



Your strong and independent voice for livestock producers

Draft South Australian Commercial Kangaroo Management Plan 2018-2022

Comments from Livestock SA, October 2017

In the South Australian Kangaroo Management Plan 2013-2017, it is stated that –

The primary goal of the management plan is to ensure conservation of kangaroos, to mitigate damage caused by kangaroos through commercial harvest, and to ensure that the harvest is ecologically sustainable.

It is obvious, given that in many areas of South Australia kangaroo numbers are reaching plague proportions, that this plan has largely failed.

Unfortunately, the draft 2018-2022 plan has not only the same primary goal, but the same processes to achieve this goal as for the 2013-2017 plan, and is also likely to also fail.

With the commercial industry in decline, the State can now not rely on commercial harvesting to ensure kangaroo numbers are lowered to a level where they are not detrimental to the landscape and the community as a whole, there have been reports in *The Advertiser* of the increase in road crashes involving kangaroos showing this is now a road safety issue.

There are a number of reasons that the industry is in decline. Indeed, the sheer numbers of kangaroos has meant an oversupply and has lowered prices to make it uneconomic to attract and to continue to employ kangaroo field processors. The cost of tags which harvesters pay up front is also discouraging. While quotas are set, the number of kangaroos harvested is far lower than the quotas. Kangaroo meat processors in this State also find it easier to obtain carcasses from other States. And the policy of only harvesting males, while understandable, does nothing to reduce overall numbers.

The draft plan is limited by only dealing with the commercial management, only dealing with some species, and only covering a designated area of the State.

While kangaroo numbers are now an issue for land owners across the whole of South Australia, it is an even more serious problem for pastoralists. A case study from Livestock SA member Richard Warwick from Holowiliena Station outlining the situation on their property and concerns on the grazing pressure caused by the increased kangaroo numbers is attached.

For South Australia there is now an urgent need to have a management plan for more than “commercial” kangaroos. And all parts of the State need to be covered, including national parks

and conservation parks. It is now time to re-examine the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* and its regulations.

It is conceded that outside of the current management plan, it is relatively easy to obtain permits from NRM Boards to reduce kangaroo numbers, and with the comment often made to landowners that numbers are not always counted. But this is not an ideal way to manage numbers and is certainly not a planned approach.

Livestock SA recommends that a roundtable of stakeholders be held to tackle the issue of how to manage the current overabundance of kangaroos.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A Curtis', is positioned above the typed name.

Andrew Curtis
Chief Executive Officer



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Case Study on Kangaroo Harvest

– from Richard Warwick October 2017

North Flinders Harvest Sub Region

Quotas set in North Flinders in 2014

Red Kangaroo	86,000
Western Grey	5,500
Euro	36,000
Total quota	127,500

Area of sub region 34,000 square km

	Density (per square km)
Red	12.5
Western Grey	1.35
Euro	28.65

Holowiliena 330 square km

Holowiliena Pastoral Lease has a maximum carrying capacity of 6600 DSE = red 4125; western grey 445; euro 9454 total 14024 kangaroos

Permit issued 14/11/13 for 650.

There is nothing in a kangaroo management plan that I am aware of that addresses kangaroo numbers if the commercial kangaroo industry fails, brings in carcasses from other States for processing rather than harvesting in South Australia, or just cannot or fails to take the allocated quota from a region.

We need to have within the plan an ability to limit the total grazing pressure which applies under the *Pastoral Act*. At the moment we are dealing with the highest kangaroo numbers experienced in most regions yet are unable to reduce total grazing pressure yet it is quite possible for an employee of DEWNR or its current equivalent to order a pastoral lessee to reduce the stocking on their lease, i.e. reduce cattle and/or sheep numbers to comply with the Act. I stress there are no controls like these which apply to other than pastoral lease holders yet it has the same effect on all land tenure, as total grazing from all species (kangaroos, deer, emus, local native species, cattle and sheep, etc.) all impact on land conditions.

What kangaroo management plans do not address is controlling maximum kangaroo numbers but rather all seem to address the threat to the future of the minimum numbers of kangaroos. And do not even mention that kangaroo numbers within protected areas e.g. pastoral leases where harvesting may not be permitted, areas where commercial harvesting does not take place (this may be due to terrain, land type or distance from a processing facility) yet high numbers are still impacting on the land condition.

There are now a number of regions within Australia where funding by governments to build 'kangaroo proof' fences are being built in clusters to enable landholders to continue farming domestic livestock and make a living from the land by reducing the plague numbers of kangaroos within those clusters. If fencing clusters are established in SA, under which Act will the numbers legally reduced? I personally do not support this but would rather see kangaroos controlled across the entire regions.

I am not even suggesting that the commercial kangaroo industry is responsible for these issues but do believe if there was a much lower entire kangaroo number the commercial price for kangaroos would possibly rise. At the moment I see excessive numbers forcing those prices down. I likewise believe one of the issues which has perhaps impacted on the kangaroo industry has been the rapid increase in other harvested species, such as goats, deer, crocodile, buffalo, marketing strategies by some, saltbush mutton, non-wool producing sheep types, and camels. All have meant a lower number of the earlier established markets.

The following excerpts show how few kangaroos there were in the 1800's:

Comments from the diary of Dr Charles Davies January 1864

Page 66 on the record he wrote of his trip from Mattawarrangalla to Barretta

Thursday 7th. *Arrived at Barratta 18 miles from Matt (and ends with) saw no emus nor kangaroos the whole day and but six wallabies later*

Sunday 10th

They (there are) 40 or 50 goats and consequently had milk twice a day during our stay.

Tuesday 12th

Burned 14 wild dog scalps. Saw about 70 kangaroos in herds of 3, 4, and 5; also 5 emus and one wallaby (this entry is his trip from Matt at 10½ (assume 10.30) and arrived Oladdie at 6.p.m.