



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2024-2025

Ms Nicole Lawder MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),
Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by: Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

Addressed to: Minister for the Environment, Parks and Land Management

Redirection: N/A

Reference: Environment

Hearing Date: 31/07/2024

In relation to: Kangaroo Management Program

Question Lodgement Date: 01/08/2024

Date Answer Due: 08/08/2024

1. Given the importance of public accessibility to reports, such as the recent review of the Kangaroo cull by Professor Legge, what steps will you take to ensure that all relevant documents are correctly linked and readily available to the public? (for example the recent culling program's announcement and the release of Professor Sarah Legge's report were notably accompanied by a broken hyperlink on the EPSDD website, leading to a 404 Error, although fixed now).
2. How do you justify the findings of the statutory review of the 2017 management plan, which was released alongside this year's cull announcement, which makes distressing findings about the methods used, such as decapitation and bashing joeys with a mallet. What measures will be taken to address the ethical concerns raised by these methods?
3. How do you explain the cost overrun for kangaroo management (from Notifiable Invoices register, there is a significant discrepancy between the contractual agreement with Strathbogie Wildlife for kangaroo management, which was supposed to not exceed \$880,000 GST inclusive over five years, and the current cost of \$1,118,680).
4. How has this irregularity been allowed to take place, even before this year's cull? Who is responsible for approving this additional payment?
5. Can you provide a detailed response addressing concerns about the amount paid to Strathbogie (ie above the amount specific in the Notifiable Invoices Register) and outline how the ACT Government plans to improve transparency and accountability in future wildlife management contracts?

6. What assurances can you provide that future wildlife initiatives will prioritise innovative and humane solutions?
7. How many joeys were clubbed to death in this year's cull?

Rebecca Vassarotti MLA: The answer to the Member's questions is as follows:

1. The ACT Government maintains an open and transparent policy approach to sharing information with the Canberra Community about the Kangaroo Management Program. The Eastern Grey Kangaroo website on the environment.act.gov.au provides comprehensive information about the program. New reports and information are regularly published online, and every effort is made to keep the website and associated links up to date. Website issues are promptly reviewed and fixed following notification.
2. In the ACT, kangaroo pouch young are humanely killed in accordance with the *National code of practice for the humane shooting of kangaroos and wallabies for non-commercial purposes* (2008). In the recent [Independent review of the Eastern Grey Kangaroo Controlled Native Species Management Plan](#) on pages 97 -98, Professor Sarah Legge acknowledges that the killing of pouch young is a sensitive topic for some people but states that the methods described in the Code appear to be the most humane ways to kill pouch young of different ages. The ACT Government is considering Professor Legge's recommendation that it work with other jurisdictions to update the 2008 Code so it better aligns with the more recent and more descriptive 2020 *National code of practice for the humane shooting of kangaroos and wallabies for commercial purposes*.
- 3-5 This question has alerted the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) to an administrative error.

The amount of \$1,118,680 is an administrative error on the Contracts Register. When some work orders under this contract were published, they were added to the contract amount \$880,000 (GST Inclusive) instead of being subtracted.

EPSDD has requested the administrator of the Contract Register to amend and update the register to reflect the correct amount expended through work orders under the Stratbogie Wildlife contract.

Total expenditure to date under this contract is \$399,913.60 (GST Inclusive).

- 6 The ACT Government works to ensure wildlife management programs are based on the best available science and prioritise animal welfare. The ACT's kangaroo management policy and programs are based on scientific knowledge supported by ongoing research and monitoring, appropriate regulation, and a national code of practice.

Animal welfare, innovation and ongoing review and improvement have been, and will continue to be, key features in the development of kangaroo management policy and the implementation of management programs in the ACT, including the innovative and pioneering fertility control program now integrated into the ACT's management. This commitment and investment to ensuring best practice kangaroo management is demonstrated by the policy documents, research papers, monitoring reports and reviews that are available on the Eastern Grey Kangaroo website.

- 7 438 Eastern Grey Kangaroo pouch young were humanely killed in accordance with the National code of practice for the humane shooting of kangaroos and wallabies for non-commercial purposes (2008) as part of the 2024 kangaroo management program.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2024-2025

Signature:



Date: 9/18/2024

By the Minister for the Environment, Parks and Land Management, Rebecca Vassarotti MLA