

**Question on Notice
No. 808
Asked on Thursday 24 May 2007**

QUESTION:

MRS ATTWOOD asked the Minister for Environment and Multiculturalism (Ms Nelson-Carr)—

Will she advise the issues involved with the management of the large population of kangaroos at Wacol?

ANSWER:

The issue of welfare of kangaroos being struck by cars along Wacol Station Road at Wacol was raised in the media by the RSPCA earlier this year.

This follows from issues since the mid-1990s associated with eastern grey kangaroos at Wacol, when the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries raised concerns that the kangaroos at the Wacol Tick Research Station were a quarantine risk and were consuming cattle pasture.

The Wacol Government Precinct is an area of approximately 1,200 hectares of State and local Government-owned land isolated by the Brisbane River to the west, the urban areas of Riverhills and Sumner Park to the north; and the Ipswich Motorway to the south east. As a result of this isolation, the resident kangaroos have no capacity to disperse.

The numbers of animals and the present drought conditions have recently forced many animals to move across Wacol Station Road and Grindle Road in search of food and water. This has led to increasing numbers of animals being killed and injured on these roads and increased safety risks to motorists in the area.

As a result, the EPA has convened a working group of landholders, wildlife scientists, animal welfare and conservation interests. The Department of Primary Industries, Corrective Services, Queensland Police, the Department of Main Road, Queensland Health, Queensland Rail and Brisbane City Council are represented on the working group. This working group has discussed a range of measures to maintain a healthy kangaroo population at Wacol without compromising the welfare of the animals or, more importantly, the safety of the public using nearby roads.

The EPA is undertaking a range of actions to address the current issues, including:

- Conducting an aerial survey of the Wacol area to estimate the current Wacol kangaroo population (1,350 animals);
- Collection and assessment of any dead animals that are found in the area to determine body condition and cause of death;
- Using satellite data to monitor vegetation condition at the site, and
- Collecting data on vehicle strike locations to help identify animal movement corridors and 'hot spots'

Other agencies represented on the working group are also planning or undertaking a range of actions in an effort to address the issues.

All of the information being gathered and the views of the various stakeholders and community groups are being considered by the working group in developing strategies for future management.

Strategies receiving particular attention include increasing driver awareness, fencing to separate kangaroos and traffic and management of habitat and non-natural water resources.

The overall objectives of this management strategy are to ensure the conservation of a sustainable wild kangaroo population at Wacol; to reduce the risks posed to motorists by kangaroos along major public roads in the area of the Wacol Government Precinct to an acceptable level; to reduce the potential for other incidental impacts by kangaroos on residents, users and the environmental values of the Wacol Government Precinct, and to provide the community with a safe, enjoyable opportunity to view kangaroos in an near-natural environment close to the city.