Large Mammal Risk Management Plan

Procedural step	Hazards	Risks	R1*	Risk controls	R2**
Rescue animal	Working out of doors	Exposure to sun.	3	Wear appropriate sun protection including long sleeved shirt, 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. 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, long pants and covered footwear with non-slip soles.	4

	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. Consider taking another member along on remote rescues. As above.	5
	Working alone	Physical overexertion. Potential psychological stress.	2 3	Eliminate the activity if the rescue will exceed the physical capability of the rescuer. Carry reliable communication device, e.g. mobile phone, UHF radio. Consider working in pairs, especially where one is inexperienced.	5 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 to carry out a “Take Five” site risk assessment to determine specific hazards before attempting the rescue. Eliminate the activity or seek assistance if the risk is perceived as too great.	5
	Barbed wire	Skin and eye injuries	4	Two member rescue, long sleeves, eye protection and gloves	5
	Human aggression from members of the public at the rescue site	Psychological stress to rescuer. Potential for physical aggression.	4 4	See conflict management interpersonal Issues - under WHS tab.	5
	Kicks, bites, scratches from rescued animal	Cuts, bruises, abrasions, eye injury.	3	Rescuers to be trained in appropriate capture and handling techniques.	5

		Disease transmission.	4	Wear appropriate protective clothing including long sleeved shirt, long pants, covered footwear, and eye protection. Maintain a quiet environment at the rescue site to minimise the risk of the animal panicking. Ensure tetanus vaccination is up to date. Wear appropriate protective clothing, as above.	5
	Contact with animal body fluids, e.g. blood, urine, faeces, saliva, pouch secretions	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
	Emotional trauma	Psychological stress resulting from the sights, sounds and smells of injured and distressed animals.	3	See stress management interpersonal issues – 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 species and age and size of the animal. e.g. Pouch with the flap or inner liner securely closed for an immature marsupial, secure transport cage or bag for juvenile / adult animal. Consider having a second person in the vehicle to manage the animal to relieve the driver of this task. Chemical restraint (sedation) is not sufficient for an adult macropod/wombat when transported in a	4

				vehicle. These animals must be securely restrained in a bag or transport cage.	
Rehabilitate animal	Zoonotic diseases	Illness	3	See zoonotic diseases in the Intro to WHS segment – under the WHS tab. 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. Members must demonstrate competence prior to carrying out this procedure.	4
	Storage of animal medications	Poisoning	2	Animal medications must be kept in a secure storage area out of the reach of children. Storage must	4
	Preparation of animal foodstuffs	Potential contamination of food preparation areas.	3	Animal food preparation areas must be separate from household food preparation areas.	5
	Maintain hygiene	Allergic reactions to hygiene products, potentially leading to	2	Carers must read product labels and safety data sheets for any products used. Label directions regarding usage, rates of application and safety	3

		anaphylaxis (e.g. disinfectants, latex gloves). Disease transmission from collection of animal faeces.	 3	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).	 4
	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 fencing (particularly where electric fencing is used to exclude predators). Trip hazards from furnishings within enclosures. Drowning hazard from water sources within enclosures	3	Enclosures to be regularly maintained and any deficiencies repaired immediately. Electric fences should be turned off prior to any repairs or maintenance being carried out. Furnishing 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	2	Consider requirements to “test 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	3

		electrocution.		to prevent animals from tangling in them or chewing on them.	
Release animal	Capture animal for release	Manual handling injury. Kicks, bites and scratches.	3 3	Consider having another person assisting with capture. Observe handling instructions from RICC and Species manuals	5 5
	Apply marking devices (e.g. ear tags)	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 manufacturers instructions.	6
	Sedate animal for transport	Needle stick injury. Poisoning	2	Carers must be trained in administration of medications from appropriate personnel. Carers must demonstrate that they can carry out these procedures safely prior to carrying out this procedure.	4
	Transport animal to release site	Injury to driver or passengers from inappropriately restrained animal	2	Animal must be securely restrained in a container suitable to the size/species of the animal. Chemical restraint (sedation) should not be the only means of restraint for an animal during transport	4
	Release animal	Injury to a person 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. Hard release sites are to be as remote as possible from human habitation, including picnic and camping areas.	5

*R1 = risk before risk controls are implemented

** R2 Residual risk after risk controls are implemented

WIRES

Large Mammal Risk Management Plan

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

Large Mammal Risk Management Plan

Inform your health practitioner that you intend to work with wild animals and be guided by their advice in regards to your personal 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.

Bites and Scratches

The mouth and claws of all animals carry bacteria, which can cause infection in the flesh around the wound and eventually, if left untreated, may spread to the blood stream.
If bites or scratches penetrate deeply, tetanus may develop.

There are definite certain health risks due to animal bites depending upon the severity of the bite.
First aid should be administered as soon as possible after the incident in order that infection does not occur.

Wound Care

Minor Wounds – a bite or scratch that has merely penetrated the skin

- Gently irrigate/flush the with a saline solution, if saline is unavailable rinse the wound under warm water
- Rinse continuously for at least a few minutes
- Cover wound with a sterile bandage

Deep wounds –where the skin is torn and continuously bleeding.

- Apply direct pressure with the use of a sterile or clean dry cloth until the bleeding stops
- Seek medical attention

If you develop any signs of infection like redness, swelling, severe pain or oozing seek medical attention immediately.

All members should maintain current tetanus immunisations.

Large Mammal Risk Management Plan

Diseases

Sarcoptic mange (*Sarcoptes scabiei)*
These are burrowing mites that dig through the skin causing intense itching from an allergic reaction to the mite.

Always where personal protective clothing when attending a wombat rescue, the use of disposable gloves is essential.

The mange mite is extremely small and cannot be seen by the naked eye, if you have been in contacted with a wombat you suspect has mange follow these instructions:

- Wash all clothing, towels etc. in hot water
- Shower
- Cut your nails and clean under them thoroughly to remove any mites or eggs that may be present

Ascabiol (*Benzyl benzoate)* is an effective treatment if you become infected with the mite, but if symptoms persist contact your medical practitioner.

Q Fever
Q Fever is an illness caused by the bacterium *Coxiella burnetii* and is spread to humans from infected animals.
The bacteria survive for long periods in the environment as they are resistant to heat, drying and m any disinfectants.

Q Fever is usually an acute (immediate) infection but it can sometimes lead to a chronic (long term) illness.
Acute Q Fever can cause a severe flu-like illness that is sometimes associated with hepatitis and pneumonia. Chronic Q Fever most commonly results in inflammation of the heart and people who already have heart valve diseases are at increased risk.

Symptoms:

- High fever and chills
- Severe chills
- Severe headaches, often behind the eyes
- Muscle and joint pain
- Extreme fatigue

How is it spread?

Breathing in infected aerosols or dust when working with infected animals usually infects people. Infected animals often have no symptoms and can shed bacteria into their urine or species.
Spread of Q fever from person to person has been reported but is extremely rare

A vaccine (Q Vax ®) is available.
The risk of contracting Q Fever can be reduced by:

- Washing hands thoroughly in soapy water after contact with animals
- Wearing gloves and masks while cleaning enclosures.

Acknowledgments: NSW Government Health