



Your strong and independent
voice for livestock producers

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Mr John Schutz
Chief Executive
Department for Environment and Water
GPO Box 1047, ADELAIDE SA 5001
(Email: kmp@sa.gov.au)

Dear Mr Schutz,

Draft South Australian Commercial Kangaroo Management Plan 2020-2024

Livestock SA welcomes and supports the proposed amendments to the South Australian Commercial Kangaroo Management Plan 2018-2022.

The State Department for Environment and Water is proposing to expand the commercial kangaroo harvesting zone to four new sub regions, including the Adelaide Hills and Fleurieu, Kangaroo Island, Lower South East and Upper South East, and an extension to the Murray Mallee and Mid North Region to include the Yorke Peninsula and Lower North. The number of kangaroo species available for harvest will also increase by four species.

The proposal comes after renewed calls from industry to provide additional flexibility in kangaroo management across South Australia.

The proposed changes are a positive step in kangaroo management.

Livestock SA has strongly lobbied for the commercial harvesting areas to be increased to ensure harvesting can occur in all areas where kangaroo populations have increased significantly.

Since 2011 kangaroo numbers have increased across the State, doubling from an estimated 2.5 million to more than 5 million. This large rise in kangaroo populations has impacted hugely on producers, as well as at an environmental level, with increased numbers placing significant grazing pressure on properties.

Despite rainfall in some of these areas, many producers have limited feed due to ongoing dry conditions and kangaroos continue to eat significant amounts of pasture that sheep and cattle would otherwise consume.

They also cause damage to infrastructure such as fences and have an impact on water resources. In addition, there has been a population shift, with many kangaroos moving further south in search of feed.

There is good evidence from the insurance industry that these growing kangaroo numbers are a road safety issue, with a rise in single car collisions. In 2017-18, RAA research showed that South

Australian motorists lodged more than 1700 animal collision claims, double the amount of the previous financial year. About 60% of these collisions were attributed to kangaroos.

If anyone is not sure of the environmental damage kangaroos can do, they should read the transcript of Associate Professor David Paton's presentation to the Natural Resources Committee of the South Australian Parliament for its Inquiry into Management of Overabundant and Pest Species (see [file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Hansard%20OAPS%20Paton%2020190404%20\(4\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Hansard%20OAPS%20Paton%2020190404%20(4).pdf)). He gives details of kangaroo overabundance being a threat to the State's biodiversity not only plant species but also reptiles, invertebrates and birds, particularly in the Mount Lofty Ranges. In addition, he has noted that the 'shoot and let lie' non-commercial harvesting permits only results in feral foxes and cats having a ready food source from kangaroo carcasses.

The overgrazing of rangelands by over-abundant kangaroo numbers needs to be highlighted. Areas and properties that choose not to undertake any control measures should come under the same scrutiny that those that do no wild dog control. They are just breeding grounds for feral animals as well as over-abundant native animals.

The downside to expanding the commercial kangaroo harvesting zones is that currently only 13% of the quota is harvested in the current four zones. If the commercial kangaroo industry moves southwards, it could well be that the numbers harvested in the pastoral zones will further decline, leaving an increasing over-abundance of kangaroos in those regions.

The best way to solve the over-abundance is to increase the price overall and particularly the price per kg for lighter younger animals which should be better eating quality. This would attract more field processors to the industry. Unfortunately, this is currently outside the scope of the draft management plan.

Kangaroo Management Reference Group

In the draft Management Plan, under Aim 2, Action 3 it states:

"Members of the Kangaroo Management Reference Group will be provided with relevant information and afforded the opportunity to advise DEW on kangaroo management issues throughout the life of this plan."

Livestock SA would like to see the role of the Kangaroo Management Reference Group strengthened so that it does play a more robust role and is listened to by the Department and the State Government. Currently it appears to do little more than meet twice a year to receive information from the Department. Even to date, it has not been consulted on the draft Management Plan.

The Natural Resources Committee of the South Australian Parliament in its Inquiry into Management of Overabundant and Pest Species made two specific recommendations in relation to kangaroos. These were that the South Australian Government:

11. *Takes urgent action to establish and develop markets for abundant species, particularly kangaroos, including by consulting with industry with the objective of avoiding waste. Measures should include further use of carcasses, broadening the range of areas in which commercial harvesting can be undertaken, allowing harvesting trials in non-commercial zones, and reviewing fee structures associated with harvesting activities.*
12. *Initiate further inquiry to examine the structures, processes and challenges that prevent the development of a more robust commercial kangaroo products industry.*

The Kangaroo Management Reference Group, as the primary forum through which stakeholder group representatives can raise issues for discussion as well as communicate their group's positions, would be well placed to assist the State Government to implement these recommendations as part of an integrated management approach to managing kangaroos in this State. There needs to be an active committee that can provide good advice in a timely manner.

yourSay website

Livestock SA notes with concern the comments posted on the yourSay website. This has certainly not encouraged primary producers to participate. This is what a Livestock SA member has said:

"I have read through the draft management plan and was going to comment in the forum until I read some of the unfair comments that were being posted. I refer to the extreme animal welfare views, the almost hatred of farmers and the anti-European comments (invasion of Australia). I would not like to share my views in this forum because of the potential backlash over the internet and social media that could possibly come back my way. Everyone is entitled to their view, but I believe that everyone also has the responsibility to express that view in a respectful manner based on fact and observations not emotion!"

Some of the comments made should not be allowed to be posted on a Government website. There is certainly a need for this website to be moderated to ensure abusive comments are excluded.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Curtis
Chief Executive Officer