

**OPERATING PROCEDURES**

# **Wildlife Advocate Experts Panel**

31 March 2006

**Wildlife Advocate**

Representing the Quiet Australian



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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Wildlife Advocate is an Australian not-for-profit community organisation dedicated to ensuring the needs of Australian native wildlife are taken into account in the development and enforcement of policies and practices affecting the safety, freedom and independence of native Australian wildlife.

### 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Wildlife Advocate Experts Panel is to provide members of the general community with direct access to easily understandable yet comprehensive opinions of combined Australian experts on issues relating to the health, safety and liberty of native Australian wildlife.

### 1.3 Scope

For the purpose of the Wildlife Advocate Experts Panel the following definitions apply:

- ▶ **native Australian wildlife** includes all fauna except insects and fish but includes aquatic mammals.
  - Targeting endangered, threatened and vulnerable species.
  - Focused on native animals whose health, safety and liberty is directly impacted by human activity.
  
- ▶ **Australian expert** includes permanent residents.
  - Not limited to experts with particular agendas;
  - Total openness paramount for credibility;
  - Experts limited to those who pass the qualification process;
  - Experts must be available to advise on, and assist with the preparation of significant research papers (submissions).
  - Membership of Wildlife Advocate is not a pre-condition of Panel Membership.
  - Panel members are not encumbered by virtue of their participation in the Panel. Panellists are free to express their own opinion.

## **1.4 Benefits of Panel Membership**

### ***1.4.1 Contributing to the development of best practices/public policy***

Participation in an adjudicated non-government forum to provide objective advice/opinions to governments, landholders and the community on the effect of policies, practices and purchasing decisions on the health, safety and liberty of native Australian wildlife.

### ***1.4.2 Additional forum for the publication of expert opinions***

The Wildlife Advocate Experts Panel is an additional forum/mechanism for Panel Members to publish their research / reports.

Panel Members may elect to receive a royalty for any research / opinion paper published through the Wildlife Advocate Experts Panel.

Panel Members to submit an electronic copy of their work in either Adobe Acrobat or MS Word format together with a list of the topics to which the work relates.

If the Panel Member has elected to seek royalties, the Panel Member should indicate the amount of royalty to be forwarded.

If Wildlife Advocate receives a request for a publication or group of publications on a particular topic, Wildlife Advocate shall bundle the relevant works, recoding them in separate Adobe Acrobat files on a CD for posting to the requester on a COD basis (if not pre-paid by cheque or EFT).

When payment is received by Wildlife Advocate, it shall forward royalty payment to the relevant Panel Member(s)

## **2 Establishing the Experts Panel**

Wildlife Advocate shall send an invitation to all universities, wildlife rehabilitation centres, zoos and relevant government departments and agencies towards the conclusion of a calendar year.

Applicants are to submit their applications by the specified time. Wildlife Advocate is under no obligation to consider late applications. By applying, an applicant accepts the rules of the Panel including availability to advise on and participate in the preparation of reports, issue papers and submissions.

Wildlife Advocate will assess applicants paying particular attention to the standing of the applicant amongst his/her peers. Existing Panel Members have presumption of expertise.

Successful applicants (here-in-after 'Panel Members') will be so advised in writing.

Panel Members' participation in the Panel valid for one year.

Panel Members may re-apply in subsequent years.

Panel Members may elect to remove themselves from the Panel at anytime by advising Wildlife Advocate in writing.

### **3 Combined Opinions of Wildlife Advocate Experts**

#### **3.1 Developing a Combined Opinion**

From time to time Wildlife Advocate will invite Panel Members to :

- ▶ Submit reports / papers / opinions on a selected topic; and
- ▶ Participate in a peer review of the resultant combined opinion.

Wildlife Advocate will review all material provided and develop a draft combined opinion that is easily understandable / comprehended by government, industry and the general public.

Wildlife Advocate will distribute the draft, combined opinion to Panel Members who have elected to participate in the peer review. Reviewers will be given at least one week to review and provide comment on the combined opinion.

Wildlife Advocate will review the draft, combined opinion in light of comments received. Wildlife Advocate will pay particulate attention to comments that indicate that:

- ▶ Wildlife Advocate has misquoted or misrepresented the opinion/contribution from a Panel Member; and
- ▶ an argument or conclusion is not logical, defensible or scientifically / factually based.

A Panel Member may, at this point in the development of the common opinion, request that his/her report/paper/opinion not be sighted in the references and/or used in the development of the combined opinion.

Wildlife Advocate shall finalise the combined opinion and publish it on the Wildlife Advocate website in Adobe Acrobat format.

Publication of an opinion will include a list of references and date of publication.

#### **3.2 Setting Topics for Combined Opinions**

Wildlife Advocate will normally set the topics and time-frame for the development of combined opinions based on its available resources. However, Panel Members may indicate at anytime a desire for a particular topic to be given priority.

In developing the schedule of combined opinions, Wildlife Advocate will be mindful of:

- ▶ the topical nature of the subject matter;
- ▶ any research that has a significant impact on a previously published combined opinion; and
- ▶ the number of requests from Panel Member to address a particular topic/subject matter.

### **3.3 Adjudication on Combined Opinions**

Common opinions will be adjudicated by Guy Wilmington (B.AppSc) until such time as another suitably qualified alternative Wildlife Advocate member is appointed.

### **3.4 Intellectual Property**

The names of contributors and reviewers will be published as part of combined opinions.

Copyright over combined opinions rests with Wildlife Advocate Inc.

#### **4 Ad Hoc Advice**

As a condition of participation, Panel Members agree to be available to provide advice on or assist in the development of Wildlife Advocate submissions to government inquiries and / or contributions to public debate.

Wildlife Advocate will email / telephone relevant Panel Members asking for an answer to a particular question or an opinion on a particular matter.

To ensure that Wildlife Advocate does not unwillingly or unintentionally misreport the opinion or answers provided by Panel Members, Panel Members should consider providing their answers in writing to [experts@wildlifeadvocate.com](mailto:experts@wildlifeadvocate.com)

Panel Member's responses should be short and concise.

Where issues are complicated, Panel Members may reference previously provided papers – or provide an electronic copy of relevant papers.

Wildlife Advocate submissions are not open to peer review and remain the property of Wildlife Advocate.