

Submission
No 272

**INQUIRY INTO HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF
KANGAROOS AND OTHER MACROPODS IN NEW SOUTH
WALES**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 26 April 2021

Partially
Confidential

Date 23rd April 2021

Chair of the N.S.W. Upper House Portfolio Committee 7- Planning and Environment

Legislative Council

6 Macquarie Street

Sydney N.S.W. 2000

Via Parliament of N.S.W. Committees website

Dear Ms Faehrmann M.L.C.

Submission to the inquiry into the health and well being of Kangaroos and other macropods in N.S.W.

My name is _____ I have been involved in the Game meat Industry in excess of 30 years, firstly as a Kangaroo Harvester and for last 25 years as a _____ of Kangaroo mainly. and other mixed species of Game meat when the company I work for requires it.

I have signed a letter of support for the Submission letter entered by the K.I.A.A. as I believe over the last 10 years our industry has come under scrutiny by different Green Groups and thanks to them pointing out flaws in our Management Programme it has been refined and has evolved into the benchmark of a world leader in the humane management of a sustainable harvest programme for a protected Fauna. Through the visibility and transparency of the programme it is sometimes deemed by others not to be a necessary programme to have in place, but many Shire Economies and families in many isolated areas including indigenous workers and or harvesters rely on it for a living. To stop this industry would be an absolute traverse to the mental health of communities and families whom rely on it to survive in sometimes very isolated harsh economic conditions. Harvesters now are highly skilled marksman, undertake shooting skills tests every 5 years, have completed hygiene and handling courses, maintain a strict code of practice, are monitored by regulatory authorities in the field, in the chiller depots, in the processing factories and by the royalty tags they are licenced to harvest with, their own harvest returns they submit to the management programme, by the chiller depot managers returns he does every week to the management programme, by the Processors purchase harvest return he has to supply to the management programme. Any infringement of the 32 conditions of licence, printed on a Harvesters licence will cost him a hefty fine or loss of licence. Any infringement of the 24 conditions of licence printed on a Processors licence will result in the same penalties. There will always be a non – commercial cull because when the numbers become to high they become a threat to themselves through disease or starvation or over populating of landholders holdings doing insurmountable damage to grasslands or crops, but mind you there has to be an equilibrium of balance when this case scenario occurs. I believe the commercial harvest will never have a detrimental effect on kangaroo populations managed in the correct manner under the current programme, with the harvesting done as humanely as possible by skilled trained monitored and regulated professionals. This brings me to the point of why I am putting a submission into this inquiry and I will dedicate the next two paragraphs to the issues that I believe will be detrimental to long term healthy strong populations going forward into the future as I am sick of harvesters being referred to as the Dirty little Secret that this country hides. Harvesters are in general very nice people who work in a transparent industry and are ridiculed by some while the government of this country and those who scream the loudest have not got the gall to stand up for what, has had, and is

going to continue to have the most profound effect on kangaroo populations over the next 10 years. The issues I have are as follows.

Non Commercial Culling by landholders.

To have a sustainable management program of a protected Fauna you must have compliance over commercial harvesting and culling by landholders, if a cull is deemed necessary. Culling should only occur where commercial industry cannot meet the demand. This is the dirty little secret the government turns a blind eye to and activist groups ignore and attack the commercial industry. The non-commercial industry has a code of practice which is totally ignored, if you report illegal inhumane culling to government compliance officers in the commercial industry they go red in the face become agitated when you want it investigated and they say its National Parks job. Report it to National Parks and they say cannot do anything about it we have been instructed by ministers to turn a blind eye to it. The Commercial industry has strict compliance and training. I say to myself do I live on a different planet, it is illegal to kill protected Fauna without permits, it is illegal to cull protected Fauna inhumanely, it is illegal to leave live joeys in the pouches of dead parents to suffer and die from heat exhaustion, freeze to death or die of starvation. This happens to millions of kangaroos each year shot by unskilled farm workers or farmers themselves. The farmers complained to the minister Niall Blair we have a plague of kangaroos we haven't got time to walk out to them and put drop tags on them so they abolish drop tags, umm wonder how they make sure the animal is dead after shooting it in the largest part of the body they may be capable of hitting, how do they kill the joey in the pouch. Amazing how ministers claim there is a plague of kangaroos in a dry time don't they realise this is just a congregation of large numbers where there is feed, how gullible do they think we are. I have reported kangaroos being illegally culled by landholders, poisoned by landholders with urea in water troughs, run up against barrier fences and shot from helicopters and absolutely nothing is done about it. This is the dirty little secret that the government hides under the guise of fining a commercial harvester for a misdemeanor in his paperwork, this makes out to the world what a great job they do, the only one being monitored and compliant I can assure you is the harvester. There are 100,000 plus rural landholders in N.S.W. just imagine no commercial industry and all of them out culling kangaroos at their leisure with exactly what they have now, no compliance no regulation, no accountability and absolutely no skills to cull humanely and in most cases no intention of doing so, it is a disgrace what the government has allowed to happen, funny every one else has to comply to the law but obviously the government is above the law in this country as most compliance officers say it is taboo to prosecute a farmer. What needs to happen immediately is landholders have to be enforced to do a shooting skills test to prove they have the ability and correct firearms prior to culling and being issued with a permit to do so, and be made comply to the same code of practice as the commercial industry. They should have to give a professional harvester the opportunity to harvest their animals to an acceptable level before a culling permit can be issued, drop tags have to be re-issued and must be placed on the carcass after culling this will insure the animal is in fact lifeless and the joey has been dealt with humanely. The non-commercial industry must come under the compliance of the commercial industry or National Parks with random checks being carried out by officers to see whether landholders are being compliant to the code of practice and compliant to the number of tags and species they have been given on the permit to cull, and where necessary infringements or prosecutions to take place exactly the same as it would for infringements in the commercial industry. Many harvesters report illegal activity and this must be investigated and no longer ignored as the biggest threat to long term kangaroo populations is the landholder, when I first started harvesting landholders would never shoot kangaroos illegally as they were monitored by real compliance officers from National Parks and Wildlife. Landholders would contact professionals to do the job, now because the government

has become so lax it is a totally uncontrolled, unregulated inhumane slaughter by landholders, their paid workers or illegal weekend warriors with landholder permission to shoot kangaroos and if any government official argues against this I am happy to debate them as long as they are happy to supply me with the list of infringements they have issued in the last 10 years for illegal non-commercial culling by landholders or their paid employees.

Exclusion Fencing

I would like to request this inquiry to look into the exclusion fences which now fully enclose many properties in Qld, in these areas kangaroos are almost extinct, I wonder why they died in these enclosed properties, was there ever an environmental impact study done on this type of fencing as to what impact it would have on all species of native Fauna and their natural migratory pattern across the landscape. E.G. Red Kangaroos. Maybe they died of lead poisoning. With the same fencing occurring heavily in N.S.W. now I would hate this to happen here. I request this committee to look into this because I think it is illegal to have native Fauna locked up on your property it would almost constitute your property being a Zoo and you would have to get licences and you would be in a Quasi type ownership of all penned up protected Fauna and be responsible for their health and well being through all climatic weather patterns supplying food and water even in the worst droughts. Be interesting to see what the high court decision would be. Enough of the funnies, you as a government know what happened to the Q.L.D. kangaroos get it right in N.S.W. while you still can. Identify and rectify.

I have no objection to my submission being made public, but require my name and occupation to be deleted and remain confidential due to possible adverse effects it may have on my livelihood. I am open to giving any further advice to the committee if they deem it necessary and are genuinely interested in having a sustainable harvesting industry and are willing to look at the industry objectively and do what is in the best long term interest of kangaroo populations, rather than bowing down to self interest groups within your own constituents.

Regards

Date 23rd April 202

Chair of the NSW Upper House Portfolio Committee 7 - Planning and Environment
Legislative Council
6 Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Via: Parliament of NSW Committees website

Dear Ms Faehmann MLC,

Submission to the inquiry into the health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods in NSW

I welcome the inquiry into the health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods in New South Wales and appreciates the opportunity to make a submission.

I support the existence of a strictly regulated and sustainable commercial kangaroo industry for the reasons outlined in the Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia's (KIAA's) submission. Kangaroo conservation is a complex issue that also impacts other native animal species, the livelihoods of rural and regional Australians and the environment more broadly. It is vital that we take the time to explore the facts and put aside preconceived ideas about conservation and meat industries so that we can find the best way in which the State's residents can live harmoniously with kangaroos, protect the biodiversity of the land and continue to live off the land.

We must seek to understand the importance of kangaroo management for conservation purposes, the role of the commercial industry to provide a responsible alternative to culling, the effectiveness of existing scientific and regulatory frameworks as well as potential rooms for improvement, and the actual impact a ban on commercial harvesting would have on kangaroos and communities.

We ask the Committee to consider:

- The different approaches required for threatened and non-threatened species.
- The recent drop in population numbers following the severe drought in the context of the long-term population trends.
- The importance of kangaroo population management for conservation and animal welfare.
 - Without population management, healthy kangaroo species would increase beyond the capacity of the land and lead to overgrazing and food shortages, mass starvation events, loss of biodiversity, damage to pastoral land, increased road accidents and more instances of non-commercial and illegal culling.
 - Sometimes conservation measures can be counterintuitive. In other words, to serve the health and wellbeing of all macropod and native species, population management of a small percentage of abundant species in certain areas might be necessary.
- The role commercial harvesting can play in providing a responsible alternative to culling.
 - A commercial harvest is more strictly regulated and qualified commercial harvesters are highly skilled, ensuring better animal welfare outcomes than other population management methods.
 - Without a commercial industry, population management would still be required but the meat and skins would be discarded.
- The most humane methods of harvesting kangaroos and euthanasing young according to the experts.
- The level of transparency and traceability of the commercial industry due to existing regulatory controls such as licensing, tagging, reporting and auditing.
- The genuine concern and care that commercial harvesters have for the health and wellbeing of kangaroos.

- The environmental impact and animal welfare outcomes of the commercial kangaroo industry compared to other meat industries.
- The value of the commercial industry to the economy, to the livelihoods of rural and regional Australians and to the environment.
- The damage ongoing campaigning against the commercial kangaroo industry has on the reputation of Australia internationally and, therefore, on the reputation of all Australian export industries.

As such, our recommendations to the Committee are:

- An urgent review into the animal welfare impacts of exclusion fencing on all native animals.
- An updated non-commercial code that aligns more closely with the commercial code.
- Reintroduction of drop tags for animals that are culled under a damage mitigation permit and greater policing.
- Authority for rangers to enter a private property to inspect carcasses, similar to fish inspectors, and take appropriate action for animals found without tags.
- Mandatory recording of joey deaths by harvesters.

We appreciate the Committee's time and review of this submission. We hope this Inquiry results in practical and reasonable changes that further our common goal to protect the health and wellbeing of kangaroos and other macropods in NSW and recognises the value of the commercial kangaroo industry in achieving this objective.

Your sincerely