



Bat and Flying Fox Risk Management Plan

Procedural step	Hazards	Risks	R1*	Risk controls	R2**
Rescue bat/flying fox	Working out of doors	Exposure to sun.	3	Wear appropriate sun protection including long sleeved shirt or gauntlets, long pants, hat, sunglasses and sunscreen.	4
		Exposure to climatic extremes - heat, cold, rain, wind, storms.	3	Check weather forecast for possible sudden changes to weather conditions. Wear clothing appropriate to the weather conditions. Eliminate activity in dangerous weather conditions such as severe thunderstorms; hail storms or extreme bushfire danger.	5
	Working after dark	Becoming lost / disoriented.	3	Rescuers must not work alone after dark. Obtain clear directions before proceeding to rescue location. Ensure someone knows where you are going and what time you should be expected back. Have a plan if you do not return by that time. Carry reliable communication device, e.g. mobile phone, UHF radio. Take a map of the area or reliable GPS navigator. In the event of becoming lost or disoriented, cease the activity and regain bearings or call for assistance.	5
		Trip hazards exacerbated.	2	Take a fully charged torch. Wear suitable protective clothing, including long sleeved shirt or gauntlets, long pants and covered footwear with non-slip soles.	4



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	Working in rural / remote areas	Lack of reliable communication (e.g. mobile phone coverage). Becoming lost / disoriented.	4 3	Carry reliable communication device, e.g. mobile phone, UHF radio if you will be out of mobile phone coverage. Branches to encourage a 'buddy' system to despatch rescuers in pairs, especially where one is inexperienced. As above	5
	Working alone	Physical overexertion. Potential psychological stress.	2	Eliminate the activity if the rescue will exceed the physical capability of the rescuer.	5
			3	Carry reliable communication device, e.g. mobile phone, UHF radio. Branches to encourage a 'buddy' system to despatch rescuers in pairs, especially where one is inexperienced	4
	Hazards specific to rescue site, e.g. water bodies, cliffs, steep slopes, dense timber, falling branches, powerlines.	Slips, trips, fall, collisions, drowning.	3	Rescuers must thoroughly examine the site for potential hazards prior to attempting the rescue. Eliminate the activity or seek assistance if the risk is perceived as too great.	5
	Barbed wire	Skin and eye injuries	3	A two person rescue wherever possible, long sleeves or gauntlets, gloves and eye protection to be worn	5
	Working at height	Falls	3	Ensure using proper, undamaged ladder, do not work above second rung, and ensure foot placement is stable. Where possible, have a second person hold ladder. Take snake hook or other extendable pole to rescue as way of bring the animal closer to you, rather than	5



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				you moving closer to animal	
	Human aggression from members of the public at the rescue site	Psychological stress to rescuer. Potential for physical aggression.	4 4	Refer to conflict management section under WHS tab Rescuer must cease the activity and seek assistance if there is a risk of physical aggression from a bystander or member of the public.	5
	Bites, scratches from rescued animal	Cuts, bruises, abrasions, broken bones, eye injury. Disease transmission.	3 4	Rescuers must be trained in appropriate capture and handling techniques. Branches must ensure that rescuers are equipped with specialised rescue equipment as necessary. Wear appropriate protective clothing including long sleeved shirt or gauntlets, long pants, covered footwear, and eye protection. Maintain a quiet environment at the rescue site to minimise the risk of the animal panicking. Rescuer must ensure Tetanus and Lyssavirus vaccinations are up to date.	5 5
	Contact with the animals body fluids, e.g. blood, urine, faeces, saliva,	Disease transmission	2	Use appropriate PPE, which could include impervious gloves and disposable overalls. Carry a means of washing / disinfecting contaminated skin, e.g. a container of water for hand washing or waterless hand cleaner	4



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	Emotional trauma	Psychological stress resulting from the sights, sounds and smells of injured and distressed animals.	3	Read Stress and Post Traumatic Stress section under WHS tab	4
Transport animal	Animal not appropriately restrained in vehicle	Injury to driver &/or passengers. Motor vehicle accident.	2	Animal is to be securely restrained in a container suitable to the, age and size. Container should be appropriate placed and where possible restrained in car Consider having a second person in the vehicle to manage the animal to relieve the driver of this task.	4
Rehabilitate bat or flying fox	Zoonotic diseases	Illness	3	Refer to RICC manual and disease section, which follows. Vaccination for rabies is mandatory Maintain hygiene appropriate to the species / age of the animal. Provide washing / hygiene facilities for animal bedding and feeding utensils separate from those used by the household.	4
	Manual handling of animal (e.g. for administration of fluids / medication or weighing)	Strains, sprains, manual handling injuries	3	Refer to RICC and species manuals	4
	Administration of rehydration fluids or medications	Needle stick injury. Poisoning.	2	Refer to WHS section of RICC manual and information under the WHS tab.	4
	Storage of animal medications	Poisoning	2	Animal medications must be kept in a secure storage area out of the reach of children.	4



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				Storage area must be separate from areas used to store household foodstuffs.	
	Preparation of animal foodstuffs	Potential contamination of human food preparation areas.	3	Animal food preparation areas must be separate from household food preparation areas.	5
	Storage of animal foodstuffs	Potential contamination of foodstuffs for human consumption	4	Animal foodstuffs involving, insects and other food not sold for human consumption, must be stored separately from human foodstuffs and out of the reach of children and domestic animals.	6
	Gathering natural foodstuffs	Manual handling injury. Injury from sharp tools e.g. secateurs, loppers. Insect bites and stings.	3	Appropriate personal protective equipment to be worn. This should include long pants, long sleeved shirt, covered footwear and gloves. Where browse is to be cut from trees above head height, eye protection must be worn. Consider use of a hard hat where large branches are being lopped.	4
	Maintain hygiene	Allergic reactions to hygiene products, potentially leading to anaphylaxis (e.g. disinfectants, latex gloves). Disease transmission from collection of animal faeces.	2 3	Carers must read product labels and Safety Data sheets for any products used. Label directions regarding usage, rates of application and safety precautions must be strictly adhered to. Wear appropriate PPE, e.g. impervious gloves. Dispose of collected faeces in a suitable area, away from possible contact by children, household pets or human food sources (e.g. vegetable garden)	3 4



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	Emotional trauma	Psychological stress from death of animals in care or prolonged nursing of sick / injured animals.	3	Refer to the interpersonal issues section under the WHS tab.	4
	Maintain care facilities	Injuries from enclosures Trip hazards from furnishings within enclosures. Drowning hazard from water sources within enclosures	3	Enclosures to be regularly maintained and any deficiencies repaired immediately. Furnishings within enclosures must be placed so as to allow clear pathways for movement. Children must not be permitted within animal enclosures.	5
	Use of electrical equipment, e.g. heat pads, heat boxes	Potential ignition source. Potential for electrocution.	2	Consider requirement to “test and tag” electrical equipment used for animal rehabilitation. Electrical cabling in close proximity to animals (e.g. electrical leads for heat pads) must be located so as to prevent animals from tangling in them or chewing on them.	3
Release animal	Capture animal for release	Manual handling injury. Bites and scratches.	3	Consider having another person assisting with capture.	5



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	Apply marking devices	Injury from tagging devices	4	Suitably qualified personnel must train carers in the use of these devices. Tagging devices must be used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.	6
	Transport animal to release site	Injury to driver or passengers from inappropriately restrained animal Motor vehicle accident	2	Animal must be securely restrained in a container suitable to the size/ species of the animal. Cages must be appropriately placed in car, and secured with the seat belt.	4
	Release animal	Injury to persons at or near the release site from humanised animals	3	Animals are to be de-humanised prior to release to the extent that they will not approach humans or allow humans to approach them.	5

* R1 = risk before risk controls are implemented

** R2 Residual risk after risk controls are implemented



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Risk Matrix

1. How severely could it hurt someone OR How ill could it make them?	2. How likely is it to be that bad?			
	Very Likely Could happen at any time	Likely Could happen sometime	Unlikely Could happen but very rarely	Very Unlikely Could happen but probably never will
!!!! Kill or cause permanent disability or ill health	1	1	2	3
!!! Long term illness or serious injury	1	2	3	4
!! Medical attention and several days off work	2	3	4	5
! First aid needed	3	4	5	6

Hazards with a risk rating of **1 or 2** are considered – **High Priority** – Controls that are higher up the hierarchy should be considered

Hazards with a risk rating of **3 or 4** are considered – **Medium priority** – Controls that are at the top to the middle of the hierarchy should be considered

Hazards with a risk rating of **5 or 6** are considered – **Low priority** – PPE or administrative controls options should be considered



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Inform your health practitioner that you intend to work with bats and be guided by their advice in regards to your medical history.

The information below is general in nature only and does not include all zoonotic diseases, for a further list of diseases refer to the Introduction to WH&S under the WHS tab on Carer HQ.

Diseases

Australian bat Lyssavirus (ABLV)

Lyssaviruses are a group of viruses that includes rabies and bat lyssavirus. Bats in Australia carry Lyssavirus and mammals in many overseas countries carry rabies, bites and scratches spread both. These diseases can be prevented by rapid and thorough cleaning of the wound and by vaccination. There is no cure.

Rabies vaccine is used to protect against rabies and ABLV infection. A course of three injections, given over one month, is recommended for people whose job or other activities place them at increased risk of being bitten or scratched by bats in Australia. Periodic booster doses of vaccine may also be required.

Only members with up to date Lyssavirus vaccinations are permitted to rescue or rehabilitate bats and flying foxes.

Hendra virus

Hendra virus is an emerging disease first identified in 1994 and has only been found in Australia.

Hendra virus occurs naturally in flying fox populations, and it is thought to be transferred to horses through contaminated urine. Human infections have occurred as a result of direct exposure to body substances from infected or dead horses. To date there has been no known transfer of Hendra virus from person to person or from flying foxes to humans.

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