

Dear Expert Advisory Panel,

My name is Jodie Prideaux (previously Graham), and I am writing in relation to the current review of *The Wildlife Act 1975*.

For many years I was involved in the board of the *Wildlife Possession and Trade Advisory Committee* as chairperson for Wildlife Dealers, alongside the following:

[REDACTED], Marsupial Society of Victoria
[REDACTED], Wildlife Displayers
[REDACTED], Victorian Herpetological Society
[REDACTED], Melbourne Zoo
[REDACTED], Department of Primary Industries
[REDACTED], Department of Primary Industries
[REDACTED], Department of Sustainability and Environment
[REDACTED], Department of Sustainability and Environment
[REDACTED], Department of Sustainability and Environment

I understand the newly appointed advisory board is not meeting to discuss DELWP policies and structures, regulations under the Act, discussions surrounding wildlife emergencies and cruelty offences. These are many points that we used to discuss and work on as a committee helping as a tool between general public and the department.

We have attempted to, on several occasions, to get the board to meet regularly regarding issues in wildlife and to continue this board of committee members with the Wildlife Department, but I have not received any follow up correspondence from my attempts. The Department have seemed to have faded out this committee, we were meant to be meeting at least once a year. I understand that this is due to the changes within DEWLP and wish for the committee recommence.

I have spoken personally to a number of wildlife officers and they are in agreement that the committee would assist in the ongoing improvement and issues that are found within the general wildlife community.

There are now new members who wish to join this committee. Due there being no meetings held since 2013, many members have decided to opt out. The remaining chairpeople are willing to start meeting again and hope that this correspondence reaches the department appropriately to consider reinstating this important sector. When the advisory committee was in operation it was running efficiently and providing positive outcomes to ongoing issues. I currently get asked on a weekly basis whether the committee is still in operation from members in the industry due to issues that arise.

I think this board is important for the community to have an open pathway for the general public to be able to bring up issues surrounding wildlife possession and trade. In the past, the general public and members of the wildlife possession community would directly contact the relevant member of the committee to bring up local issues, complaints, queries and provisions relating to wildlife caring and purchasing. The only option now is to go directly to DEWLP but many people have expressed that they don't feel comfortable going to them directly and instead the committee would often be the ones to assist with these issues.

I believe it was an important part of providing input into the development and management of the wildlife department and suggest that it is an important measure to have going forward. I look forward to hearing from you in the hopes that there can be some action going in reinstating this advisory committee. Please do not hesitate to contact me and I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Jodie Prideaux