representative Jacqueline O’Neill of ORRCA.

**At 1 p.m. there will be an** update briefing by P. Stathis and R. Haering on Biodiversity Conservation Act (BCA) matters affecting the rehabilitation sector. Robert Oliver will address the meeting on Stakeholder consultations on Animal Keeping matters. Notes from the discussions will be provided separately.

1. **Confirmation of the Minutes: Motion:** That the Minutes of the 20 November 2018 General Meeting No. 50 are a true and correct record. Proposed: M. Ryan; Seconded: L. Stoev: **Carried**
2. **Business Arising from the Minutes (not previously distributed):**

NCC Report from James FitzGerald-AK – no sign of report – SNW[[1]](#footnote-1) to follow up

Heat stress actions in Flying-fox Camps – Update Kerryn Parry-Jones – This year Queensland flying-fox colonies copped it particularly in the Tropics with humidity reached up to 60%. Other camps experienced temperatures of 44-45ᴼ C with humidity ranges under 30%. Spectacled Flying-foxes in Cairns, Black Flying-foxes in Townsville were the groups worst affected. Most Heat Stress Event (HSE) victims were adult females with babies on them. Over 500 juveniles were euthanased due to the lack of carers available in Queensland. It is absolutely imperative we do something about it by resolving cross State border issues to allow speedy movement interstate when rehabilitators are available in other states. Grey-Headed Flying-foxes were as far North as Ingham. KPJ was trying to organise southwards movement of bats, but couldn’t get it done legally with the export/import licence requirements to cross state borders. About 100 were driven from Townsville to Rockhampton and rehabbers/transporters drove up from S. Qld. NPWS was able to issue licence overnight but Qld could not issue licence in time for ferry trip that has been organised. It was impossible to arrange flights for animals that could have been moved southwards because

* Queensland Government was unable/unwilling to organise export licences in the required time frame and
* airline specifications for the types of animal containers could not be met at short notice

The Cowra/Young HSE is the only one recorded in NSW this season so far. KPJ advised Singleton is a bad camp and Council is considering sprinklers in some of the high trees. KPJ. AK advises the Blackalls Park Camp Management Plan is considering water supply points and sprinkler availability for use during HSEs. SE advises Grants of up to $50k are available are available from Local Government NSW for Land Managers with Flying-foxes on their land. Applications close on March 18th. Groups should be asking their Councils what they are planning to apply for to be able to respond to HSWs in their flying-fox camps.

KPJ Queensland people were unprepared for HSEs. We need to think how we can have a flying-fox squad where people can fly to the area and help. This would need to be funded. JM – We need recognition of HSE as a threatening process to trigger disaster responses. Currently HSEs in flying-fox camps are not recognised events for DPI to include in any disaster response mechanism.

JM: Subject of heat stress will be part of the Agenda for the FFCC meeting to be held tomorrow. SE – Few years ago some bats from southern NSW destined to go to rehab care in Queensland hit a road block with the Qld Dept. JK Can a Federal response be co-ordinated? SNW and MR advise such responses usually devolve to state agencies.

**Request for discounted rabies vaccinations for groups** – Update MR. NWC applied to Sinofi; Matthew Mo on behalf of FFCC is looking through Environment Trust to ways to help rehabilitators with vaccinations. NWC will keep members informed of any progress.

1. **Activities awaiting BCA details**

**Shared Resource List:** Suzy Nethercott-Watson and Justine King

This activity is awaiting recommendations from the BCAct Rehabilitation licensing “Discussion Paper/Strategy doc”.

**Wild4Life campaign – preliminary material is on the NWC Webpage:**

This was originally to be a joint venture between WIRES, NWC and other organisations. WIRES went ahead without NWC input. SN-W gave background to the recommendation of a recently formed animal keeping group recommending government to open up the list of native mammals that can be kept as pets. Government is not currently considering this recommendation and the Minister’s office has stated “….it is not proposed to make any changes to OEH’s current policy without further public consultation. This will ensure any impacts on the welfare of native animals are thoroughly examined”.

Considering the above it is felt precipitate to launch a campaign at this time, however NWC needs to be ready to act if and when there is any discussion paper released for public comment on the subject. On its Webpage the Council has expressed it is opposed to any increase in the number of native mammals that can be kept as pets.

1. **Correspondence.** Circulated to groups as received.

**Other:** Changes to member representation or details are included in new membership list distributed

Letter from Minister of the Environment’s Chief of Staff declining meeting with Minister to discuss expansion of native mammal keeping in NSW. Quote from this letter is included in Wild4Life minute above.

Notification of new staff in Biodiversity and Wildlife unit – Hannah Lloyd and Shona Lorigan.

Ron Haering advice (4/2/19) that the wildlife rehabilitation strategy has received CEO endorsement. Approval from the Minister for the Environment for public consultation is being sought.

Dr. Howard Ralph Australia Day OAM

Wildlife Rescue Inc direct contact to wildlife rehabilitators attempting to recruit to WRI service. SE was phoned direct by WRI. She made it clear that it was not the way to do it. FAWNA member contacted direct via email asking her to become a WRI rescuer. She told WRI all calls should go direct to the FAWNA Duty Phone in the first instance. HWR Secretary email was contacted. LAOKO queries WRI motivation. Leads to double handling and double recording. Is there any correlation between the OEH one Number and WRI? – answer definitely NO. JM Main problem is WRI does not want to ring the group and wants access to the private members lists. This raises serious privacy concerns. It was suggested direct contact was also a fundraising tool.

Suggestion from RH that we invite OEH Firearms Ben Russell or Grant Eccles to address May NWCV General meeting on NPWS training and protocols – Meeting agreed to do this.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Follow up request from OEH Hannah Lloyd for sea snake data – it was felt NIL returns might be helpful. Secretary[[3]](#footnote-3) will let Hannah know groups likely to receive sea snakes will be asked to send in a NIL return if they have nothing to report.

Western Australian Wildlife Rehabilitation Council sought information on the situation in NSW re. licensing fees; fees are proposed for rehabilitators in W.A. – Ron Haering advised this morning that there is no intention to impose any fees on rehabilitation licences.

DPI launch of Most Unwanted Animals campaign and seeking help from wildlife rehabilitators. Material distributed to NWC Reps and Alternates and they were encouraged to distribute in their own areas.

1. **Chair Report:** Presented and attached to Minutes. Moved for Acceptance: A. Koosmen; seconded M. Ryan **Carried**

**Matters to raise with OEH later in meeting:**

* CN: Discussion on Non-releasable native fauna. C. Northwood question procedure – to be asked of OEH today.
* MR: Believe all documentation must make it absolutely clear that permanent care must be in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Protected Native Animal Policy.
* SE: Conflict between OEH and DPI legislation for animals that are used by groups for education purposes. DPI now say that they “may” need to approve the use of these animals for education.
* RI: FOK have a few animals that are permanent care but not under Exhibited Animals Protection Act
1. **Treasurer’s report.** Treasurer’s report was presented, and has been circulated to group via email and appended to Minutes.

Proposed: Treasurer’s report is accepted S. Lack, ; Seconded Ros Irwin, **Carried**

1. **Insurance Officer Report – M. Ryan –**
* Two volunteer insurance claims involving loss of income and allowable medical and incidental expenses are progressing satisfactorily. One claimant has had repeat surgery and the other is continuing with physiotherapy.
* Offer Policy document to members[[4]](#footnote-4)
1. **Media Officer Report – S. Elwood:** In Summary: Apologies for not being able to attend November meeting. Facebook group has trebled in size going from 500 – 1500 members. Biggest post on 19/11 of a Koala cuddling a koala teddy has reached 100,000 – the 2nd major post trending 17K people was the Australia Day Award for Dr. Howard Ralph and 13k from putting water out for wildlife. 3k for post on report on the Rehabilitation sector. NWC Facebook has reached 63 countries. It would be nice to do a few more political posts. E.g. EDO, Forests, Reposted WWF post about animals dying each year. NCC too. Request received but not activated wanting NWC to post a petition against farmers’ Kangaroo culling licensing procedures. It is entitled *Stop Kangaroo Cruelty in NSW.* SE will distribute her post to the groups.

JM believes we could include a lot of the EDO material on Facebook. Proposed: “That Media Officer with the approval of the management committee considers all appropriate postings with a political bent relevant to wildlife” Proposed S. Elwood; Seconded K. Parry-JonesJ **Carried**

SE sent out Forests Survey in November, and a follow up has been received. Secy[[5]](#footnote-5) to distribute to groups once received..

**Sonja as Media Rep would like to get media contacts for use in all areas. [[6]](#footnote-6)**

(Meeting discussion diverged into safety issues of shooting and matters not relevant to the Agenda item of Media Report; then into Animal Welfare of animals not killed)

1. **Codes of Practice Update: Chair:**  Further consultation will take place with OEH.
2. **Nature Conservation Council Report : Nil**
3. **Biodiversity Conservation Act Stakeholders Meetings update: A. Koosmen: Robert Oliver will be updating our meeting this afternoon – next meeting 8-3-2019.**
4. **Flying-fox Consultative Committee Report – J. Maisey : Next meeting 20-2-19** Meredith Ryan attended the previous meeting and has reported separately.
5. **Vet and Vet Nursing training platform – A. Koosmen**  Groups’ recommendations summarised to meeting. Sydney Wildlife Reps seeking permission to offer their
Vet/Vet Nurse Training Manual resource already produced. (KPJ expressed there was pressing need for flying-fox education on handling and veterinary matters).
6. **IFAW / NWC Wildlife Rescue App update:** Report on App upgrade.It won’t load on Android devices. WCNCW Need update to its data and this has been asked of IFAW. The App is currently not available from the App store.
7. **Where to from here?** Notes on the presentations from OEH are the subject of a separate report
8. **Project Officer and Future Funding:** Theoretical at this stage? This topic can be pursued after the release of the Strategy discussion paper.
9. **General Business items:**
10. **Protocols/Policies for transfer of animals between groups – S. Elwood** Sydney Wildlife has provided its template for protocols for transfer of animals between groups. Sydney Wildlife will share its material when the policy is enshrined. This is the type of documentation that can become a valuable part of the shared resources inventory.
11. **Establishment of NFP for wildlife carers including mental health – S. Nethercott-Watson**

presented an outline of anew not-for-profit organisation she is in the process of establishing aimed at supporting the people volunteering in the wildlife sector. The sector does a lot of capital in investing in the animals but little on the people who are fuelling that investment capital. Many factors in volume of animals, disasters, the scale of them, interactions, cruelty, and grief associated with animal outcomes present challenges for mental health.

Suzy anticipates the organisation, Two Green Threads, will be launched by May and she welcomes any enquiries from NWC members for more information via suznetwat@hotmail.com. Suzy’s presentation was followed by an open discussion on the need for groups to acknowledge the mental health aspects of work with wildlife and communicate them to their members.

**Meeting Close 3.30 pm**

**Signed/Chair……………………………………………….Date……………………….**

**Dates of next meetings:**

**GM 52 Tue 21 May, 2019 - NPWS 43 Bridge St Hurstville Room 104**

**GM 53 Sat 17 August, 2019 – The Centre, Randwick**

**AGM 14 Sun 18 August, 2019 – The Centre, Randwick**

1. S. Nethercott-Watson to seek report from JFitzGerald from NCC Conference [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Secretary invite OEH Firearms personnel to May GM [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Secretary contact groups asking them to send in NIL returns for seasnakes when OEH requests any updates [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Secretary offer Policy Docs to member groups. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Secretary distribute follow up Forests survey when received [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Secretary to ask groups to provide Media contact lists to Media Officer [↑](#footnote-ref-6)