

Expert Advisory Panels Review of The Victorian Wildlife ACT 1975 – POCTA 1986

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(1) Wildlife Rescue Organizations

High percentage of Viable cases i.e. (Return to Habitat), left to languish in Veterinary Clinics for days leading to Capture Myopathy and euthanasia, (Lack of Rescuer and Veterinary ACT obligations) and lack of system obligations. (Recommend “Releases” policy, licensing and accreditation be implemented).

Wildlife Rescue Organizations definitions and operational obligations is sadly lacking i.e. (Return to Habitat) cases converted to Carer cases as a solution to resolve) (No Injuries) (Wildlife Act 1975) e.g. the definition of “Orphan” to justify intervention in cases of Fledgling bird capture.

Lapse legal and legislative obligations by Wildlife Rescue Organizations as to case details, records and outcomes leading to a lack of intervention integrity and species representation.

There is a distinct lack of DELWP accreditation and mandated training required of Wildlife Rescue Organizations leading to detrimental outcomes in relation to intervention, obligations, and operational integrity.

(2) Bird Entanglement (Fishing Line & Rubbish)

The ever-increasing number of both Water and terrestrial birdlife entangled & restricted by specifically disposed of fishing line & rubbish on beaches, lakes and industrial areas provides for difficult and dangerous recovery and often irreparable damage to our birdlife.

Within a short period of time if evading capture persists, line restriction amputates limbs & wings.

This is a direct and foreseeable consequence of the Victorian governments push for a target of 1 million recreational fishing licences.

The Recreational fishing industry lacks environmental oversight in relation to the vast detrimental effects on wildlife and the pollution of habitats.

(Recommend): Fisheries Victoria and DELWP provide adequate disposal bins and signage at all fishing sites including all lakes, jetties, and develop an educational awareness package provided when fishing licences are applied for by members of the public.

(Recommend) Mandated development of fishing tackle biodegradability standards when systematically lost in water habitat and the environment.

Commercial & Industrial Bird Netting

The prospect of capturing & freeing 1 entangled bird at a specific site pales into insignificance when industrial sites/factories in certain area's such as Port Melbourne have many hundreds of entangled birds of various indiscriminate species hanging from old and neglected nylon lines and suspension nets on rooftops that are not only ineffective but persist in cruelly killing birds over long periods of time.

I have referred this issue to DELWP along with images consistently over many years but to this day the issue persists and remains out of sight and out of mind.

If the general public was aware of this issue, there would be outrage and immediate demands for legislation to restrict and set standards of installation and maintenance stipulations.

(Recommend) Legislated Owner Corporation obligations and installer adherence to types and monitoring.

GIC Orders & Confinement Traps



The above 3 case files may be a reflective of extensive and systematic breaches of the Wildlife Act 1975 & POCTA 1986.

These cases require a clear set of Protocols and Standard Operating Procedures provided to both Wildlife Rescue Organizations Staff and Rescuers in line with specific POCTA legislation and Legal framework.

I recommend developing a specific policy and procedural manual with DELWP, to not only protect rescuers but to apply due process to the integrity of DELWP investigation and prosecution prospects which in these cases is secondary and may be subject to compromise.

As a DELWP licensed Controller, there is Protected Wildlife Record Book that is a strict register of all and specific species trapped with adherence to commercial conditions to be applied to all cases, this is not the case for a Private Property Owner that has purchased a "Legal" trap with no reference to legislation or record keeping.

The above 3 cases referenced, had all in there nature and purpose of trapping led to:

- 1) Injury and stress to the animal, (Including inadvertent trapping of non target species, (i.e Birds)
- 2) No protection from Rain, Wind, Direct Sun (Roof-tops) or domestic animals.
- 3) Re-location of wildlife and release into Parks, Gardens & Bush land (Not within 50m)

As it stands, property owners can legally trap (Not selectively) leading to the above detrimental consequences, confine & re-release within 50m, (Still on their property) to no effect, in the protection of their gardens, and leading to extremely adverse consequences to wildlife with clearly apparent protections.

The Expert Advisory Panel may be uniquely placed to call for an amendment to existing DELWP legislation, i.e., a Ban on the private sale of these Confinement Traps with the exception of commercial licensed and authorized users.

These “approved” traps when purchased legally in no way inform the purchaser of GIC legislation to be legally adhered to with its use or hold the seller accountable to even inform or advise of the user’s obligations under GIC orders or breaches of POCTA 1986.

Statistics and case files could be used to highlight the inherent harm and displacement of our wildlife, as a consequence of this misplaced GIC policy that constantly leads to breaches of protections outlined in legislation in POCTA 1986.

Thank you.

Kind Regards

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