



HUNTER WILDLIFE RESCUE (NATF INC.)
LOWER HUNTER REGION NSW

Emergency Incident Procedure Operational Plan

CONTENTS

Objective	3
Legislation, Policies and Guiding Principles	3
Roles and Responsibilities.....	4
Workplace, Health & Safety Responsibilities	6
Field Search Procedure	7
Euthanasia Procedure.....	8
Our Resources.....	9

Objective

The search for and rescue of all species of native fauna that may be distressed or injured as a result of a designated event (disaster/emergency).

Legislation, Policies and Guiding Principles

1. National Parks and Wildlife Service NSW is the authorising body for all native fauna activities carried out under this operational plan
2. All operations must adhere to the regulations and procedures of relevant State and Federal government bodies
3. HWR is a supporting organisation under the NSW Department of Primary Industries Emergency Plan. HWR will assist NSW Department of Primary Industries in responding to major emergencies where native fauna are involved. Any action taken by HWR in emergencies will first be discussed with an officer of NSW Department of Primary Industries
4. HWR will assist the NSW Rural Fire Service with any bushfire disasters managed under the provisions of section 44 of the Rural Fires Act 1997
5. HWR disaster mobilisation is governed by the organisation's disaster committee or its appointed delegates
6. HWR is the governing body for site operations once activated
7. All activities carried out under this operational plan must adhere to Workplace, Health & Safety requirements and procedures
8. No HWR member or member of the public under the age of 18 years is to be utilised as a resource under this operational plan

Roles and Responsibilities

Chain of Command

POSITION	ROLE
OPERATIONS INCIDENT CONTROLLER	Leads and oversees the HWR site operation
OPERATIONAL INCIDENT ASSISTANT	Provides assistance to the Operations Incident Controller
REGISTRATION OFFICER	Governs all sign-in and sign-out processes
FIELD COORDINATOR	Governs all field activities
FIELD CO-COORDINATOR	Provides assistance to the Field Controller
RESCUE COORDINATOR	Governs all rescue activities
RESCUE CO-COORDINATORS	Provides assistance to the Rescue Controller
SPECIES COORDINATOR	Governs all animal activities
PUBLICITY COORDINATOR	Governs all media and publicity activities
CATERING COORDINATOR	Governs all catering activities

The below table shows key above mentioned roles - operation setup/management and site operation activities.

Note: Due to the specific nature of any individual event, variations and/or additions to these procedures/responsibilities may be required.

Role	Operation Setup/Management	Site Operation Responsibilities
Operations Incident Controller Following initial event, report and liaise with disaster committee members to assess situation (visit to site) and activate disaster management plan as appropriate. Advise NPWS Hunter District Office of activation and they will nominate a liaison officer from NPWS staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise/meet with full disaster committee to discuss/ determine the following matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Exact nature and scope of disaster – Location of disaster – Required HWR activities – Control site location – Intended duration of operation – Access requirements – Relevant state/federal governing bodies – Personal requirements (age, fitness, etc) – Equipment required – Catering requirements – Additional welfare/operations groups required to assist – Media/publicity requirements – Special requirements – Specific requirements of individual coordinator functions • Nominate Species Coordinator • Nominate Publicity Coordinator • Determine availability of and nominate area specialist (if required to assist with local knowledge of an area) • Coordinate equipment availability and delivery to site • Coordinate personnel requirements • Coordinate catering activation • Liaise with NPWS appointed officer and determine special requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with NPWS Coordinator • Meet with all coordinators at commencement of exercise and prior to the start of each day's activities to discuss and determine the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Planned field activities – Rescue planning – Publicity and media planning – Catering activity – Communications set-up – Equipment availability – Personnel requirements and availability – Special considerations – Access requirements – Animal management – Data control – Site plan • Coordinate site plan and set-up • Coordinate animal care facilities • Coordinate site equipment requirements • Manage daily operations • Meet with Coordinators at the end of daily activities re the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Collection of field data – Discuss daily activity – Discuss following day's activity – Ensure indemnity completion and compilation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with state/federal governing bodies to determine special requirements • Coordinate activation of any assisting organisations (RSPCA, CREST, St John Ambulance, other wildlife groups, etc) • Obtain necessary site access from authorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – National Parks (NPWS) – Post Fire Areas (NSW Rural Fire Service) – Crown Land (Dept Conservation and Lands) – Private/Lease held land (owners or Leasees) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate site clean-up • Coordinate return of all hired/loan equipment • Coordinate return and storage of all HWR equipment
Registration Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Operations Incident Controller and disaster committee ahead of any field operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identify HWR members available for participation for an emergency incident field operation – Collate a list of names, numbers, experience and availability which can be used for any field operations pending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the day of field operations, after briefing from Operations Incident Controller: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure all participants sign into operational site – Ensure all participants sign an indemnity waiver form in undertaking their voluntary duties – As participants complete their shifts, ensure they have signed out from the operational site. • On completion of field operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide any necessary data through to the Operations Incident Controller
Field Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Operations Incident Controller and disaster committee discussing the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Location of disaster – Scope and nature of area – Field, mapping, equipment and personnel requirements – Contractual information regarding special requirements – Coordinate personnel availability – Arrange delivery of equipment to operation site and additional equipment needs as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After appointment as Field Coordinators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Communicate field plans including specific field activities and associated requirements – Ensure indemnity documentation has been reviewed and signed by all participants – Conduct personnel suitability assessments to ensure fitness and compliance with WH&S protocols – Plan and communicate all personnel allocation (roles and locations) – Distribute field kits, maps, radios and any other additional equipment • On completion of field operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Debrief with all field coordinators and collect field data. Pass on data to Operations Incident Controller – Check in with personnel to obtain tentative numbers for any continuing/future field operations – Dismiss personnel post debrief
Rescue Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Field Operations Incident Controller and disaster committee discussing the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Nature and location of disaster – Rescue requirements – District specialist contacts (if required) – Mapping and personnel requirements/availability – Access/permit requirements to the disaster area • Plan and coordinate the mobilisation of rescue teams • Check rescue equipment viability • Coordinate any additional equipment requirements throughout the field operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Operation, Field and Species Coordinators to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Field Action Plan – Personnel availability and plan – Equipment requirements • Gather rescue team and convey the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rescue Plan – Distribution of rescue equipment (including radios, maps, first aid kits, etc.) – Record all equipment allocated to the team • On completion of field operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Hand rescue data to Field Coordinator and debrief any information which should be communicated with the disaster committee. – Discuss any further rescue requirements – Collect, check off, replace, repair and secure all field equipment – Debrief all rescue team members

Species Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Operations Incident Controller at the commencement of the field operation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Determine fauna assessment procedures and requirements – Identify fauna management and delivery arrangements to carers or a vet as required – Identify potential carers that may be required • Nominate site representative (experienced carer) to coordinate fauna management/assessment at field operation site • Liaise with local vets regarding field operations, management and triage of fauna located and, where possible, have a vet available on site • Record all fauna movement including IS allocation and care sheets that will follow each patient • Enter all data is entered into the NATF database and is communicated with Operations Incident Controller 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After briefing with Field Coordinator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Set up area for first aid treatment of located fauna only allowing access to authorised personnel – Coordinate first aid kits amongst participants as required – Triage all fauna through the first aid site, conducting assessment and stabilisation procedure per individual case requirements. Ear tagging/micro chipping of fauna not to be carried out on any fauna requiring care – Liaise with Operations Incident Controller and NATF Specialist Coordinators to arrange the transport of fauna to required destinations (e.g. vets, carers, etc) – Report all data at cessation of field operation to Operations Incident Controller
Publicity Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Operations Incident Controller at the commencement of any field operation to determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Publicity planning – Press release arrangements (daily media conference to outline search and rescue activities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After briefing with Field Coordinator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Collect any relevant data from daily field operations for appropriate daily publication – Oversee and govern media activities including gratitude letters for all parties involved at the conclusion of all field activities – Provide final media report at the end of field operations activities
Catering Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Operations Incident Controller at the commencement of and during daily field operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Determine catering requirements – Obtain funding from HWR Operations Incident Controller • Arrange procurement and delivery of food and beverage through the day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After briefing with Field Coordinator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Coordinate setting up and management of catering site facilities – Clean up site at end of operation – Arrange distribution of any surplus food – Provide a report at the conclusion of any operation

- At the commencement and completion of any search and rescue activities, a briefing and debriefing will be held with all participants. During the briefing sessions, all members will be required to understand all planning activities and to ensure all appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available before entering the field
- At all times, any public participants are to be treated with respect and provided support should they require assistance
- In the event of any member or public participant witnessed not adhering to the operational activities and guidelines, they will be asked to leave the operations site by either the Operations Incident Controller, National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) Officer, a member from the RFS or the NSW Police Force

Workplace, Health & Safety Responsibilities

Before the commencement of any field operation, participants will need to ensure they have met the below WH&S requirements and are aware of the processes/procedures for activities undertaken during the operation:

Fitness/age requirements

- Field participant age restrictions apply. Participants must be aged 18 years or older
- Elderly participants will be closely assessed to ensure suitability for the proposed operation
- Any adverse health conditions must be disclosed to the Operations Incident Controller (e.g. physical ailments, heart conditions, lung disease or infection, etc) to ensure they can be assessed and deemed suitable for the proposed operation

Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing

- Adequate and appropriate clothing must be worn at all times during field operations:
 - Long trousers/ pants
 - Long sleeve shirts/blouses
 - Solid enclosed footwear must be worn during any operation
 - Where designated or in any operations being conducted post bushfire or storm disasters, safety headwear (hard hat) must be worn at all times
 - Wide brimmed hats or caps and sunscreen for operations in hot weather
 - Beanies and adequate warm clothing for operations in cold weather

Members and volunteers will be required to bring an extra set of clothes for any operation

First Aid

- A Volunteer member with first aid training will be present at each operation. They will carry a first aid kit into the field to ensure all participants received required treatment if necessary
- Additional first aid kits will be dispersed across the participants where available
- St John Ambulance will be called upon to attend any operations taking place

Communication

- CREST (a community volunteer radio organisation) will be requested to attend all field operations
- CREST personnel will govern and provide support to all operational participants for radio and field communications
- Although HWR does own a limited number of field radios, these will only be used during small-scale operations

Weather Considerations

- Daily weather reports will be assessed ahead of any planned operational activity. All participants are to adhere to instructions for changing weather circumstances
- Specific caution will be taken for severe weather events, such as: thunderstorms, heavy rain storms, high wind events or extreme heat
- When adverse weather conditions pose a significant risk to the safety of participants, the Operations Incident Controller will provide an update during the briefing session each morning, if not advised via text message earlier

Activities requiring additional skills/experience

- Only trained participants identified by HWR are to be involved in any activities that require a rescue involving tree climbing. Only trained participants who are well versed in rope-climbing procedures will be covered by HWR insurance
- Any other services that may be asked to assist in these instances must carry their own insurance and be approved by all governing bodies at the operations site for rope climbing activities

Field Search Procedure

For the most effective process to locate any distressed or injured fauna within a field operation, field search should be conducted as follows:

- Where applicable, line searches should be conducted in small teams consisting a ratio of 3 rescue co-ordinators to 15 volunteer personnel. The participants in the line should remain fairly close to one another, no more than 1 metre in distance between each participant
- Where possible, teams should align one end of their search line with significant landmarks such as roadways, fence lines, creeks, drains, etc.
- All field coordinators should have mapping information, first aid and field kits, radio and water on their person
- Transport to and from field activities should be kept to a minimum number of vehicles

Euthanasia Procedure

Disclaimer: Any native fauna requiring such treatment will be euthanized humanely.

Process

Ideally a veterinarian, where available, will carry out any euthanasia procedures. In exceptional circumstances, euthanasia may be conducted by a person (other than a veterinarian) who has accredited training and license to perform such procedures.

Disposal

All euthanised fauna will be disposed of in the correct manner; a burial or cremation in alignment with local council regulations. No fauna will be left on operational sites once euthanised.

Disease Control

All fauna rescued during field operations will be kept separate at all times to reduce the risk of spreading disease. Facilities for fauna treatment and housing will be kept separate from each other as well as human facilities at all times.

There are a number of diseases that can be transmitted to humans from wildlife (Zoo noses). Appropriate health and safety measures will be implemented in handling wildlife to reduce risk of transmission.

Our Resources

Council Rangers

Water Board Rangers

Forestry Rangers

State Emergency Service (SES)

NSW Police Rescue

RSPCA

Wildlife Rescue Groups

Salvation Army

CREST

4WD Clubs

Lions Clubs

Caravan Parks

Boat Hire

Fruit Markets

Rural Lands Departments

Local Community and Landowners

Bush Walking Clubs

Taronga Zoo

Local Vet Clinics

National Parks & Wildlife Service Officers & Depots

Local Councils

Local Police Stations

Local Horse Riding Clubs

Australian Red Cross

Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF)

Australian Army

Rotary Clubs

Local Bakeries

Tent Hire

Local Supermarkets

Tree Loppers