



# NSW Wildlife Council Inc.

Achieving optimal outcomes for Australian wildlife

## NSW WILDLIFE COUNCIL – CHAIR REPORT

### 21 MAY 2019 – GENERAL MEETING NO. 52

I have attended only one meeting since the February NWC meeting. That was held on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at Taronga Zoo to look at co-ordinating an online training course for vets and vet nurses in wildlife handling, assessment, treatment and care. This course will be free to all vets and staff. NWC member groups were invited to provide input to these discussions, and all suggestions presented were included. Many groups were in accord in what they felt might be shortfalls in current vet and vet nurse training on veterinary matters specific to native animals. I was delighted to see this finally happening, and it was great to see the wildlife sector networking with some of the state's best wildlife veterinarians. The meeting was a great success and was the first in the process to develop a course overseen by a working party that will be set up to liaise with Taronga Zoo.

The NPWS Native Animal Keeping and Dealers Stakeholders meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> May was cancelled, and we await a date to be confirmed for the next meeting. There is nothing to report there.

I would like you all to know that Wires, RSPCA and NWC all agreed we no longer wished to be first responders to deal with pet native fauna such as reptiles that need to be rehoused for a variety of reasons. Cost, housing and time took in holding these animals by groups was discussed. The toll holding reptile “pets” takes on a volunteer group; an activity that is not a requirement of wildlife rehabilitation licenses is high. NPWS will look at other ways these animals can be held and moved from groups in a faster and more efficient time frame.

From last Stakeholders meeting, it was suggested a Community Education Program be put in place to help members of the public better understand our wildlife. All participants agreed this was a much-needed activity.

I would like to thank Meredith and Suzy for their work in putting together NWC submission to the NSW Volunteer Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector Strategy; both ladies spent some time bringing this together and were successful in securing a brief extension in time to submit. Very little input was provided by member groups, some of whom made their submissions.

Member groups will now need to go through the *Transitional accreditation Supporting checklist* of 42 checkboxes to identify areas where their group's governance documentation and policies might need work. This will ensure a seamless transition to accreditation. NSW Wildlife Council is keen to help all members reach the accreditation requirements, and some groups that may already have appropriate systems and policies in place have indicated their willingness to share and help others. We will be asking OEH to assist this process by identifying which groups may have policies in place for the six questions on the checklist that will require document to support a tick in the box.

OEH has convened a meeting on 20 May of data officers to represent member groups to discuss refinement of data codes used in the Record Sheet for FAWNA Rehabilitators and how groups may wish annual reporting of wildlife statistics to be presented.



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Another meeting is scheduled in Port Macquarie in early June where all groups that deal with marine turtles and sea snakes with the aim to start the process of developing a Code of Practice to replace the current marine reptile stranding guidelines currently in use.

Again we have had a three month period of waiting for announcements and continuing with the uncertainties. The release of the Strategy has been a big step forward, and we look forward to learning more of what has come from the Discussion Paper and responses to OEH from the Secor. OEH is working on those responses now.

Our management team has worked consistently through the period, and I would like to recognise the efforts of my deputy Jacquie Maisey and her work on the Flying-Fox Consultative Committee, Shirley Lack for her Treasury work and Sonya Elwood for her work on NWC's social media.

It is with great sadness that I separately put some words together on the loss of another Wildlife Warrior, Jill Dean.

*Audrey Koosmen*

*18 May 2019*

### **VALE JILL DEAN..... LOSS OF ANOTHER WILDLIFE WARRIOR.**

Many of you may have known Jill. She served on the NWC for two terms but sadly had to resign due to ill health. Jill passed away recently leaving a huge Gap in Hunter Wildlife Rescue which we will find hard to fill. Jill began her wildlife work with FAWNA some years ago then moved to Newcastle and joined HWR. I watched Jill suffer in silence for the last year with cancer, not once did she complain; she battled on. Still doing what she could to help our group often from her bed or the hospital bed. Jill was a keen traveller and saw much of the world and the animals of the world, but she would always say we had the best wildlife.

Jill battled on to spend her last Christmas with her family and to see her third grandchild born. Jill asked me once "why are the pearly gates white," I said I didn't know. She told me just a few days before she died "I am going to paint them green!" I am honoured to have been by her side supporting her in that time of need; sadly this was a battle she could not win.

We will miss her greatly, her friendship, her warm welcoming smile. Jill now flies high above with her beloved eagles. She is now at peace with no pain or suffering in Gods care.

*Audrey Koosmen*