

WILDLIFE ADVOCATE

Representing The Quiet Australian

ISSUE

Commercial Slaughter of Kangaroos at Googong Dam (NSW)

Background

Googong Dam is a major water supply for the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Whilst the dam is in New South Wales (NSW), the land is managed by the ACT government.

In July 2004, Wildlife Advocate founders were informed that the ACT Government was intending to reduce the number of kangaroos in the natural reserve surrounding the dam. The ACT government claimed that this was necessary to preserve the quality of the water in the dam. Water which they claimed was being, or had the potential to be, sullied by water run-off polluted by kangaroo dung.

The ACT government did not consult with wildlife groups prior to the intended slaughter.

Action

Wildlife Advocate founders met with members of the ACT legislative assembly and government officials over a period of two weeks.

In all those discussion Wildlife Advocate expressed its opposition to the slaughter. As a secondary tactic, Wildlife Advocate argued that if the slaughter was to continue despite community objections, it should be carried out as humanely as possible. To this end, Wildlife Advocate argued that there was a more humane way of dealing with the orphaned joeys than that specified in the *Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos*. This method was to allow the orphaned joeys to be rescued and handed over to a local wildlife carer group to be raised and released away from the dam.

Wildlife Advocate was successful in these negotiations and worked with the ACT Government and the local wildlife carer group to secure the rescue of 10 joeys.

While this may seem a low number, Wildlife Advocate was asking a lot to get the ACT and NSW governments to work outside the bounds of the current licensing regime and Code of Practice. This success will become a reference point for changes to the Code of Practice.