

**NATIONAL WILDLIFE REHABILITATION CONFERENCE
ADELAIDE 2010**

**Meeting – State & National Wildlife Councils
6pm, 22 June 2010**

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: 40 people from various states

Chair: Tania Duratovic

Brief report from each state/territory as to the status of their State Council

Qld – Eleanor Pollock

Established in 2005, 11 regions, tried to incorporate all wildlife carers, have one independent, 4 organisations represented – Wildlife Preservation Society (although not now), RPSCA, ARAZPAC, Dept of Env't & Resource Mngt, and Dept of Industries (now under a different name).

Membership is \$20. This provides membership, a twice a year members only newsletter, and public liability and personal accident insurance.

Trying to encourage wildlife care groups to add this \$20 onto their own group membership so their entire group is covered by this insurance.

Have built up a database of wildlife carers. Currently have about 2200 people on the database. Every person on the database receives a twice a year rehabilitators magazine to (struggled to get those 2200). They all have a permit with EPA).

Have 40 wildlife care groups listed on their website for people to look up about where to go

Just had an amalgamation process in Qld so now have 3 major regions covering the whole of the state but the Council still keeps the 11 reps from the original regions.

Education is important. Have produced Best Practice Guidelines which are listed on the Council website and have all been approved by legal Depts of DPI & EPA

Finding that communication is the hardest thing. Not getting the response back from the rehabilitators. We ask what would you like etc and not getting the response back.

NSW – Audrey Koosman

Established in 2005, only wildlife carers. Have 4600 licensed carers in NSW.

All meetings are held at the NSW Dept of Env't. Office (DECC). They provide a room etc and allow the use of their conference phone.

Have a regular newsletter that goes out to carers.

All insurance for carers is fully paid by the DECC (Currently \$28,000)

Have drafted minimum standards that are currently with DECC being assessed. Also currently with the DECC is a draft Rehabilitation Policy.

Representatives from the Council sit on various relevant committees such as the Royal Botanic Gardens

Flying Fox Committee (regarding the population at the Botanic Gardens that the RBG want to get rid of)

Involved in an impact study on wildlife in NSW.

Get lots of media. Are in the faces of Government.

About to sign an MoU with the DECC and the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA)

Receive \$20,000 from the RTA per year and have just asked for another \$20,000 which they have willingly granted. Covers a lot of administration.

As most people on the Council are key people in their own groups, eg, President, so cannot keep up with all the administration. Are looking to employ a part-time administration officer with this RTA money.

Trying to get a single telephone number across NSW.

Victoria – Greg Gordon

Vic has had a Steering Committee with representatives from the 7 regions as defined by Dept of Sustainability (DSE) regional boundaries plus the Metropolitan region. A representative from each of the state-wide carer groups, Help for Wildlife and Wildlife Victoria. The DSE and RSPCA have non-voting rights on the Council.

Only licenced (shelter permits) carers are representatives but membership is broader.

The Committee has developed a Constitution and a website.

There have been some difficulty communicating to carers throughout the state. Each representative is charged with communicating to their region/network. But, of course, do not have access to all carers. The DSE has provided contact details to those carers who have agreed to their details being made public. Currently, nominations are open to all for the Council. All nominations have to be (to an independent scrutineer) by the 30 June. After that, the Victorian Wildlife Council will be established.

Western Australia – Dianne Hunter

In 2006, WA hosted the NWRC. In the lead up to this, predominantly to organize the conference, a Council was formed. It was thought that following the conference, the Council would be led by others and go from there. However, this did not eventuate and we all fell into a heap for about a year.

In 2008, the Council started up again. It has 7 regional representatives and 3 Metro reps.

The boundaries used are the Dept of Environment's (DEC) regional area which have 7 regional areas, and 1 Metro areas which is considered not enough so for the Council's purpose we have created 3 metropolitan areas.

The Council receives no funding and operates on a shoe-string. It is short staffed on the Committee. No membership is charged as this saves time and work, and our members pay memberships to their own groups. The Council is not limited to registered wildlife carers nor just wildlife carers and considers this would exclude many valuable people. Unregistered carers can join the Council and also non-carers.

DEC however, provides personal insurance to those carers who register with them.

WA is a huge state with some sparsely populated areas. The metropolitan areas are covered by 3 large groups but carers living in remote areas are struggling. Carers/rescuers in regional areas are doing it tough.

The Council has 4 general meetings a year and sends out emails every 3-4 weeks.

The website is currently being redesigned completely.

The Council is currently applying for the federal Register of Environmental Organisations (REO) status so can receive tax deductible donations on behalf of our members.

Community education is half our job. The other big issue is training. DEC provides 4 basic workshop a year but are held in the city (Perth) plus 2 in regional areas but this still doesn't reach sufficient regional carers.

The Council is now starting to influence the DEC.

Have been involved in cat legislation, for example, along with other groups.

The Council has come a huge way in a short time. It could do a lot more if we had more administrative Committee people.

Northern Territory – Jo Neyers

Basically in the NT there is Wildcare, Wildlife Rescue, and Native Rescue.

All these groups are working quite well together and hence the formation of a Council in NT is not considered necessary.

South Australia – Liz MacGuinness

Have wanted to form a state Council. Some first steps towards this have been made. With the organizing of the NWRC, this has been temporarily put on the backburner. But once the conference is over, this will start up again.

RSPCA SA want to be involved.

In SA, there are about 6 wildlife groups plus individual carers. Some are suspicious of one another.

In SA, if you find a joey, you can basically keep it. There is no licensing of carers.

Comment from the floor - There have been instances in Victoria, where people from SA moving to Vic have brought 'their' native animals with them as they consider them as pets.

Tasmania – Stephanie Clark

Stephanie moved from Qld to Tas recently. It appears that in Tas forming wildlife carer groups is discouraged. Carers are independent.

No permit or license is required to care for certain species such as wallabies.

There are several carers from Tas here at the NWRC but some carers in Tas are unaware that there is a NWRC.

Open discussion

Brief discussion about communication – log onto the NWRC website, type in subject state body name and body.

Used to have names and emails of delegates at the front of the conference papers.

Discussion of national body – originally all states were to form a body and then we were going to look at a national body.

Motion proposed by Greg Gordon (Vic) to form a national body

Seconded by Marg Peachy (ACT)

Majority of people agreed so motion carried.

PASSED: Progress the formation of a national wildlife body

Suggestion that perhaps the money from the NWRC could be used towards this national body. There is moving fund that was set for the conferences under "Australian Wildlife Conference Incorporated". The current account balance is around \$12,500.

ACTION: The following people are to communicate to their relevant State/Territory, the above motion. Where there is not state body to communicate this too, the person will communicate to as many carers as possible, regardless of which group or not they belong to. The state will then carry out an election to vote for a representative on the Steering Committee to form a National Rehabilitation Wildlife Council plus an alternate rep (ie, 2 people from each state/territory).

Qld – Eleanor Pollock Nell194@bigpond.net.au (07 47797708)

NSW – Audrey Koosman secretary@nwc.org.au (via NSW Wildlife Rehab Council)

NT – Jo Neyers

Vic – Greg Gordon bushbabiesbel@bigpond.com (via secretary, Victorian Wildlife Council Steering Committee)

ACT – Marg Peachey margpeachey@gmail.com 02 6231 3210

SA – Belinda Battersby sawildlife@bigpond.com

WA – Dianne Hunter secretary@wawrc.org.au

Tas – Stephanie Clark steoclark@yahoo.com.au

ACTION: Results to be reported back to the group above by 1 November

7pm – meeting closed

Post script:

Date to report back was originally 1 October but changed upon agreement from the reps from each State/Territory to put back to 1 November to allow people time to nominate etc

ACTION: (Tania) Put up these minutes on OzArk and www.fauna.org.au

Clarification:

A National Council has not been formed, just proposed. The next step is establishing a Steering Committee that will need to decide on the form, scope, functions, aims, objectives etc of such a Council.