THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT

REPORT 23

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

REPORT ON RECREATIONAL HUNTING SYSTEMS

Presented by Hon Liz Behjat MLC (Chairman)

March 2015

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Date first appointed:
17 August 2005

Terms of Reference:
The following is an extract from Schedule 1 of the Legislative Council Standing Orders:

"**5. Public Administration Committee**

5.1 A *Public Administration Committee* is established.

5.2 The Committee consists of 5 Members.

5.3 The functions of the Committee are to –

(a) inquire into and report on –

(i) the structure, efficiency and effectiveness of the system of public administration;

(ii) the extent to which the principles of procedural fairness are embodied in any practice or procedure applied in decision making;

(iii) the existence, adequacy, or availability, of merit and judicial review of administrative acts or decisions;

(iv) any Bill or other matter relating to the foregoing functions referred by the Council;

and

(b) consult regularly with the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations, the Public Sector Commissioner, the Information Commissioner, the Inspector of Custodial Services, and any similar officer.

5.4 The Committee is not to make inquiry with respect to –

(a) the constitution, functions or operations of the Executive Council;

(b) the Governor's Establishment;

(c) the constitution and administration of Parliament;

(d) the judiciary;

(e) a decision made by a person acting judicially;

(f) a decision made by a person to exercise, or not exercise, a power of arrest or detention; or

(g) the merits of a particular case or grievance that is not received as a petition."

Members as at the time of this inquiry:

Hon Liz Behjat MLC (Chairman)
Hon Darren West MLC (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Nigel Hallett MLC
Hon Jacqui Boydell MLC
Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLC
Hon Rick Mazza MLC (Co-opted Member)

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Note

The Twenty-Third Report of the Standing Committee on Public Administration consists of a Report of the Committee and a Minority Report of Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLC and Hon Darren West MLC

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Government Response

This Report is subject to Standing Order 191(1):

> *Where a report recommends action by, or seeks a response from, the Government, the responsible Minister or Leader of the House shall provide its response to the Council within not more than 2 months or at the earliest opportunity after that time if the Council is adjourned or in recess.*

The two-month period commences on the date of tabling.

Abbreviations

ADA	Australian Deer Association
DAFWA	Department of Agriculture and Food WA
DoL	Department of Lands
DoW	Department of Water
DPaW	Department of Parks and Wildlife
DPIPWE	Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (Tas)
FGA	Field and Game Association
GLU	Game Licensing Unit, New South Wales Department of Primary Industries
GMA	Game Management Authority, Victoria
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
NTA	*Native Title Act 1993* (Cth)
PLB	Pastoral Lands Board
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
SSAA	Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia
SSAAWA	Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (Western Australia)
SWALSC	South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Corporation
UCL	Unallocated Crown Land
UMR	Unmanaged Reserves
WAPOL	Western Australia Police
1080	Sodium fluoroacetate, a pesticide used for controlling non-native pest animals

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 Chapter One provides background to the inquiry and some notes on the terminology used in the report.

2 Chapter Two provides an overview of recreational hunting systems in Australia. It also details the observations made by the Committee during investigative travel to New South Wales and Victoria in November 2014.

3 Chapter Three considers the evidence the Committee received on the potential environmental contribution of recreational hunting.

4 Chapter Four canvasses the issues Government would need to consider in establishing a recreational hunting system in Western Australia.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

5 Findings and Recommendations are grouped as they appear in the text at the page number indicated:

Page 10

Finding 1: The Committee finds that, should a recreational hunting system be adopted in Western Australia, an independent risk manager should be engaged prior to its implementation.

Page 10

Finding 2: The Committee finds that the online booking and GPS systems used in New South Wales are extremely helpful in managing risks of hunting.

Page 34

Finding 3: The Committee finds that there are long standing, well-established systems for recreational hunting in other jurisdictions.

Page 40

Finding 4: The Committee finds that there is a lack of conclusive data on the effectiveness or otherwise of recreational hunting as a form of feral animal control. There is a reliance on either small scale scientific studies or anecdotal evidence or speculation to inform conclusions on both sides of the debate.

Page 41

Finding 5: The Committee finds that there is an inconsistent approach by Department of Parks and Wildlife to engaging recreational hunters in organised and targeted feral animal management across different regions.

Page 46

Finding 6: The Committee finds that the granting of recreational hunting licences may affect native title rights and interests, and therefore may be viewed as a future act under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).

Page 46

Finding 7: The Committee finds that, as a consequence of the extent of native title determinations and claims in Western Australia, a government wishing to introduce a recreational hunting scheme may need to either compulsorily acquire the land, which would result in the payment of compensation to native title holders, or negotiate an Indigenous Land Use Agreement with each affected group of native title holders, except in areas where native title has been extinguished.

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Finding 8: The Committee finds that the process of establishing Indigenous Land Use Agreements can be lengthy and expensive. The Committee received advice that it would be challenging for Indigenous Land Use Agreements to be registered for the whole of Western Australia, as each area would require a separate Indigenous Land Use Agreement with each native title holder group.

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Finding 9: The Committee finds that it may be possible for Indigenous Land Use Agreements to be negotiated in certain limited areas for the purposes of creating a recreational hunting scheme.

Page 53

Finding 10: The Committee finds that animal welfare is a significant concern and consideration for animal welfare associations, government departments and organised recreational hunting groups.

Page 65

Recommendation 1: The Committee recommends that the Government introduce a two-year trial of recreational hunting on public land in Western Australia, taking into consideration the following issues that should be addressed:

- **native title and legislative requirements**
- **carrying out a thorough risk management assessment**
- **measuring the impact on feral animal numbers**
- **measuring the impact on the local economy and tourism in nearby areas**
- **implementing an online booking and GPS tracking system following the New South Wales model.**

The trial should be located in two separate areas, such as a reclaimed pastoral station in the Mining and Pastoral region and a state forest in the South West land division.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO THE INQUIRY

REFERRAL TO THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

1.1 On 27 November 2013, the Legislative Council agreed to the following motion:

That the Council –

(a) acknowledges the use in other States of regulated, licensed recreation hunting systems and the potential environmental contribution made in controlling pest animals on public lands, together with the possible economic, cultural and recreational benefits to the community; and

(b) directs that –

(i) the Public Administration Committee inquire into the benefits or otherwise of a similar system being adopted in Western Australia and report back to the House by 4 December 2014; and

(ii) Hon Rick Mazza be co-opted as a member to the Public Administration Committee for the purposes of the foregoing inquiry.

1.2 The Committee called for submissions, advertising in *The West Australian*, *The Countryman*, *Farm Weekly*, *Australian Shooters Magazine*, and the *Sporting Shooter Magazine*, as well as distributing a media release on 10 December 2014. Four hundred and forty two submissions were accepted. A number of further submissions were received after the closing date, and were not accepted, unless a request for an extension of time had previously been approved by the Committee.

1.3 The Committee heard from witnesses ranging from government departments and representatives from organisations with an interest in the subject matter. [See Appendix 2.]

1.4 During the course of the Inquiry, Chairman Hon Liz Behjat MLC, Hon Jacqui Boydell MLC and Hon Rick Mazza travelled to New South Wales and Victoria to learn about recreational hunting systems in those States.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1.5 As most hunting is conducted using firearms, according to a range of surveys, the word 'hunting' in this report should be understood to mean 'hunting with a firearm'. Any broader use of the term will be indicated in the text.

1.6 The use of the terms ‘pest’ and ‘feral’ animals varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The Committee uses the term ‘pest’ in this report for clarity.

CHAPTER 2
REGULATED, LICENSED RECREATIONAL HUNTING SYSTEMS IN AUSTRALIA

OVERVIEW

2.1 A number of Australian states have licensed, regulated systems for hunting. There is a difference between hunting game animals for recreation and hunting pest species for environmental control, although pest species such as pigs and goats can also be hunted for recreation. This chapter will provide a survey of hunting regulations in different states, as well as describing the models for recreational hunting systems where they exist. It will also foreground recent developments in NSW and Victoria.

Introduction: a profile of Australian hunters

2.2 In 2011 and 2012, a survey of more than 7000 people was conducted as part of the University of Queensland's *Wild deer management in Australia* project.[1] The survey claims to be 'the first attempt to quantify the characteristics of the recreational hunting community of Australia'.[2] The respondents were mostly aged between 30 and 60, and 98 per cent were male.[3] The researchers extrapolated from the survey numbers to estimate that about 1.5 per cent of the population are recreational hunters. Hunters spent between $1830 and $2140 per year on hunting activities both directly and indirectly.[4]

2.3 In relation to the motivation of hunters, the report suggested that there were a range of factors contributing to the desire to hunt, most of which were shared by hunters in other countries, such as gaining a trophy, obtaining meat and enjoying recreation.[5] One result in Australia, not replicated in surveys overseas, was the desire expressed to 'assist landholders and control pests'.[6] Indeed, 65 per cent of the survey respondents cited 'conservation as a motivation to hunt'.[7] In addition, these same hunters were

1 N Finch, P Murray, J Hoy and G Baxter, 'Expenditure and motivation of Australian recreational hunters', *Wildlife Research*, 41, 2014, p82.

2 Ibid, p79.

3 Ibid, p81.

4 Id.

5 Ibid, p82.

6 Id.

7 Id.

prepared 'to pay a levy on hunting merchandise to contribute toward wildlife conservation'.[8]

2.4 The conclusion of the report was that 'the Australian recreational hunting community is large, active and willing to spend large amounts of money associated with hunting'.[9] It also suggested that they could be more widely engaged by wildlife managers to assist with feral animal control.

New South Wales

History and administration of licensed, regulated hunting in New South Wales

2.5 The *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002* (NSW) was introduced by the then Minister for Agriculture, Hon Richard Amery, 'to manage and regulate the hunting of game; to establish a Game Council; and for other purposes'.[10]

2.6 The Game Council was established in October 2002.[11] It had responsibility for 'responsible and orderly hunting of game and pest animals', and its functions included 'representing the interests of hunters, administering a licensing system, enforcement of the Act, providing education services, and undertaking research'.[12]

2.7 The Game Council was disbanded on 15 November 2013 following a report commissioned by the NSW Government and undertaken by Steve Dunn.[13] Steve Dunn, a retired public servant, was asked to review the Game Council by Premier Barry O'Farrell in March 2013 after a Game Council staff member and a Game Council volunteer were alleged to be hunting illegally in a Game Council vehicle.[14] The report criticised the governance of the Council.[15] There were particular concerns relating to the appropriateness of having a 'regulatory agency to be representing the interests of hunters whom they also regulate'.[16] However, the report also stated that the Council had 'achieved significant results towards achieving its objects and

8 N Finch, P Murray, J Hoy and G Baxter, 'Expenditure and motivation of Australian recreational hunters', *Wildlife Research*, 41, 2014, p82.

9 Id.

10 http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/nswbills.nsf/0/a3eafffc49e932ffca256b7c007d0825/$FILE/b00-076-p08.pdf, (viewed on 2 July 2014).

11 http://search.records.nsw.gov.au/agencies/4156;jsessionid=EBA22FEB225B9B0856B35E24CD2A2141, (viewed on 28 July 2014).

12 Steve Dunn, *Governance Review of the Game Council of NSW*, 14 June 2013, p3.

13 Ibid.

14 http://www.theherald.com.au/story/1334487/hunting-in-national-parks-put-on-hold/ (viewed on 12 January 2015).

15 http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/470456/media_release_130704_dunn_report.pdf, (viewed on 2 July 2014).

16 Steve Dunn, *Governance Review of the Game Council of NSW*, 14 June 2013, p29.

functions'.[17] Steve Dunn himself was later found to be corrupt in relation to his dealings with Eddie Obeid, although these dealings were unrelated to his report on the Game Council.[18]

2.8 Following the Dunn report, responsibility for recreational hunting licences was transferred to the Department of Primary Industry (DPI). As a result, hunting in NSW state forests was suspended in July 2013.[19] Following Forestry Corporation NSW's risk assessment report,[20] completed in December 2013, hunting recommenced in February 2014 with stricter licensing conditions.[21]

2.9 The current objects of the amended *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002* (NSW) are:

> *(a) to provide for the effective management of introduced species of game animals, and*
>
> *(b) to promote responsible and orderly hunting of those game animals on public and private land and of certain pest animals on public land.*[22]

17 Steve Dunn, *Governance Review of the Game Council of NSW*, 14 June 2013, p3.

18 http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/icac-finds-eddie-obeid-joe-tripodi-steve-dunn-corrupt-over-series-of-deals/story-e6frg6nf-1226944045826, (viewed on 17 November 2014).

19 http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/game-council-to-be-abolished-20130704-2pdte.html, (viewed on 2 July 2014).

20 http://www.forestrycorporation.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/501661/risk-analysis-permitted-hunting.pdf, (viewed on 2 July 2014).

21 http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-01-20/nrn-shooter-state-parks/5208638, (viewed on 2 July 2014).

22 http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/maintop/view/inforce/act+64+2002+sch.2+2002-07-10+N, (viewed on 2 July 2014).

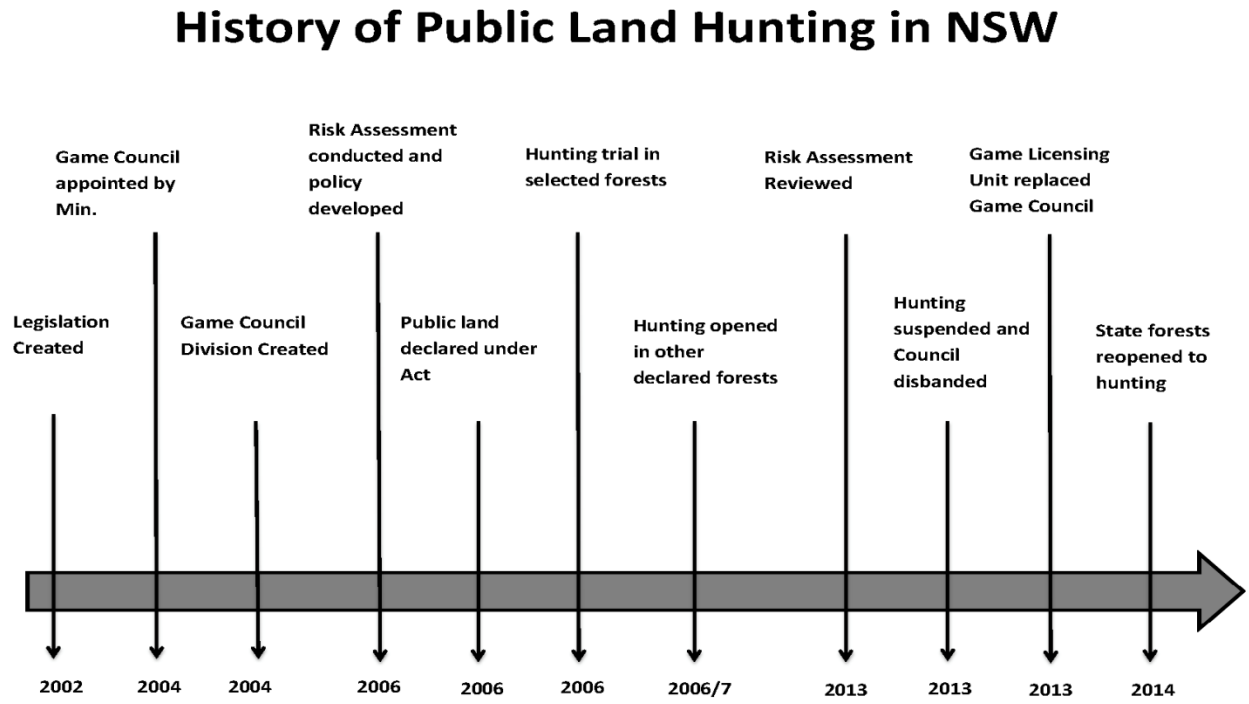

Figure 1[23]

Hunting regulations in New South Wales

2.10 The Minister for Primary Industries declares public land for the purpose of the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002* (NSW).

2.11 There are different types of licences available in NSW, depending on what and where a hunter wishes to hunt.[24]

2.12 NSW distinguishes between game and feral species, although animals such as pigs, dogs, cats, goats, rabbits, hares and foxes can be considered both. The reason for classifying animals such as pigs in both categories is because different regulations apply depending on the purpose for the hunting. Game animals, as well as non-indigenous animals that can be hunted without a licence on private land, are listed in Schedule 3 of the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002* (NSW).

2.13 Classified game animals can be taken on private land with the landholders' permission and in declared state forests.[25] Fallow, red, wapiti and hog deer are hunted during a declared season.[26]

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23 Dr Andrew Moriarty, *Current and future initiatives for managing public land hunting in NSW*, PowerPoint presentation, NSW DPI Game Licensing Unit, 10 November 2014.

24 http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/hunting/regulations, (viewed on 2 July 2014).

2.14 Pest species listed in Schedule 3 of the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002* (NSW) can be hunted on private land without a licence.[27] A hunter requires a Restricted Licence to hunt game and feral animals on declared state forests and Crown land areas.[28] Under the NSW Game Bird Management Program private landholders can obtain a Native Game Bird Management Licence, which allows them to engage licensed hunters who have passed a waterfowl identification test to hunt on their property legally.[29] This allows landholders to protect their crops from the damage caused by wild ducks.

Committee travel to New South Wales: summary and comment

2.15 On 10 November 2014, Hon Liz Behjat MLC, Hon Jacqui Boydell MLC and Hon Rick Mazza MLC met with Dr Andrew Moriarty, manager of the Game Licensing Unit (GLU), and GLU staff in their offices in Orange, New South Wales. The GLU is part of the Department of Primary Industries (DPI). The following comments are informed by this meeting, subsequent site visits around Mount Canobolas and information provided by the GLU.[30]

Location of hunting in New South Wales

2.16 In NSW at present, only state forest is declared for recreational hunting, as provided for under s 20 of the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002* (NSW). Schedule 3A of the same Act also lists national parks, nature reserves, regional parks and state conservation areas which cannot be declared as public hunting land. There are 1.2 million hectares of state forest open for hunting in NSW out of a total of 2.2 million hectares of state forest.[31] By contrast, there are 7 million hectares of national parks and reserves.[32]

25 http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/hunting/where-can-i-hunt, (viewed on 2 July 2014).

26 Id.

27 http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/hunting/hunting-licences, (viewed on 2 July 2014).

28 Id.

29 http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/hunting/hunting-native-game-birds/information-for-landholders, (viewed on 12 January 2015).

30 See, for example, Dr Andrew Moriarty, *Current and future initiatives for managing public land hunting in NSW*, PowerPoint presentation, NSW DPI Game Licensing Unit, 10 November 2014. This and other information provided to the Committee is available on the Committee website.

31 http://www.forestrycorporation.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/438460/Facts-and-Figures-2010-11.pdf, (viewed on 17 November 2014).

32 http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/about, (viewed on 17 November 2014).

Structure and governance of the Game Licensing Unit

2.17 On 5 December 2013, the GLU was established to replace the Game Council.[33] New South Wales moved away from a statutory authority model and incorporated the functions of the Game Council into a public service regulatory authority model.

2.18 The manager of the GLU, Dr Andrew Moriarty, reports directly to the Director General of the Department of Primary Industries.

Policy for public land hunting

2.19 As a result of various developments in NSW, including advice to government on the legal status of volunteer hunters which suggested they were not covered by public liability insurance, there has been a shift in emphasis from pest animal management to hunting as a recreational pursuit in its own right in the interpretation of the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002* (NSW).

2.20 However, anecdotal evidence received by the GLU suggests that regardless of this change, there has not been the same level of spending on pest animal management since the introduction of recreational hunting in NSW, except in relation to wild dogs. As there is limited money for research, this data is likely to remain anecdotal until the finalisation of a report on public land and pest animals, which is not due to be released for a number of years.

2.21 There are limited opportunities for hunters to become involved in pest control programs run by Nationals Parks NSW. There is a Supplementary Pest Control Program, where trained hunters are utilised in an area where there is a pest animal issue, such as pigs, foxes and rabbits in southern New South Wales.[34] This is separate to hunting undertaken under the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002* (NSW).

Licensing procedures and requirements

2.22 Hunters wishing to hunt game and feral animals on public land require a Restricted licence (R licence); for hunting deer and other game on private land, a hunter needs to obtain a general licence (G licence).[35] Accredited Hunting Organisations (AHOs), to which hunters are required to belong in order to secure a hunting licence, must have a

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33 Dr Andrew Moriarty, *Current and future initiatives for managing public land hunting in NSW*, PowerPoint presentation, NSW DPI Game Licensing Unit, 10 November 2014, p24.

34 Email from Kylie Middleton, Team Leader Strategic Services, Game Licensing Unit, NSW Department of Primary Industry, 12 January 2015.

35 http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/hunting/hunting-licences, (viewed on 19 February 2015).

constitution with disciplinary procedures for non-compliance. This is a policy rather than a legislative requirement.[36]

2.23 Hunters must undertake set education courses in order to obtain an R licence.[37]

Illegal hunting

2.24 The GLU suggested that anecdotally there has been a decrease in illegal hunting since the introduction of a licensed recreational hunting scheme. The GLU produces educational material on illegal hunting in partnerships with organisations such as the NSW Police and the Forestry Corporation of NSW,[38] and mobilises licensed hunters to provide intelligence on illegal activities, including but not limited to hunting.

2.25 The GLU partners with police on illegal hunting, funding police overtime during periods when there is a high incidence of illegal hunting, such as Easter.

2.26 Following a recruitment drive, there are now twelve compliance officers in New South Wales, with a further two senior positions yet to be appointed, all reporting to the Team Leader Compliance.[39]

2.27 The Committee was informed that the number of infringement notices issued by compliance officers varies from operation to operation, but many notices result in hunters applying for licences rather than receive further fines. There are few repeat illegal hunting infringements issued. Compliance officers take an educative rather than a punitive approach, explaining to illegal hunters their reasons for issuing a notice.[40]

2.28 The role of compliance officers are focused on compliance rather than the advocacy roles they held under the Game Council model, although they still liaise with other agencies such as the Forestry Corporation. Compliance officers are located in Sydney, Mudgee, Dubbo, Albury, Batemans Bay, Tamworth, Tumbarumba, Eden, Port Macquarie and Tocal.[41]

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36 Dr Andrew Moriarty, *Current and future initiatives for managing public land hunting in NSW*, PowerPoint presentation, NSW DPI Game Licensing Unit, 10 November 2014, p17.

37 See http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/hunting/education-and-training-for-hunters, (viewed on 19 February 2015).

38 Dr Andrew Moriarty, *Current and future initiatives for managing public land hunting in NSW*, PowerPoint presentation, NSW DPI Game Licensing Unit, 10 November 2014, p28.

39 Email from Kylie Middleton, Team Leader Strategic Services, Game Licensing Unit, NSW Department of Primary Industry, 12 January 2015.

40 David Smith, *Public Land Hunting in Central West NSW: Overview and Case Study*, PowerPoint presentation, NSW DPI Game Licensing Unit, 10 November 2014, p4.

41 Email from Kylie Middleton, Team Leader Strategic Services, Game Licensing Unit, NSW Department of Primary Industry, 12 January 2015.

2.29 Police officers also have the status of inspectors under legislation.[42]

Risk management

2.30 The GLU viewed risk management as a primary focus of their activities, as well as informing the activities of the Unit. Risk management is policy-based rather than being prescribed by legislation. An initial risk assessment was undertaken in 2006 prior to the commencement of recreational hunting, and reviewed in 2009 and 2013.[43] The focus of the assessment is on the risk of a hunter, worker or other forest user being struck by a projectile.[44]

2.31 The GLU recommended that Western Australia should obtain advice from an independent risk manager if it were contemplating introducing a recreational hunting system, noting that experience in hunting was not necessary: the consultant who conducted the New South Wales 2013 review had experience in working in the Western Australian mining sector.

Finding 1: The Committee finds that, should a recreational hunting system be adopted in Western Australia, an independent risk manager should be engaged prior to its implementation.

2.32 The New South Wales licensing system includes a safety reporting system, so that any incidents can be recorded and used to create new modules for training. The GLU recommended that any licensing system also needs to be responsive to emerging issues and developments, such as being able to incorporate the adoption of GPS technology.

2.33 The GLU demonstrated their GPS system, which identifies where a hunter is and clearly shows where he or she is permitted to hunt. It also provides hunters with the ability to pinpoint areas of forest where they have been successful, or to which they may wish to return.

2.34 The system also includes information on harvest data on public land, as hunters are required to report back to the GLU on the type and number of animals caught. This provides valuable information to the GLU on the numbers of pest animals removed from particular areas.

Finding 2: The Committee finds that the online booking and GPS systems used in New South Wales are extremely helpful in managing risks of hunting.

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42 *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002* (NSW), s34.

43 Dr Andrew Moriarty, *Current and future initiatives for managing public land hunting in NSW*, PowerPoint presentation, NSW DPI Game Licensing Unit, 10 November 2014, p18.

44 Id.

2.35 The GLU emphasised the importance of community consultation to diffuse concern and promote multi-use forests. It gave the example of Oberon forest mushroom collection, and how the GLU worked with the mayor to demonstrate the safety record of recreational hunters and allay the fears of mushroom pickers during mushroom season.

2.36 In relation to actual incidents, the GLU advised that there had been three minor injuries with firearms since the introduction of recreational hunting in New South Wales. All injuries were sustained by members of hunting parties, two of which were legal, one of which was illegal. These three incidents were caused by incorrect firearms handling.

Risk Management: controls

2.37 Hunters require written permission to hunt in a given area on a given date, and GPS-enabled map files are provided on booking. There is one hunter permitted per 400 hectares of forest. Hunters are required to wear blaze orange on the upper part of the body to ensure that hunters can be clearly identified by other forest users such as passing logging trucks.[45] Hunters are able to book a hunt 60 days in advance.[46] Two permits at a time per hunter are allowed. The booking system shows how many hunters are allowed in a particular area, and other agencies can use the system to book out areas for organised events and other purposes. The numbers permitted in the forest at any one time are based on risk assessment.

2.38 R-licence accreditation has a general section, as well as additional online modules. The booking system contains a lot of information which is accessible by the land managers, including those from different departments.[47] At the time of writing there was a 'one day clear' provision for bookings to ensure forestry workers are not impacted by hunters.

2.39 The GLU licensing system cost $200 000 originally, but has been added to over time and now incorporates written permissions, harvest data and all related information. It also contains full links between a hunter's Accredited Hunting Organisation number, modules completed, as well as personal details. The system is administered externally.

2.40 There are five categories of state forest, ranging from forests open to online bookings seven days a week, to forests accessible for hunting on weekends only, to forests which are closed to general hunting.

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45 Ibid, p20.

46 See Kylie Middleton, *Administering and Managing Public Land Hunting: Licensing*, PowerPoint presentation, NSW DPI Game Licensing Unit, 10 November 2014.

47 Email from Kylie Middleton, Team Leader Strategic Services, Game Licensing Unit, NSW Department of Primary Industry, 12 January 2015.

2.41 The GLU emphasised that education is essential for any recreational hunting scheme to be effective. For example, hunters are educated to understand that anybody could be anywhere at any time. Hunters have to take responsibility for safety of others regardless of how many people are registered to be in forest at any particular time.

Income from licensing

2.42 R licences create about $1.5 million in revenue per annum. A cost recovery model is about to be released in New South Wales but had not been finalised at the time of writing.[48]

2.43 The GLU stated that there were about 22 000 licensed hunters in NSW in 2014, increasing from 19 740 in April 2013.[49]

Demand for services

2.44 The GLU informed the Committee that customer service staff in GLU receive on average 80 calls a day. The turnaround for providing hunting licences is about two or three days.

Native title

2.45 In relation to New South Wales, it appears that the insertion of native title provisions included in the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002* (NSW) is viewed as sufficient recognition of native title rights.[50] Specifically, the Act contains section 54, which states that the Act does not affect the operation of the NTA, and section 17, which makes it clear that Aboriginal people, or people hunting pursuant to native title rights, or who are with a Local Aboriginal Land Council undertaking traditional cultural hunting, are exempt from requiring game hunting licences.

Victoria

Hunting in Victoria

2.46 Game hunting has a long history in Victoria, with legislation to protect game species first being introduced in the 1860s.[51] Game animals are classified as wildlife as part of the *Wildlife Act 1975* (Vic). Native and introduced game species have the same status

48 Email from Dr Andrew Moriarty, 24 February 2015, p1.

49 Game Council of New South Wales, *2012-13 Public Benefit Assessment*, New South Wales Government, June 2013, p9.

50 Letter from Scott Hansen, Director General, Department of Primary Industries, New South Wales, 11 August 2014, p1.

51 Department of Primary Industries, *Wildlife (Game) Regulations 2012*, State Government Victoria, July 2012, p2.

in Victoria. Pest animals are classified under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (Vic).

2.47 More than eight million hectares of public land in Victoria, including some national parks and wilderness areas, is available for game and pest animal hunting.[52] Regulations provide generous seasons and bag limits by world standards for game hunting.[53] Game hunting can also occur on private, leased and licensed land with the permission of the land manager, lessee or licensee.[54] However, game hunting is restricted in national and other parks, and is often restricted to a single species. This limitation ensures that there is minimal impact on other park users.[55]

2.48 In 2014 there were 47 800 licensed game hunters in Victoria, compared to 29 500 licences in 2001.[56] Because the number of hunters is growing, there is increasing pressure on game resources and access to public land, requiring more considered management.[57]

2.49 Historically duck hunting was the preeminent form of hunting in Victoria, but this has now been overtaken by deer hunting. There are now more than 47 800 licensed game hunters in Victoria, 26 000 who hunt duck and 30 000 who hunt deer.[58] There is no requirement to book public land allotments before hunting game, unlike NSW. Victoria does facilitate a balloted hunting system on public land for hog deer: this ballot allows people to hunt in areas that are not normally open to hunting. Otherwise, hog deer may be hunted on any public land where the activity is permitted.[59]

2.50 Game species, including native game, are animals that mature quickly, have high fecundity, and have good table qualities.[60] Game animals in Australia have strong recovery powers, such as the ability to recover rapidly following extreme environment conditions like drought. These characteristics are similar with game animals in other countries such as the United States and Africa.

2.51 While there are emerging issues regarding access to public land in Victoria, there is little conflict regarding hunting in and of itself. Most game hunting takes place in cold

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52 Game Management Authority, *Managing game hunting in Victoria*, Powerpoint presentation, 12 November 2014, p2.

53 Id.

54 Email from Greg Hyams, Chief Executive Officer, Game Management Authority, 23 December 2014.

55 See Parks Victoria, *Hunting in National Parks in Victoria*, Powerpoint presentation, 12 November 2014.

56 Game Management Authority, *Managing game hunting in Victoria*, PowerPoint presentation, 12 November 2014, pp16-17.

57 Email from Greg Hyams, Chief Executive Officer, Game Management Authority, 23 December 2014.

58 Id.

59 Id.

60 Game Management Authority, *Managing game hunting in Victoria*, Powerpoint presentation, 12 November 2014, p5.

seasons, so there is not a great deal of competition for public land access at those times. There is, however, conflict regarding duck hunting. This is not based on public land competition but rather on social and animal welfare issues.[61]

2.52 According to a 2013 survey conducted in Victoria, hunting is a culturally diverse activity, popular among Greek, Italian and Maltese residents, and it appears that Middle Eastern participants are increasing.[62] Seventy-two per cent of participants have higher than average income, and 48 per cent of hunters live in the metropolitan area. There is lot more family involvement in game hunting, with an even spread of ages among participants. About 50 per cent of game licence holders belong to hunting organisations: unlike NSW, this is not a requirement for holding a licence.[63] Consequently, the Game Management Authority (GMA), have a strong hunter education focus.

2.53 Over the last two decades, there has been a cultural change in hunters and the hunting industry. The majority of hunters in Victoria reside in the metropolitan area and as a result the majority of game hunters are in full-time work, have post high school education, are in a relationship, have children and have a household income greater than $78 000.[64] Hunting has changed from being an exclusively male domain to a more family-inclusive activity, as demonstrated by the 2013 research.[65] Marketing strategies have picked up on this change, with some brands and equipment marketed solely for females.[66]

2.54 The Committee heard from the GMA that the hunting industry itself has also dramatically developed during that time. It has changed from a cottage industry supported by military surplus to a large professional trade industry importing products from around the world for Victorian hunters. With an increase in discretionary income and access to information, there is an increasing market demand to provide hunters with state-of- the-art technology.[67] This is evident at annual trade shows held in Victoria, which are very well-attended.

2.55 In Victoria, hunting has provided an incentive to conserve habitats: 60 000 hectares of land has been set aside as State Game Reserves specifically for the conservation of

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61 Email from Greg Hyams, Chief Executive Officer, Game Management Authority, 23 December 2014.

62 State of Victoria Department of Environment and Primary Industries, *Estimating the Economic Impact of Hunting in Victoria in 2013*, State of Victoria, Melbourne, March 2014.

63 Ibid, p7.

64 Ibid, p6.

65 Id.

66 Email from Greg Hyams, Chief Executive Officer, Game Management Authority, 23 December 2014.

67 Email from Greg Hyams, Chief Executive Officer, Game Management Authority, 23 December 2014.

waterfowl habitats and hunting of waterfowl during the open season.[68] Hunters have lobbied government to save habitat for waterfowl.

2.56 The focus of hunting regulation in Victoria is on sustainability, animal welfare, equity, and public safety.

Administration of a licensed, recreational hunting system in Victoria

2.57 In Victoria, recreational game hunting is provided for under the *Wildlife Act 1975* (Vic) and regulated by the *Wildlife (Game) Regulations 2012* (Vic). Hunting for game animals (deer, duck and quail) is permitted in more than eight million hectares of public land, 'including six national parks and some coastal parks and wilderness areas'.[69]

2.58 In July 2014, Victoria established the GMA to oversee the regulation and management of game hunting in Victoria.[70] Game species are hunted under licences now issued by the GMA.

2.59 Pest animals are declared by virtue of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (Vic),[71] and are listed on the Department of Environment and Primary Industries' (DEPI) website.[72] Pest animals can be taken on both state forest and private land with the landholders' permission, with a firearms licence.[73]

2.60 The number of game licence holders in Victoria was 40 893 in 2011 and in 47 800 in 2014.[74] There are also six commercial game bird farm licences which allow the licensees to produce and release game birds for hunting on private land.[75]

2.61 Recreational hunters are engaged by government departments to 'assist in pest-animal management and over-abundant wildlife'.[76] Examples of such engagement include:

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68 Id.

69 Letter from Adam Fennessy, Secretary, Department of Environment and Primary Industries (Victoria), 30 July 2014, p1.

70 See http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/fishing-and-hunting/game-hunting, (viewed on 2 July 2014).

71 The State of Victoria, *Victorian Hunting Guide*, Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Melbourne, 2014, p62.

72 http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/agriculture-and-food/pests-diseases-and-weeds/pest-animals/a-z-of-pest-animals, (viewed on 2 July 2014).

73 The State of Victoria, *Victorian Hunting Guide*, Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Melbourne, 2014, p62.

74 Email from Greg Hyams, Chief Executive Officer, Game Management Authority, 23 December 2014.

75 Email from Greg Hyams, Chief Executive Officer, Game Management Authority, 23 December 2014.

76 Letter from Adam Fennessy, Secretary, Department of Environment and Primary Industries (Victoria), 30 July 2014, p2.

> *the management of feral goat populations in the Murray Sunset National Park, and removal of over-abundant game deer in the Dandenong Ranges National Park and the Yellingbow Flora and Fauna Reserve*.[77]

Victorian report on estimating the economic impact of hunting in 2013

2.62 There are approximately 300 000 licensed firearms owners in Victoria.[78] In 2013, 131 104 licensed firearm holders indicated that 'recreational hunting' was their reason for owning a firearm.[79] The Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) had a register of 44 684 game licence holders for the purpose of hunting on public land.[80] By comparison, Western Australia had 82 412 firearms licence holders of all types in February 2015.[81]

2.63 DEPI commissioned a report on the economic impact of hunting in Victoria in 2013.[82] One thousand people with 'a firearms licence for the purpose of 'recreation' were surveyed on their hunting activities in Victoria, with a focus on game hunters.[83] The results of the survey indicated that 'the total expenditure for hunting game animals was estimated to be $282 million'.[84] The total expenditure for game licence holders when hunting for pest animals was included was estimated to be $417 million.[85] This means that $135 million is estimated as the direct spend on pest animal hunting by game licence holders in Victoria in 2013.

2.64 The breakdown of total spending for hunting trips generally included 42 per cent on 'off-trip' expenditure and the remaining 58 per cent spent while on the road.[86] The report estimates that the total direct Gross State Product (GSP) impact of game hunting in Victoria was $118 million, and 'flow-on effects' of $177 million; when pest animal hunting is included, those estimates increase to $177 million as a direct impact and $262 million flow-on.[87] In relation to the economic impact of hunting

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77 Id.

78 Email from Greg Hyams, Chief Executive Officer, Game Management Authority, 23 December 2014.

79 State of Victoria Department of Environment and Primary Industries, *Estimating the Economic Impact of Hunting in Victoria in 2013*, State of Victoria, Melbourne, March 2014, p5.

80 Id. Also note that game licensing has transferred from DEPI to the GMA.

81 Letter from Business Intelligence Office, WA Police, 20 February 2015, p2.

82 State of Victoria Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Estimating the Economic Impact of Hunting in Victoria in 2013, State of Victoria, Melbourne, March 2014.

83 Ibid, pi.

84 Ibid, pii.

85 Id.

86 State of Victoria Department of Environment and Primary Industries, *Estimating the Economic Impact of Hunting in Victoria in 2013*, State of Victoria, Melbourne, March 2014, pii.

87 Id.

different animal groups, pest animal hunting was identified as the most significant, generating $59 million in direct GSP.[88]

2.65 Although game hunting is the focus of the DEPI report, it distinguishes between the economic impact of recreational hunters on one hand, and primary producers and professional wildlife controllers on the other, in shooting pest animals. The report suggests that the economic benefit of primary producers and wildlife controllers is 'the benefit of feral animal control, being a reduction of crop and livestock losses to producers, and the environmental benefits of reduced feral animal populations'.[89]

Committee travel to Victoria: summary and comment

2.66 The Committee met with the CEO of the GMA, Greg Hyams, on 12 November 2014, along with other GMA staff and representatives from bodies such as Parks Victoria and the Department of Environment and Primary Industry (DEPI). The information below comes from that meeting,[90] as well as site visits to the Dargo and Grant townships.

Role of agencies in managing game hunting

2.67 While the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security is the minister with primary responsibility for game hunting, there are other ministers who have shared responsibility, such as the Minister for Environment and Climate Change.

2.68 The GMA is primarily a regulator, with responsibility for enforcement, operational policy, licensing, education and research. Parks Victoria manages the parks estate, while other areas are managed by DEPI, although it should be noted that there is a complex set of land classifications underpinning land use in the state. Victoria Police manage protests, public order and safety and regulates firearms use, ownership and trade.

Game Management Authority (Vic): structure and governance

2.69 The GMA is a statutory authority established in June 2014 but, as noted above, there is a long history of game management in Victoria. The GMA has a skills-based board, appointed by the Minister, which emphasises the administration and governance skills: the legislation sets out a number of qualities to which the Minister needs to have regard when appointing the board.[91] An external firm ran the Expression of

88 Id.

89 Ibid, p5.

90 See, for example, Game Management Authority, *Managing game hunting in Victoria*, Powerpoint presentation, 12 November 2014. This and other information provided to the Committee is provided on the Committee website.

91 *Game Management Authority Act 2014* (Vic), s10(3)(b).

Interest process to ensure DEPI and the GMA were separated from the process of appointment. The board on its own motion determines when it will meet.

Funding and economic benefits

2.70 The GMA is funded by appropriation, and has four years funding guaranteed at about $4.8 million funding per year. Licensing fees are paid into consolidated revenue.[92]

2.71 Licensing fees provide between $1.8 million and $2 million a year, with a charge of $52.90 for single species licence and $79.40 for three species.[93]

2.72 The GMA advised that the sustainability of resources is paramount. As an example, when environmental conditions are extreme, duck hunting seasonal arrangements may be modified or the season cancelled to ensure sustainability. For this reason, a cost recovery model is not considered feasible for Victoria. Further, current revenue raised through licence sales does not cover costs in regulating game hunting. Cost recovery pressures may produce actions that are at odds with the objectives of sustainable game management.[94]

2.73 As noted above, the economic impact of hunting in Victoria in 2013, when pest animal hunting was included, was $417 million.[95] Sixty per cent of the economic activity generated by hunting occurs in regional Victoria: that is, 60 per cent of the $439 million spent by game licence holders in 2013, which was an average year for hunting activity.[96]

Native title

2.74 The *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* (Vic) provides an alternative mechanism to the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) for resolution of land claims with traditional owners. In addition, because Victoria has always had a scheme of hunting being allowed unless otherwise stated prior to the enactment of the NTA, it is likely that any new game hunting legislation would not be considered a future act under the NTA.

2.75 The Committee was advised that:

> *Native Title claims and settlement agreements with Traditional Owners complement current hunting practices in Victoria. In certain*

92 Game Management Authority presentation to the Public Administration Committee, 12 November 2014.

93 http://www.gma.vic.gov.au/licensing/apply-for-a-game-licence, (viewed on 5 January 2015).

94 Email from Greg Hyams, Chief Executive Officer, Game Management Authority, 23 December 2014.

95 The State of Victoria, *Estimating the economic impact of hunting in Victoria in 2013*, Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Melbourne, 2014, pii.

96 Ibid, p24.

situations there are additional species, areas and methods for hunting that are available to Traditional Owners.[97]

2.76 The Committee was further advised that:

> *Victoria recently entered into a Natural Resource Agreement with the Dja Dja Wurrung as part of a settlement under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010. A number of other agreements exist with other traditional owner groups. As part of the agreement with the Dja Dja Wurrung, traditional owners are allowed to hunt game in accordance with the game regulations that already exist, however, they do not have to pay for or obtain a Game Licence. Should Traditional Owners wish to hunt game outside of the regulations, they can enter into specific agreements with DEPI and the GMA. In addition, Dja Dja Wurrung members have also been provided with the authority to harvest native wildlife not previously allowed to be recreationally hunted. This includes species such as kangaroos and possums etc. Methods of take and numbers allowed to be harvested are documented under the agreement.*
>
> *Victoria expects to enter into approximately seven new Natural Resource Agreements within the next seven years. Similar to Dja Dja Wurrung both game and native wildlife agreements will be negotiated*.[98]

Controlling pests on public land

2.77 The *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (Vic) declares pest animals. Public land managers and private land holders have an obligation to control pest animals on the land over which they have responsibility.

2.78 Pest animals cannot be hunted on State Game Reserves or areas under the park reserve system in Victoria.[99] Pest animals include pigs, foxes, wild dogs, and rabbits.[100] If a species is declared a pest animal, this changes the status and governance of the species. For example, private landowners would have an obligation to control deer on their properties and a significant amount of public land in National Parks currently available for deer hunting would be closed.

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97 Letter from Adam Fennessy, Secretary, Department of Environment and Primary Industries (Victoria), 30 July 2014, p2.

98 Email from Greg Hyams, Chief Executive Officer, Game Management Authority, 23 December 2014.

99 Game Management Authority, *Managing game hunting in Victoria*, Powerpoint presentation, 12 November 2014, p21.

100 http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/agriculture-and-food/pests-diseases-and-weeds/pest-animals/a-z-of-pest-animals, (viewed on 23 February 2015).

2.79 For State Game Reserves, there are restrictions on hunting pest animals to ensure that hunting activity doesn't impact on waterfowl during vulnerable periods, such as breeding. Game hunting seasons are set to avoid periods of vulnerability, such as breeding or times of environmental extremes.[101]

2.80 There is no regulation of pest hunting in Victoria, apart from the requirement to have a firearms licence if using a firearm and to ensure that hunting is humane. For people using firearms on private property or leased and licensed land they must have the permission of the landowner, manager, lessee or licensee.[102]

2.81 Pest animal hunting can occur on all unreserved Crown land, and all reserved Crown land unless prohibited. For example, hunting of pest animals is prohibited in National Parks and State Parks, but some Forest Parks and Coastal Parks are open to pest hunting. All hunting must be carried out in a humane manner under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* (Vic). About 132 000 firearms licence holders nominate pest animal hunting as their primary reason for having a licence, out of an approximate 300,000 firearm licences in Victoria.[103]

2.82 Parks Victoria works with Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (SSAA) to GMundertake shooting programs of pest animals. The use of the poison 1080 is restricted in Victoria because native species are affected. A Conservation and Pest Management course undertaken by SSAA members to take part in Parks Victoria pest animal management programs, which includes a firearms proficiency requirement.

2.83 Parks Victoria emphasised that intensity of the shooting program is vital in managing pest animals, with an integrated approach necessary to have the maximum impact on populations of pest animals.[104]

2.84 Remote areas and difficult terrain can affect success of programs. The catch rate can affect volunteer enthusiasm, and the skill and expertise of volunteers is important. The Victorian government has granted $400 000 to the SSAA to assist specifically with pest animal control in partnership with Parks Victoria over four years.

2.85 The GMA stated there was anecdotal evidence that systematic hunting can have impact on pest animal populations, however, it appears that it is not effective as pest control unless it is part of a broader program. It is necessary to monitor pest animals before and after programs take place.

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101 Game Management Authority, *Managing game hunting in Victoria*, Powerpoint presentation, 12 November 2014, p19.

102 Ibid, p21.

103 Id.

104 Parks Victoria, *Hunting in National Parks in Victoria*, Powerpoint presentation, 12 November 2014, p15.

Risk management

2.86 The GMA stated that the incident of injuries during hunting is very low in Victoria: in game hunting, there were three fatalities between 1995 and 2014.[105] Hunters don't want to be in areas where other people are, which makes it easy to avoid conflict.

2.87 The GMA advised that hunters are not required to wear blaze orange, as it may lead to the perception that they only need to look for blaze orange. Education of hunters emphasises that there is only one tool for safety: identify your target. If you're not sure, don't shoot.

Illegal hunting/compliance

2.88 The GMA held the view that Victorian hunters are generally a very compliant group.

2.89 GMA has four dedicated compliance officers who work with Parks Victoria rangers and the police, and any other agency with an interest.

2.90 A risk-based approach is taken to non-compliance, having regard to the highest risk activities and targeting resources accordingly. Reputational risk also important to consider.

2.91 Managing hunting culture is one of the roles of GMA. For example, hunting organisations partner with GMA to promote responsible hunting behaviour, and illegal hunting is not tolerated.

Case studies: Victoria

2.92 Murray Sunset Goat control program: an aerial survey of Murray Sunset National Park in 2003 showed that feral goats were causing a great deal of vegetation damage. An estimated 9,000 to 12,000 goats were present.[106]

2.93 A four week aerial muster removed 909 goats; trapping did not take place as the commercial markets for goats collapsed.

2.94 Parks Victoria partnered with the Nhill SSAA, resulting in 45 goat hunts of 2.5 days in duration, removing 3544 feral goats, 39 feral pigs, 42 foxes and 8 feral cats over 10 years. The SSAA contributed 16 292 volunteer hours, and spent $30 400 on fuel, food and ammunition. Seventeen members also purchased firearms for the culling program,

105 Email from Greg Hyams, Chief Executive, Game Management Authority, 26 February 2015, p1.

106 Parks Victoria, *Hunting in National Parks in Victoria*, Powerpoint presentation, 12 November 2014, p18.

costing more than $26 000. The total investment by volunteer hunters is $67 380 over the period.[107]

2.95 In addition, there was positive media and community engagement with the program.

2.96 Other programs have taken place in the Dandenong ranges with ADA and SSAA culling deer. Risk management was an important part of the shooting program, as the area is extremely popular with visitors. Tracks were closed, and skilled shooters used. The program took place with no incidents.

2.97 Another project took place at the Werribee Park mansion, where there was extensive rabbit damage. However, 1080 was not able to be used to control the rabbits, as the garden beds are historically registered. Sporting shooters have taken 1000 rabbits out of a small area, hunting every Wednesday night using spotlights. Horticulturalists at the mansion report that there are no longer rabbits in the area.

Heart Morass Restoration Project

2.98 In Victoria, the Field and Game Association has undertaken significant conservation work in Gippsland. The Committee highlights the work done in that region as it is a demonstration of the public benefit that may arise partly as a result of a licensed hunting regime.

2.99 The Committee visited the Heart Morass area, a 3147 acre wetland near Sale, Victoria. This was purchased in stages by the Field and Game Association (FGA) with the support of the Hugh Williamson Foundation.[108] Extensive restoration work has been completed by the FGA. While only FGA members can hunt during prescribed hunting seasons, Heart Morass is open to visitors all year round by appointment.[109]

2.100 The West Gippsland Catchment Authority describes the area as being located 'within an area of ecological diversity and complexity – a meeting place of waters and environments at the interface of two large and well-defined ecosystems; the Gippsland Plains and the Gippsland Lakes'.[110] Before the site was rehabilitated, it was suffering from the effects of 'drainage, grazing, salination and acidification'.[111]

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107 Parks Victoria, *Hunting in National Parks in Victoria*, Powerpoint presentation, 12 November 2014, pp19-20.

108 http://www.wet.org.au/heart.html, (viewed on 12 January 2015).

109 Rod Drew, Director Policy and External Relations, FGA, 24 February 2015, p1.

110 http://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/programs/latrobe/131-heart-morass-restoration-project.html, (viewed on 12 January 2015).

111 Id.

2.101 Since 2006, volunteer conservationists coordinated by the Field and Game Association of Victoria have rehabilitated the Heart Morass wetland. The rehabilitation includes:

- Planting approximately 50 000 indigenous trees, shrubs and grasses.
- Controlling high-threat weeds such as blackberry, boxthorn and invasive grasses.
- Collecting seeds from more than 50 wetland and riparian plant species to support future revegetation efforts.
- Undertaking seasonal botanical surveys. Twelve 10 by 10 metre quadrants have been monitored four times for floristic diversity, cover abundance, photo-points and water quality.
- Fauna and bird surveys completed by ecological consultants, such as active Sea Eagle nest and Growling Grass Frog population.
- Capturing formal and informal photo-points to catalogue the restoration process and response of the landscape.
- Identifying two highly significant eucalypt species found on the WET Trust property by the State Herbarium, including one potentially new species of Eucalypt.
- Carrying out earthworks to block old drains and inappropriate drainage.
- Constructing artificial earth mounds or “habitat” islands which have been planted with indigenous plants.
- Direct seeding of indigenous vegetation, such as grasses, rushes, trees and shrubs.
- Removing more than 20 tonnes of carp in partnership with commercial fisheries.
- Undertaking extensive work to investigate, justify and secure environmental water entitlements from the Latrobe, Thomson and Macalister Rivers. This water is fundamental to the restoration of the wetland.

- Creating a Heart Morass hydrological model and design of water control structures and watering plans.[112]

2.102 The following photographs demonstrate the rehabilitation of the Heart Morass site between 2007 and 2014.

Figure 2 2007

[112] See http://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au/programs/latrobe/131-heart-morass-restoration-project.html, (viewed on 12 January 2015).

Figure 3 2014

Figure 4 2014

Figure 5 2007

Figure 6 2007

Figure 7 2014

Figure 8 2007

Figure 9 2014

Figure 10 2007

Figure 11 2014

Figure 12 2007

Figure 13 2014

Figure 14 2007

Figure 15 2014

Queensland

2.103 The *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002* (Qld) governs the control of pest animals in Queensland.[113] Pest animals declared under the Act include deer, camels, foxes, goats, pigs, cats, wild dogs and horses. Pest animals can be hunted on private land with the landholder's permission.[114] Queensland's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry notes that 'shooting is a costly control method and is generally only effective in controlling individual animals remaining after a baiting program, or targeting bait or trap-shy animals'.[115]

2.104 There is no regulated, licensed recreational hunting system in Queensland for hunting pest or game animals.

2.105 Like Western Australia, Queensland does not have any species classified as game.

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113 http://www.daff.qld.gov.au/plants/weeds-pest-animals-ants/legislation-policies-permits, (viewed on 28 July 2014).

114 http://www.daff.qld.gov.au/plants/weeds-pest-animals-ants/pest-animals/control-methods/shooting, (viewed on 28 July 2014).

115 Id.

Tasmania

2.106 The Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) is responsible for wildlife management in Tasmania.

2.107 In relation to pest animals, DPIPWE issues crop protection permits to landholders to help manage both native and introduced pest animals.[116] These permits enable private landholders and managers to issue further permits to hunters to control pest animals on their behalf, in accordance with the *Nature Conservation Act 2002* (Tas) and the *Wildlife (General) Regulations 2010* (Tas).[117]

2.108 DPIPWE also operates a game licence and wildlife permit system to issue authorisations for taking, possessing or trading in protected wildlife or their products.[118]

2.109 There are recreational game seasons for wallaby, wild duck, brown quail, pheasant, fallow deer and mutton birds on public land.[119] Pest animals can be hunted on private land, Crown land and state forest with the permission of the landholder.[120] Recreational game licences can be purchased at Service Tasmania, by post or over the Internet, and renewal notices are sent out each January.[121]

2.110 The revenue for these licence sales in 2012 were:[122]

Species	Sales	Revenue
Brown Quail	247	$6 585.60
Wallaby	7236	$191 772.40
Deer	4325	$260 807.40
Muttonbird	960	$25 536.00
Pheasant	123	$1 677.20
Wild Duck	1032	$27 406.40
Total	**13 923**	**$513 785.00**

116 http://dpipwe.tas.gov.au/wildlife-management/management-of-wildlife/managing-wildlife-browsing-grazing-losses/permits-and-regulations#Species-asclassifiedundertheWildlife(General)Regulations2010, (viewed on 28 July 2014).

117 Id.

118 Email from Greg Hocking, Manager, Wildlife Monitoring & Management Section, Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, 12 March 2014, p1.

119 http://dpipwe.tas.gov.au/wildlife-management/management-of-wildlife/game-management/game-hunting-requirements, (viewed on 27 October 2014).

120 Id.

121 Email from Greg Hocking, Manager, Wildlife Monitoring & Management Section, Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, 12 March 2014, p2.

122 Ibid, p3.

2.111 It should be noted that the figures above concern licence sales only, and do not include general expenditure on hunting.

Northern Territory

2.112 The Northern Territory requires hunting permits for feral pigs and waterfowl.[123] Shooters' permits can be obtained from the Northern Territory's Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment, which enables permit holders to hunt on specified areas of Crown land for the purposes of recreational hunting.[124] Pest animals are declared under s 47(1) of the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 2006* (NT).[125]

Waterfowl (hunting season – September to December)		
Year	**Sales**	
2011	1855	
2012	2081	
2013	2070	
2014	2175	

Pig hunting – 1 year permits		
2011-12	409	
2012-13	514	
Pig hunting – implemented 5 year permits in addition to 1 year permits		
2013-14	175	
2013-18	276	
2014-15	65	
2014-2019	449	

2.113 A permit from the relevant Land Council is required to hunt on Aboriginal lands.[126]

Australian Capital Territory

2.114 In the ACT, pest animals are declared under the *Pest Plant and Animals Act 2005* (ACT). These animals include rabbits, hares, pigs, goats, foxes, feral cats and feral dogs, and are listed under the *Pest Plants and Animals (Pest Animals) Declaration 2005*.[127] To obtain a firearms licence in the ACT, a genuine reason is required, which includes recreational hunting or vermin control on private property, which can be

123 http://www.parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au/permits/wildlife/hunting, (viewed on 5 August 2014).

124 http://www.lands.nt.gov.au/landadmin/shooters-permits, (viewed on 5 August 2014).

125 http://www.parksandwildlife.nt.gov.au/wildlife/exotic, (viewed on 5 August 2014).

126 http://www.nlc.org.au/articles/info/frequently-asked-questions/, (viewed on 5 August 2014).

127 *Pest Plants and Animals (Pest Animals) Declaration 2005* (No 1) Disallowable Instrument DI2005-255.

undertaken with the permission of the owner.[128] The *Firearms Act 1996* (ACT) also notes that pest animals can be taken by firearm licence holders 'with the permission of ACT Parks and Conservation Service or ACT Forests or another authority prescribed'.[129] No hunting licence fees are payable.

South Australia

2.115 South Australia requires basic hunting permits for feral animal hunting, as well as the written permission of the landholder on private land.[130] Hunting is regulated under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* (SA) and the *National Park and Wildlife (Hunting) Regulations 2011* (SA). Ducks and quail can only be taken during an open season, and hunters are required to sit a Wildlife Identification Test.[131]

2.116 Licence numbers for permits in South Australia in 2012 and 2012 were:

	Class number	2012	2013
Basic	1	5429	6052
Open season duck	2	1434	1594
Pensioner basic	3	1240	1416
Pensioner open season	4	14	316
Junior basic	5	126	125
Junior open season	6	53	48
Sub-junior	7	75	72
Open season quail	8	395	331
Basic/quail - pensioner	9	126	102
Basic/quail - junior	10	8	5
Total		**8900**	**10 061**

Finding 3: The Committee finds that there are long standing, well-established systems for recreational hunting in other jurisdictions.

128 *Firearms Act 1996* (ACT), Table 61.

129 Id.

130 http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/managing-natural-resources/plants-and-animals/Permits_licences/Native_animals_in_the_wild/Hunting_Permits/Hunting_feral_animals, (viewed on 5 August 2014).

131 Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, 'Hunting in South Australia', n.d., p2.

CHAPTER 3

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONTRIBUTION OF RECREATIONAL HUNTING SYSTEMS

PEST MANAGEMENT IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA: OVERVIEW

3.1 There is widespread agreement that feral animals cause environmental damage and economic loss to primary producers,[132] as well as harm to native animals. The evidence received by the Committee suggests hunters, animal welfare bodies and government departments agree on this point. The difficulty in managing feral animal populations is exacerbated by the large areas of Western Australia that are sparsely populated: pastoral leases comprise 38 per cent of the state, while unallocated Crown land (UCL) and unmanaged reserves (UMR) comprise a further 36 per cent of Western Australia's land mass, equating to nearly one million square kilometres.[133]

3.2 The *Biological and Agricultural Management Act 2007* defines and declares pest animals and weeds. The Department of Agriculture and Food (DAFWA) maintains a list of declared pests on its website. The list includes, but is not limited to, wild dogs, several types of deer, feral horses, wild boars/feral pigs, dromedary camels, feral goats, feral donkeys and red foxes.[134]

3.3 The responsibility for managing pest animals on public lands rests with the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) by virtue of the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* and the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*. DPaW takes the view that the most efficient and effective means of pest animal control is 'by way of well-coordinated, targeted and managed programs'.[135] DPaW works with shooting groups in targeted pest animal control programs which are enabled under existing legislative and regulatory frameworks and departmental policies.[136]

EFFECTIVENESS OF RECREATIONAL HUNTING AS PEST CONTROL

3.4 DPaW presented a review of scientific literature in their submission regarding the management of pest animals.[137] This literature suggests that 'the shooting of pest

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132 See for example Western Australian Auditor General's Report 18, *Managing the Impact of Plant and Animal Pests: A State-wide Challenge*, December 2013, p5.

133 Colin Slattery, Director General, Department of Lands, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p2.

134 See https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/pests-weeds-diseases, (viewed on 24 November 2014).

135 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, pi.

136 Ibid, pii.

137 Ibid, pp7-10.

animals is most effective [for control of pest populations] when conducted as part of a planned and coordinated approach'.[138] By contrast, recreational hunting is likely to occur 'at random locations and times, making it more difficult to accurately plan for and monitor the outcomes'.[139] This is not likely to be effective in managing pest animal numbers. In evidence, Dr Stoneman observed that:

> *One of the key things for a pest animal control program to be effective is that it really needs to have quite a significant impact on the species that you are looking to target, because most of these pest animals are highly invasive. They have usually got very high reproductive rates, so you would need to actually have a very big impact on a population before that starts to have an environmental impact or else you are simply removing animals which would be removed by competition between the different animals in that population. To have such a big impact on a population really requires a pretty well coordinated, integrated and targeted program in particular areas where those feral animals are having significant impacts on particular environmental animals*.[140]

3.5 DAFWA expressed a similar view about the effectiveness of a recreational hunting system in controlling pest animals:

> *I think we really start from the need that most of these animals should be controlled across the landscape. They are very mobile and if you are controlling them only in very small pockets, then you may well be hunting but you will not be controlling them. But there will be parts, including of the very vast landscapes of the rangelands, where a well-organised program, with all the appropriate approvals and processes in place, where recreational shooters with the approval of the appropriate landholders et cetera could be a very valuable adjunct to a broader control program. But I expect it will be an adjunct to a control program because they simply could not get across enough land to be able to really control large numbers. Theoretically, it is possible that you could have recreational hunters operating from helicopters and the like, as they do, but this is a specialised role and our people who do this are vastly experienced and highly skilled*.[141]

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138 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, p7.

139 Ibid, p10.

140 Dr Geoff Stoneman, Director, Forest and Ecosystem Management, Department of Parks and Wildlife, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p2.

141 Rob Delane, Director General, Department of Agriculture and Food, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p6.

3.6 A number of organisations, including the Wildflower Society of Western Australia and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), referred to a paper published by the Invasive Species Council which refutes claims made by Sporting Shooters Association Australia (SSAA) and others that recreational hunting controls pest animals, or is equivalent to professional control programs.[142] The Invasive Species Council was established in 2002 by environmentalists, and is an 'incorporated not-for-profit charitable organisation' based in Victoria, and supported through private donations.[143] The main argument in that paper is that:

> *feral animals are highly mobile and highly fecund, and quickly replace those killed [by recreational hunters] … For many invasive species, more than 50 per cent of the population must be culled each year just to maintain the status quo; for foxes in Victoria the estimate is more than 65 per cent*.[144]

3.7 The paper cites research suggesting that even large culls may not:

> *reduce populations or have environmental benefits, and may even result in perverse outcomes of expanded distributions and increased densities of targeted and non-targeted feral animals.*[145]

3.8 According to the Invasive Species Council, the goal of pest animal control should be 'set in terms of biodiversity benefits, not numbers of pests killed'.[146]

3.9 The paper also suggests that in relation to shooting pest animals, notwithstanding the concerns regarding the effectiveness of merely reducing populations, 'professional programs are more effective than recreational hunting in reducing pest numbers'.[147] The paper summarises a number of small studies from South Australia, Tasmania, Florida and New Zealand showing that helicopter culls and targeted culling by professional shooters are more effective than using recreational hunters to remove pest animals.[148] It should be noted, however, that the examples were in relation to different animals in different locations using different methods of shooting. In addition, the paper notes that:

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142 Dr Carol Booth, 'Is recreational hunting effective for feral animal control?', http://invasives.org.au/download/reports/, 13 January 2009.

143 http://invasives.org.au/who-we-are/, (viewed on 23 October 2014).

144 Ibid, pp1-2.

145 Ibid, p2.

146 Id.

147 Ibid, p3.

148 Id.

> *The efficacy of recreational hunting as an adjunct to more targeted control programs has not been assessed in Australia. There are isolated examples, and they seem to have in common that a small team of skilled hunters is used to supplement other more effective methods.*[149]

EXISTING USE OF SHOOTING IN PEST ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

3.10 DPaW manages pest animal activity using aerial and ground shooting in conjunction with other methods.[150] The range and extent of these activities indicate the diverse and site-specific responses required to control the incursions of pest animals across the state.

3.11 DPaW has existing partnerships with recreational shooting organisations such as the Sporting Shooters Association Australia Western Australia (SSAAWA) and the Western Australian Field and Game Association.[151] These partnerships enable recreational shooters to take part in organised culls of pest animals following 'an on-site risk assessment, safety induction, and development of a detailed and coordinated "ground shoot plan"', overseen by a departmental coordinator.[152] DPaW holds public liability insurance to cover shooters, who are regarded as employees for the duration of the program.[153] Ground shooting programs have taken place in Cape Range National Park, Moora, Lake Muir/Denbarker and the South West, and other areas. These programs have been designed to meet the specific requirements of the local areas.

3.12 For instance, in relation to Lake Muir, 'shooting of feral pigs is undertaken in conjunction with a substantial, complementary trapping effort', with SSAAWA providing 'support and training in firearms safety and ethical control of pest animals', among other things.[154] The partnership has created 'considerable efficiencies' in managing the pest animal problem in that area.[155]

3.13 Further, in relation to the South West, DPaW has 'provided licences to up to seven registered and inducted volunteers over 25 years,' often dealing with 'specific pest

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149 Dr Carol Booth, 'Is recreational hunting effective for feral animal control?', http://invasives.org.au/download/reports/, 13 January 2009, p4.

150 See submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, pp5-6.

151 Kelly Gillen, Assistant Director, Regional and Fire Management Services, Department of Parks and Wildlife, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p4.

152 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, p3.

153 Jim Sharp, Director General, Department of Parks and Wildlife, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p4.

154 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, p4.

155 Id.

occurrences'.[156] However, partly due to the 'difficulty of recruiting replacement [volunteers] that can satisfy the strict code of conduct and ethics', the program has declined.[157]

3.14 The Wildflower Society of Western Australia suggested that it was difficult to find recreational hunters with the required patience to engage in effective pest animal control. Dr Wajon gave an example from his own properties in Tenterden and Boxwood Hill:

> *To shoot these animals you need to be very patient. You need to stake them out … As part of a DPaW grant, we engaged a shooter for 12 months. We paid them $500 a day to come and control and shoot feral animals on our property – whatever they could find; rabbits, cats, foxes and pigs. After four months of a 12-month contract, they quit. This was just too difficult; they could not handle the pressure. So we believe that recreational hunting does not provide an effective control mechanism for feral animals.*[158]

3.15 The Conservation Council contended that even though recreational hunters can currently hunt on private land, including pastoral leases with the permission of the landholder, there is an increasing reluctance for this to take place:

> *I think it is because private landholders have a range of concerns about the impact of recreational hunting on their lands, whether it relates to the safety of themselves or whether it relates to biosecurity risks such as the [spread] of dieback or whether it relates to impacts through four-wheel drive use and that sort of thing.*[159]

3.16 From the hunters' perspective, there are limitations on how extensively those wishing to be involved in pest animal hunting can be involved on public lands. Differing management practices among government agencies in different areas were seen as the main contributor to these limitations. While the SSAA is and has been involved in a large number of partnerships with government agencies, the approach is not uniform:

> *The manager in one district might be all for it, while the manager in another might not like the idea whatsoever. That is part of the issue. This state is one of the last in which quolls are kicking around, and*

156 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, p4.

157 Id.

158 Dr Eddy Wajon, Past President, Wildflower Society of WA Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p2.

159 Piers Verstegen, Director, Conservation Council of WA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p4.

> *they are at risk of being completely in danger. In some areas we are helping, and some areas we are not ...*[160]

3.17 The Western Australian Field and Game Association concurred with the SSAA's view of the limitations on current involvement in pest animal control in Western Australia:

> *We would have to approach the Department of Parks and Wildlife … We would need permission from the regional manager, and the department would develop a shoot plan, which is probably about 40 A4 pages. That is assuming that the regional manager was in agreement … Some managers are very supportive of getting rid of feral animals and some are not.*[161]

3.18 The Committee was given an example of the difficulties of coordinating with government departments to effect feral animal control:

> *There was a joint effort between ourselves and the Department of Parks and Wildlife in Carnarvon to reduce the feral donkey numbers on a property that Parks and Wildlife took over. It was a pastoral lease and it reverted to the Crown. It was carrying a heavy load of donkeys, based on the information from Parks and Wildlife. We put a team together and we were all set to go, but 24 hours before we were to go I had a call from the guy in their Carnarvon office who was most disappointed to say that his regional manager would not sign the shoot plan. That was annoying to the local office in Carnarvon and it was upsetting to our guys who had taken annual leave to go away for a week to reduce the feral donkey numbers … It is just an example of the hit-and-miss approach that Parks and Wildlife take to the management of land under their jurisdiction.*[162]

Finding 4: The Committee finds that there is a lack of conclusive data on the effectiveness or otherwise of recreational hunting as a form of feral animal control. There is a reliance on either small scale scientific studies or anecdotal evidence or speculation to inform conclusions on both sides of the debate.

160 Ronald Bryant, President, Sporting Shooters Association of Australia WA Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p6.

161 Howard Barks, Hunting and Habitat Director, Western Australian Field and Game Association Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p2.

162 Ibid, p3.

Finding 5: The Committee finds that there is an inconsistent approach by Department of Parks and Wildlife to engaging recreational hunters in organised and targeted feral animal management across different regions.

CHAPTER 4

ISSUES REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A LICENSED RECREATIONAL HUNTING SYSTEM IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

4.1 This chapter outlines the main concerns raised both for and against a possible recreational hunting system, except for the issues regarding pest animal management, which were dealt with separately in Chapter Three.

4.2 Although recreational hunting can and does take place on private land with the permission of landholders in Western Australia, there is no regulated, recreational hunting system.

4.3 The State currently has no animals declared as game.

4.4 If a recreational hunting system were to be implemented in Western Australia, there are a number of agencies which would have a role in its administration.

4.5 Other agencies would have an interest in, or be affected by, the introduction of such a scheme, or have carriage of legislation that would need amendment.

4.6 The main agencies and their relevant areas are listed below:

- **Department of Lands (DoL).** DoL has statutory responsibility for 92 per cent of the land mass in Western Australia, 36 per cent of which is Unallocated Crown Land (UCL) or Unmanaged Reserves (UMR).[163] DoL administers land rather than directly manages it; other agencies, such as DPaW, performs that role on DoL's behalf.[164] DoL administers the *Land Administration Act 1997*, provisions of which currently prohibit the discharge of any firearm or other weapon on Crown land without the permission of the Minster or reasonable excuse.[165]

- **Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW).** DPaW has statutory management responsibility for 28.5 million hectares of land and water in Western Australia (10 per cent of Western Australia's land mass) for various purposes under the *Conservation*

163 Colin Slattery, Director General, Department of Lands, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p2.

164 See Sandra Eckert, General Counsel, Department of Lands, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p4.

165 *Land Administration Act 1997* (WA), s 267(2)(h).

and Land Management Act 1984.[166] It is also responsible for fire prevention, weeds and pest animals on a further 89 million hectares of UCL and UMR.[167]

- **Department of Agriculture and Food (DAFWA).** DAFWA has statutory responsibility for, and operates programs in relation to, biosecurity and animal welfare under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* and the *Animal Welfare Act 2002*.[168]

- **Western Australia Police (WAPOL).** WAPOL administer the *Firearms Act 1973*, and is responsible under this for licensing firearms holders. Recreational hunting schemes usually require that applicants hold a firearms licence, however another body would be responsible for administering a hunting-specific licence. Legislative amendment would be required to ensure that the 'genuine need' test under section 11 can be met, should a recreational hunting scheme be implemented in the State.[169] WAPOL gave evidence that they already liaise with DPaW and hunting associations on various matters.[170]

NATIVE TITLE

4.7 The Committee notes that the activities of hunting for recreation and traditional hunting by Aboriginal people should be regarded as entirely separate. The South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC) pointed out that 'recreational hunting by the general public should not be confused with customary hunting by Aboriginal people because they are vastly different activities'.[171] Hunting for Aboriginal people 'is part of a whole suite of cultural activities that are intrinsically linked to … spiritual and emotional wellbeing'.[172] Hunting is only one native title right or interest, as will be discussed below.

4.8 The legal operation of native title in Western Australia is complex. The Committee makes the following observations to provide an aid to understanding the possible interaction of native title legislation and a potential recreational hunting system in the

166 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 28 March 2014, p1.

167 See Jim Sharp, Director General, Department of Parks and Wildlife, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p1.

168 See Robert Delane, Director General, Department of Agriculture and Food, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p2.

169 Dr Karl O'Callaghan, Commissioner of Police, Western Australia Police, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p2.

170 Craig Ward, Assistant Commissioner State Crime, Western Australia Police, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p4.

171 Justin McAllister, Joint Management Coordinator, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p1.

172 Id.

state. It should be noted that these observations do not constitute legal advice or opinion.

The *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) and its possible interaction with a recreational hunting system in Western Australia

4.9 As a Commonwealth act, the *Native Title Act 1993*(Cth) (NTA) takes precedence over state legislation.

4.10 The Commonwealth is empowered to make laws in relation to native title under s 51(xxvi) and s 51(xxix) of the *Constitution.* Following the decision in *Western Australia v Commonwealth* (1995),[173] it is clear that Western Australia can only legislate in respect of native title to the extent that such legislation is not inconsistent with the NTA.

4.11 For any legislative change regarding a recreational hunting system, it is therefore imperative that such change takes into account the rights and interests of Aboriginal people, as defined in the NTA, and that the Government adhere to any procedural requirements that the NTA may impose.

The potential for a recreational hunting system to affect native title rights and interests

4.12 The future act provisions in the NTA are designed to ensure that native title holders have a say in any government or other action that affects native title rights or interests. These rights may include exclusive rights, which allow a group to use an area to the exclusion of all others, or non-exclusive rights. Non-exclusive rights may include accessing the area for traditional purposes, such as ceremonies or camping, visiting and protecting important sites, hunting, fishing and gathering food or traditional resources such as water, wood and ochre, and teaching law and custom on country.[174]

4.13 An action that could potentially affect native title rights or interests is one which is 'wholly or partly inconsistent with their continued existence, enjoyment or exercise'.[175] The Committee received advice that the definition of 'acts affecting native title' is broad, and that it includes an act which is 'inconsistent with the enjoyment of native title rights, not just their exercise'.[176]

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173 *Western Australia v Commonwealth* (1995) 183 CLR 373.

174 Private correspondence, 26 June 2014, pp4-5.

175 *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), s227.

176 Private correspondence, 26 June 2014, p 7.

Finding 6: The Committee finds that the granting of recreational hunting licences may affect native title rights and interests, and therefore may be viewed as a future act under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).

4.14 DPaW noted that:

> *As at June 2013, there were 37 native title determinations in Western Australia covering about one third of the State. For much of these determination areas, the land is subject to exclusive possession native title* …. [and] *the majority of the remainder of the State is covered by registered native title claims.*[177]

Finding 7: The Committee finds that, as a consequence of the extent of native title determinations and claims in Western Australia, a government wishing to introduce a recreational hunting scheme may need to either compulsorily acquire the land, which would result in the payment of compensation to native title holders, or negotiate an Indigenous Land Use Agreement with each affected group of native title holders, except in areas where native title has been extinguished.

Establishing Indigenous Land Use Agreements in Western Australia

4.15 The process for developing an ILUA was outlined by Mark Gregory in his evidence to the Inquiry into Pastoral Leases.

> *The key statutory requirement for an Indigenous land-use agreement is that you need to go through a very robust process of getting the authorisation, the agreement of the whole native title group, and that essentially means notifying it widely, bringing that group together or as many of them as you can together in a large meeting, giving them all the information about the agreement and getting their agreement to it, and then going off to the Native Title Tribunal and registering the Indigenous land-use agreement.*[178]

Finding 8: The Committee finds that the process of establishing Indigenous Land Use Agreements can be lengthy and expensive. The Committee received advice that it would be challenging for Indigenous Land Use Agreements to be registered for the whole of Western Australia, as each area would require a separate Indigenous Land Use Agreement with each native title holder group.

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177 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, p21.

178 Mark Gregory, Partner, Castledine Gregory, *Transcript of Evidence*, 27 November 2013, p5. See http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/commit.nsf/(InqByName)/79408CEE13DAAAE448257BC10026AF5F?OpenDocument, viewed on 28 November 2014.

Finding 9: The Committee finds that it may be possible for Indigenous Land Use Agreements to be negotiated in certain limited areas for the purposes of creating a recreational hunting scheme.

Recreational hunting: the perspective of the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council and the Goldfields Land and Sea Council

4.16 The Committee received submissions from two Aboriginal organisations in the course of this inquiry. The SWALC is 'the native title representative body for Noongar native title claims in the South West of Western Australia'.[179] The Goldfields Land and Sea Council Aboriginal Corporation is a representative body which is the 'principal voice for Aboriginal people from the Goldfields-Esperance region on matters to do with land and waters, governance, social and economic development, heritage and other matters of justice'.[180]

4.17 The Goldfields Land and Sea Council stated in its submission:

> *The proposal that recreational hunting be used as a means of controlling pest animals on public lands is problematic for native title parties as it will impact on their native title rights and interests, as public or Crown land is where native title predominantly exists. In particular the right to practice traditional law and custom, and the right to exclude others from land where exclusive possession native title exists, will be affected by the proposal.*
>
> *When a native title claim is lodged with the Federal Court and registered by the National Native Title Tribunal, the native title claimants are afforded certain rights. These range from the right to be consulted, to the right to negotiate, depending on the act being undertaken. As a result of this, any proposal for recreational hunting will require some form of interaction between native title rights and that any right to be proposed to be provided to a recreational hunter.*
>
> *As native title parties will have the right to practice traditional law and custom, including the right to hunt and camp, on land where native title exists there will be significant safety issues for native title parties if recreational hunting were to occur.*

179 Submission No 313 from South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Corporation, 28 March 2014, p1.

180 http://www.glsc.com.au/, (viewed on 22 September 2014).

> *Any proposal for recreational hunting will necessitate strict notification of hunting and control of hunters to prevent injury to native title holders, and damage to areas that may contain sites of cultural significance, through unfettered access to these areas.*[181]

4.18 SWALSC also commented, in relation to the possible impingement on native title rights and interests:

> *Any proposed recreational hunting system must take into account potential native title implications. SWALSC would not support any proposal that would have a detrimental effect on Noongar native title rights. Further, SWALSC and the relevant Noongar native title claim groups should be formally consulted in regards to the design, location and implementation of any proposal to introduce a recreational hunting system in the south west.*
>
> *Any proposed program would also need to comply with CALM Act requirements to "protect and conserve the value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal peoples". Once again formal consultation would be required to ensure Noongar values are not negatively impacted by any proposed recreational hunting system.*[182]

4.19 SWALSC noted in its oral evidence that native title claims in the south west are currently under negotiation: six native title claims are underway over Noongar country in the south west, and access to country, including hunting rights, are part of the regime that is under negotiation.[183] Mr McAllister said:

> *What concerns us about* [a recreational hunting scheme] *is that having a proliferation of other people on the estate using firearms could have a negative effect on the ability of Noongar people to undertake their customary activities … we do not want to see the ability of Noongar people to hunt on the conservation estate and other crown land* [affected].[184]

4.20 This is not only a matter which relates to Commonwealth legislation. SWALSC stated that:

> *Under the Conservation and Land Management Act, the second highest management order of DPaW is to protect and conserve the*

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181 Submission No 35 from Goldfields Land and Sea Council, 20 March 2014, p1.

182 Submission No 313 from South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Corporation, 28 March 2014, p2.

183 See Justin McAllister, Joint Management Coordinator, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, pp1-2.

184 Ibid, p2.

> *value of the land to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people. There is a legislative requirement that any activities that DPaW undertakes do not have a detrimental effect on Noongar people's cultural values and a very strong cultural value in the south west for Noongar people is the ability to take a kangaroo and feed the family et cetera. That is something that is very important and that gives the Noongar people a lot of comfort going forward especially in the context of the native title negotiations.*[185]

Native title and recreational hunting systems in other states

4.21 It appears to the Committee that in other states where native title has not been extinguished or suppressed by existing land use, either the implications of the NTA have not been considered or alternative mechanisms have enabled the introduction of recreational hunting schemes so that they do not constitute future acts under the legislation. Regardless of how this has been treated elsewhere, the Committee has, as noted above, received advice that a recreational hunting system is likely to constitute a future act under the NTA in Western Australia, and therefore trigger the procedural requirements under that Act.

ANIMAL WELFARE

4.22 The issue of animal welfare and recreational hunting is one that attracted a great deal of comment in submissions and evidence.

4.23 There were concerns expressed by a number of agencies and other organisations regarding the animal welfare implications of expanding recreational hunting in Western Australia. DPaW, for example, expressed the view that 'unmanaged and unsupervised recreational hunting is possibly less likely to involve humane killing of animals'.[186]

4.24 As the agency with specific animal welfare responsibility, DAFWA observed:

> *One of the major issues facing pest management programs is the concern that animal welfare will be compromised. Major pest animal control programs, such as the recent cull of feral horses at Lake Gregory in the Kimberley region and the National Feral Camel Management program, are audited by independent veterinarians to ensure that the animals were killed humanely. This level of animal welfare consideration would be difficult to include in recreational*

185 Justin McAllister, Joint Management Coordinator, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p2.

186 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, p19.

> *hunting systems, and could put at risk the current pest animal control operations due to public concern.*[187]

4.25 The committee advising DAFWA on pest animal control ethics was also concerned that a recreational hunting system has potential to compromise animal welfare:

> *The Pest Animal Control Ethics Advisory Committee (PACEAC) was established to advise DAFWA on the ethics of pest animal control programs. PACEAC considers that there is a high risk that animal welfare will be compromised in a recreational hunting system. The* Animal Welfare Act 2002 *(WA) provides a defence against animal cruelty for the "usual and reasonable" killing of pests. The Committee recently endorsed six guiding principles of what it considers "usual and reasonable" killing of pests, which applies to the killing of pests not covered under a code of practice or other animal welfare guidelines. PACEAC has advised DAFWA that it would be difficult to regulate adherence to these guiding principles, codes of practice or other animal welfare guidelines.*[188]

4.26 There were other concerns that inadequate shooting ability and a lack of experience may result in the wounding and unnecessary suffering of animals,[189] as well the accidental shooting of native or endangered wildlife.[190] Concerns were also expressed regarding the inherent cruelty in practices such as hunting with dogs.[191] The orphaning of offspring was cited as an existing by-product of hunting, which would only increase with the implementation of a recreational hunting system in Western Australia.[192]

4.27 The RSPCA was keen to point out that while the organisation does 'support the control of invasive species under a firm management plan', it views recreational hunting for pest control as 'ineffective'.[193] It also stated that the RSPCA:

> *is not opposed to the shooting of animals; this can be a humane method of killing animals when done by experienced, skilled and responsible shooters, and when shooters adhere to accepted standard operating procedures.*[194]

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187 Tabled paper No 1 from Department of Agriculture and Food, 18 June 2014, p2.

188 Ibid, p3.

189 Submission No 300 from RSPCA, 28 March 2014, p3.

190 Submission No 278 from Animals Australia, 28 March 2014, p2.

191 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, p19.

192 Submission No 25 from Chidlow Marsupial Hospital, 13 March 2014, p1.

193 Lynne Bradshaw, President, RSPCA WA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p1.

194 Lynne Bradshaw, President, RSPCA WA, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p2.

4.28 The RSPCA does oppose in principle the hunting of animals for sport. In evidence, the following exchange took place:

> *Mrs Bradshaw: The RSPCA is against the hunting of animals for sport. But if you transfer the analogy I mentioned in my opening statement about a clean shot to the head, then I am sure that recreational hunters have expert marksmen who could be channelled into the system under the approved management plans, rather than opening up public lands for sport as such. So, there is a very distinct definition.*
>
> *Hon RICK MAZZA: All right. When you talk about the idea of hunting for pleasure, that is more the emotive side of things, rather than, I suppose, the actual fact of humane despatching of an animal. The hunting for pleasure side of the thing is what you object to. So it is more the emotive side of things.*
>
> *Mrs Bradshaw: It is hunting for sport. It is not emotive. It is actually a fact that the RSPCA policy is against any kind of hunting for sport. In other words, if there is a necessity to cull animals for a specific purpose because there is a species that is out of control and affecting the environment, or whatever, then under an approved management plan, with expert marksmen and in a certain way, we do not object to that.*[195]

4.29 The RSPCA stated that there were no reliable statistics for the wounding rates of animals by recreational hunters, but offered the following information in support of the use of professional shooters:

> *Wounding rates and estimated times to death from professional shooters have been studied for a number of situations. These report the outcomes that can be expected from skilled shooters under best practice conditions. For example, in Australia, for camels shot during planned and coordinated aerial culls by experienced and trained government shooters (see attached paper from Jordan Hampton et al) a wounding rate of 0.4% was found, with a mean time to death of four seconds.*
>
> *Overseas studies involving ground shooting of deer and for wild impala have reported similar results. During a cull of 856 wild impala in the Mkuzi* [sic] *Game Reserve, South* [Africa] *by a marksman, 93% of animals were killed with only one shot (to the*

195 Ibid, p4.

> *head) and 6% were wounded and then killed. The average survival time for wounded animals was 30 seconds. No animals escaped wounded. The animals were hunted at night with the aid of a spotlight to reduce animal stress prior to shooting and to ensure a high proportion of animals were killed instantaneously. In this example, the level of instantaneous unconsciousness quickly followed by death is comparable to what is achieved in commercial abattoirs (>94 % stunned instantly).*[196]

4.30 SSAA held that it is a misconception that a regulated hunting system will enable people to 'randomly go in and wantonly shoot just about anything. It is not going to happen'.[197] In relation to mistreatment of animals, the President of the SSAA stated that a regulated system will ensure hunters follow humane hunting practices, because:

> *You know exactly who it is that has gone into that area, and there is a lot of responsibility on that person at the end of the day. If something goes wrong in that square kilometre someone will say, 'Well, hang on, that animal has been shot with this particular calibre and that is what this person was using.*[198]

4.31 The Australian Deer Association was also keen to dispel the view that hunters are indiscriminate with their shot:

> *Our organisation has its training course, and that is what we teach: to be 100 per cent positive sure before a shot is ever taken.*[199]

4.32 Western Australian Field and Game Association took the view that animal welfare and safety issues would be addressed if hunters were required to be part of established organisations in order to get a permit:

> *We would like to see people who hunt on public lands be a member of an organisation such as the SSAA, the ADA or our organisation, where we have codes of practice and so forth to ensure that people operate at a high level of effectiveness and ethical treatment of animals*.[200]

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196 Supplementary information from David van Ooran, Chief Executive Officer, RSPCA WA, 17 September 2014, p1.

197 Ronald Bryant, President, Sporting Shooters Association of Australia WA Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p3.

198 Id.

199 Jeff Stuart, WA President, Australian Deer Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p4.

200 Howard Barks, Hunting and Habitat Director, Western Australian Field and Game Association Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p2.

4.33 The WA Vice President of the Australian Deer Association observed:

> *I might go hunting five times and probably fire my weapon twice. I am very, very specific in what I take, and I just think that I am providing for my family. It is not for some sadistic pleasure, as some people would have you believe. It is not blood lust or anything like that; it is about providing my food.*[201]

Finding 10: The Committee finds that animal welfare is a significant concern and consideration for animal welfare associations, government departments and organised recreational hunting groups.

SAFETY

4.34 The introduction of a recreational hunting scheme raised concerns regarding the safety of other users of public land. DPaW noted that there were '16.02 million recreational visits to department-managed lands and waters' in 2012-13.[202] More than 5000 licences were granted during the same period, enabling people to conduct activities on public land, and there were 300 commercial operators.[203] Groups using the land are diverse, including 'firewood collectors, researchers, other shire, government and industry employees [such as] Forestry Products Commission, Water Corporation, mining and public utility employees', as well as recreational users.[204] Some activity is planned, such as timber harvesting and mining operations, but 'much is unplanned or takes place on an opportunistic basis', making risk management challenging.[205]

4.35 DoL also submitted that a statewide recreational hunting system 'would be extremely difficult to administer' given the amount of land that would be available to hunters, equating to '38% of the WA landmass'.[206] DoL noted that 'bullets can travel anywhere from 800m to 8km', and that warning all other land users 'would prove to be difficult and onerous in practice'.[207]

4.36 Currently, recreational shooters are able to go onto pastoral leases with the appropriate permission from the leaseholder. DoL states that:

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201 Mark Mazza, WA Vice President, Australian Deer Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p4.

202 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, p10.

203 Id.

204 Ibid, p11.

205 Id.

206 Submission No 441 from Department of Lands, 4 April 2014, p7.

207 Id.

> *There is anecdotal evidence of a recreational hunter being accidentally shot on a pastoral lease, and a number of near misses on other pastoral leases involving recreational shooters and, variously, Aboriginal people, miners, prospectors, recreational and professional shooters.*[208]

4.37 Groups associated with bushwalking activities, such as the Perth Bushwalkers Club and the Bibbulman Track Foundation, expressed significant concern about the safety of having hunting in areas where bushwalkers might be present.[209] Organisations such as the Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Organisation were also concerned that 'uncontrolled shooting' could present a 'danger to human life'.[210]

4.38 Tourism Western Australia believed that any recreational hunting system in Western Australia would need to be 'managed carefully' in order not to 'impact negatively on people's ability to access the national parks, and the ability of the tourism operations that already exist in national parks'.[211] Research on tourism demand conducted by Tourism Western Australia found that:

> *A safe and secure destination ranks as the most important factor for choosing a holiday destination, and was named in the top five factors of destination chose by 61 per cent of respondents.*[212]

4.39 Tourism Western Australia concluded that there may be a risk that the introduction of a licensed, recreational hunting system on public land could influence the perception of the safety of Western Australia for tourists. Further discussion of the possible impact of recreational hunting on tourism is considered later in this chapter.

4.40 There was also concern expressed in the evidence the Committee received about the ability of government departments to manage hunters on the ground:

> *We know that DPaW, at the moment, is really under-resourced; I am not sure how they are going to coordinate anything like this anyway without extra government funding.*[213]

4.41 Training was suggested by a number of groups as the best way of improving safety outcomes. Zaine Beaton observed that:

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208 Ibid, p9.

209 See submission No 277 from Perth Bushwalkers Club (Inc), 27 March 2014, p2; submission No 301, Bibbulmun Track Foundation, 28 March 2014, pp3-4.

210 Submission No 303 from Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association, 28 March 2014, p1.

211 Stephanie Buckland, Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p3.

212 Ibid, p2.

213 Mike Wood, Chairman, Bibbulmun Track Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p4.

> *The level of training at the moment is very substandard. The level of training should, at the minimum, encompass some sort of practical component, where someone actually has physical contact with a firearm prior to getting a firearms licence; at the moment there is none.*[214]

4.42 The Australian Deer Association pointed out that hunters generally want to avoid other people:

> [People] *do not understand that people do not hunt on that track where they walk; the hunting is done in the bush because those people scare these animals away and that is why they survive. The hunting area that people hunt is not anywhere near where the general public use.*[215]

4.43 A study conducted on behalf of the Game Council of New South Wales suggests that in the context of general recreational activities, the deaths and injuries from recreational hunting is relatively low. [216] The data from the report was used by one submission to suggest that 'hunting is a safe sport, much more so than recreational fishing, because there were fewer fatalities associated with hunting'.[217]

4.44 Other submissions cited increased shooting accidents in other jurisdictions as a reason why recreational hunting systems should not be implemented in Western Australia. In New Zealand, for example, it was claimed that over the ten years to 2012, there had been ten shooting deaths and 81 injuries in national parks in which hunting has been permitted.[218] More recent figures from New Zealand suggest that number is increasing, and that those killed and injured are hunters themselves.[219]

4.45 In addition to actual injury, one submission cited research indicating that 50 per cent of surveyed Victorians 'would try and avoid areas in which duck hunting occurs'. suggesting that fear of injury would have an impact on recreational activities.[220] It was

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214 Zaine Beaton, Manager, Beaton Firearms, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p2.

215 Jeff Stuart, WA President, Australian Deer Association, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p5.

216 http://www.ssaa.org.au/hunting/educational-resources/2010-08_australian-external-cause-deaths-engaged-hunting-activities.pdf, (viewed on 6 August 2014).

217 Submission No 298 from Stephen Larsson, 28 March 2014, p13.

218 http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/opinion/feral-shooters-destroy-parks/story-e6frgd0x-1226390506034?nk=ef6192081b813f5abe73d9cb591e28c9#, (viewed on 6 August 2014), cited in submission 305, Anthea Shodley, 28 March 2014, p3.

219 http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11252951, (viewed on 4 November 2014).

220 Submission No 279 from Outdoors Australia, 27 March 2014, p3.

suggested that this fear could lead to a 'significant economic impact' for local outdoor clubs and a loss of social amenity for Western Australians.[221]

ILLEGAL HUNTING

4.46 The Committee heard mixed views regarding the impact a recreational hunting system may have on illegal hunters: some were of the view that they would be under pressure from such a scheme; other organisations believed that it would only exacerbate existing dangers for bushwalkers, orchid collectors and similar individuals.

4.47 Organisations such as the SSAA held the view that the introduction of a licensed, regulated hunting system would dissuade illegal firearms use:

> *Firearms owners have a lot to lose with regard to illegal activity. They will not only get a fine, but they will probably lose access to their firearms if they do something illegal.* [222]

> *… to have a firearms licence you have to be an absolute model citizen. You have to have ticked all the boxes, done all the right things and be above reproach. You have had criminal level checks in not only this state, but at a national level through the internal police system*.[223]

4.48 SSAA stated that 'it is not the licensed shooters who are the problem, who want to do the right thing across the board. It is just a few individuals out there and generally they are unlicensed'.[224]

4.49 Evidence from the Bibbulmun Track Foundation also identified existing problems with illegal hunters on the Bibbulmun, who are attracted to the site because of the shelters that have been put there to accommodate walkers. They provided details of 24 incidents reported by their members, following the Committee hearing on 20 August 2014, which variously described hunters, hunting dogs, vehicles and firearm discharge at Bibbulmun campsites.[225] Walkers reported feeling unsafe, unsettled, terrified, and intimidated by the conduct of the illegal hunters.[226] The Foundation expressed the view at the hearing that the introduction of a licensed, recreational hunting system would increase this type of activity:

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221 Ibid, p4, p3.

222 Matthew Godson, Special Projects Officer, Pest and Wildlife Management, Sporting Shooters Association of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p4.

223 Ronald Bryant, President, Sporting Shooters Association of Australia WA Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p5.

224 Ibid, p3.

225 Supplementary information B1 from the Bibbulmun Track Foundation, 19 September 2014, pp1-2.

226 Ibid, p2.

> *I think … as we encourage more people to get involved in hunting … that will start encouraging more people to go out more because they do not have a lot of those opportunities … I think what we will see is an increase in people around the track.*[227]

4.50 One of the activities associated with illegal hunting is the translocation of animals from one part of the State to another for the purposes of establishing new colonies for the purposes of hunting. DPaW stated that 'the illegal translocation of pest animals within WA for establishing new colonies of game species is a significant concern for the Department'.[228] The Department cited a 2005 study of 'the genetic structure of feral pigs in the south-west of WA', which found that 'individual pigs had been deliberately and illegally translocated to supplement recreational hunting stock'.[229] Similar results have reportedly been found in relation to wild deer.[230] Translocation risks spreading diseases as well as increasing the prevalence of pest animals.[231]

4.51 DAFWA also discussed the activities of illegal hunting of pigs in its evidence. DAFWA reported anecdotal evidence of death threats against members of biosecurity groups, as well as 'suggestions of public intimidation and property damage'.[232] DAFWA took the view that a regulated, licensed recreational hunting system might 'shade out' the activity of illegal pig hunting to some degree.[233]

TOURISM

4.52 The CEO of Tourism WA highlighted the importance of tourism to Western Australia's economy:

> *Tourism is worth $8 billion to the Western Australian economy annually, employs more than 91 000 people and accounts for about seven per cent of all jobs in our state. The state government's Tourism 2020 strategy sets the goal of increasing the value of tourism to $12 billion annually by 2020.*[234]

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227 Mike Wood, Chairman, Bibbulmun Track Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p4.

228 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, p17.

229 Ibid, p18.

230 Id.

231 Ibid, pp17-18.

232 Viv Read, Acting Executive Director, Invasive Species, Department of Agriculture and Food, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p6.

233 Rob Delane, Director General, Department of Agriculture and Food, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p6.

234 Stephanie Buckland, Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p2.

4.53 One way in which Western Australia has been marketed is as a destination that provides nature-based experiences for travellers. Ms Buckland cited a 2009 review of nature-based tourism run by the then-Department of Environment and Conservation:

> *The review recommended approaches to ensure that both tourism and conservation objectives are achieved in the management of national parks and other protected areas, development of infrastructure and the granting of commercial operations on these lands. Approaches included long-term tourism operator leases and licences for national parks, as well as the Naturebank program to reserve investor-ready land for accommodation development within national parks. Changes to commercial licence arrangements now mean that tourism businesses applying for a licence to operate within a national park or a protected area must obtain both a licence from the Department of Parks and Wildlife, and must be quality standard accredited by the Tourism Council of Western Australia. There are more than 300 licensed and accredited commercial tourism operations in Western Australia's national parks; some have secured long-term leases for nature-based tourism activities.*[235]

4.54 Mrs Buckland believed that Western Australia's 'brand promise' as a nature-based holiday destination needed to be considered if a recreational hunting system is implemented:

> *I believe it would have to be managed carefully because it could potentially impact negatively on people's ability to access the national parks, and the ability of the tourism operations that already exist in the national parks.*[236]

4.55 Tourism Western Australia conducted some modelling on the potential economic impact of a recreational hunting system in Western Australia, based on Victorian estimates of the study conducted there in 2013. Figures were extrapolated from the number of licensed gun owners in the state, and combined the number of hunters with the daily average spend per hunting trip and, separately, the average expenditure of hunters in Victoria annually. These two scenarios suggested either a likely economic spend of $44 million per year by recreational hunters using the daily rate, or $320 million using the annual on-trip expenditure figures.[237] While these figures sound

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235 Ibid, p3.

236 Id.

237 Myles Boardman, Government Relations and Policy Manager, Tourism Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, pp3-4.

significant, Mr Boardman pointed out that $320 million would account for four per cent of tourism spending in Western Australia.[238]

4.56 Tourism Western Australia also took the view that while there may be a small increase in tourism numbers if a recreational hunting system were introduced, the number was not likely to be significant:

> *The research tells us that the propensity to travel to hunt is primarily driven by the types of animals. Those would be, I guess, characterised colloquially as big game, such as deer – certainly some of the types of animals that hunters are able to hunt in Canada, the United States and Africa*.[239]

4.57 There was more likelihood that increased tourism would be generated from Western Australians rather than interstate or overseas visitors:

> *We think Western Australians would travel around the state and are likely to do that for the purpose of hunting, but I think it is unlikely that interstate and international visitors would travel to Western Australia for the purpose of hunting and bring their families along.*[240]

4.58 The Bibbulmun Track Foundation highlighted the tourism value in both the Bibbulmun and the Munda Biddi bike trail:

> *The Bibbulmun Track just got voted in the top 20 trails by National Geographic in the world, and the Munda Biddi has been voted the best off-road cycle trail in the world … the Bibbulmun Track contributes* [$39 million] *into the economy of the south west every year*.[241]

4.59 The Bibbulmun Track Foundation expressed concern that Western Australia might become similar to walking trails in the USA, where walkers have to wear high-viz gear, and report experiencing shooting near-misses.[242] An introduction of a recreational hunting system might detract from visitor numbers, and thus have a negative impact on the economy of the south west.

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238 Ibid, p4.

239 Stephanie Buckland, Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Western Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p4.

240 Ibid, p5.

241 Mike Wood, Chairman, Bibbulmun Track Foundation, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p2.

242 Id.

Tourism and Aboriginal groups

4.60 When asked about the potential tourism opportunity for indigenous groups in conducting recreational hunting tours, the following exchange occurred:

> ***Mr Shaw**: It goes to the defence and section 103A of the CALM Act, which says that a customary activity is for a non-commercial purposes; it is for self-sustenance. The defence under the CALM Act limits the level of activity you can have in regard to hunting.*
>
> ***Mr McAllister**: I would probably even go one step further and say that there is a far greater chance for cultural tourism and walking through the bush and taking bush tucker and those sort of low-impact acts, and they would be more financially viable in the long term as well. So, yes, we cannot see that as a real possibility.*
>
> ***The CHAIRMAN**: Is the term bush tucker confined to flora rather than fauna?*
>
> ***Mr McAllister**: When I say it in that term, it was, yes. That is sort of the passive, just collection of —*
>
> ***Hon AMBER-JADE SANDERSON**: I think an extension of that question is whether there is a potential limiting of tourism opportunities for traditional owners if you were to introduce recreational hunting like that?*
>
> ***Mr Shaw**: Yes. The counter to recreational hunting is limitations on access to the country where the hunting is occurring. One of the concerns the Land Council has is that the rollout of the program would have the high possibility of limiting the access of Noongar people to undertake their customary activities because of the recreational hunting in specific areas. That sort of impact is something the Land Council would not support in any way, shape or form.*[243]

SPREAD OF DISEASE

4.61 DAFWA had particular concerns about the potential impact of increased hunting activity on public lands in relation to the spread of diseases such as dieback as well as weeds:

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[243] Glenn Shaw, Land Unit Manager, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p3.

> *Unregulated movements of recreational hunters and hunting dogs increase the risk of weed spread on public land. Weed seed can be spread through mud on footwear and vehicles and adherence to clothing of hunters and coats of hunting dogs as they move from weed-infested areas into other non-infested areas.*[244]

4.62 DPaW also held concerns both about the spread of dieback, as well as the illegal taking of protected fauna. In relation to dieback, it observed that:

> *Hunting may lead to greater vehicle access to public lands through the use of minor tracks and management-only roads. This is likely to increase the risk of dieback disease introduction and/or spread, as well as have other impacts such as weed incursions, track creation, vegetation trampling and erosion. Dieback disease caused by P. Ginnamomi continues to spread and affect the distribution and abundance of many native south-west plant species and their associated fauna. This plant pathogen presents a significant threat to the health and vitality of many ecosystems in the south-west, and is spread by off-road vehicles in bushland areas*.[245]

4.63 Environmental concerns were also expressed by the Wildflower Society:

> *There is a great risk that recreational hunters will spread dieback and weeds … There is going to be increased camping in the bush, with cutting down of vegetation and the risk of fire*.[246]

4.64 The Wilderness Society also held concerns about the spread of dieback:

> *I would have no confidence whatsoever that recreational shooters would take the time and effort required to wash down their vehicles and their footwear prior to and after going on hunting expeditions in our natural environment. Therefore, it is almost guaranteed that they will spread dieback. Of course, once dieback is introduced into an area, there is nothing that can be done to get rid of it, and it kills hundreds of different native species*.[247]

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244 Tabled paper No 1 from Department of Agriculture and Food, 18 June 2014, p2.

245 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, p18.

246 Dr Eddy Wajon, Past President, Wildflower Society of WA Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p2.

247 Peter Robertson, Senior Campaigner, Wilderness Society (WA), *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p3.

4.65 The Wilderness Society gave examples of behaviour which is already degrading the natural environment:

> *Bush bashing, rubbish dumping and the shooting of protected wildlife occurs in many of our conservation areas. This is in the Perth metropolitan region … the Banksia woodlands of the Swan coastal plan are especially vulnerable to degradation by disturbance of the top soil. Once the top 10 centimetres is disturbed – it is mostly sand – degradation sets in, and it is irreversible.*[248]

4.66 The Wilderness Society stated that the biodiversity values of the Perth region are significant that problems with monitoring and controlling increased numbers of hunters, given the limited resources of DPaW, will put that biodiversity at risk.[249]

4.67 The Committee notes that is a requirement that all forest users need to observe existing dieback prevention procedures.

RESOURCING

4.68 There were concerns that the resourcing required for a recreational hunting system might divert funding from existing, effective pest management programs. DPaW stated:

> *Given recreational hunting has been identified and assessed as not being the most effective method of controlling pest animals when compared to organised programs or baiting programs … the department submits that if resources are removed from existing pest control programs and channelled towards a licensed recreational hunting system in lieu of existing programs, then the net effect will likely be a 'negative contribution'.*[250]

4.69 Supplementary information received from WAPOL expressed some concern that police resources would be further stretched by the implementation of a hunting scheme. In 2013, police 'attended 28 properties to respond to concerns from residents who heard gunshot fire in their immediate area'.[251] Fifty-five per cent of which occurred between 6pm and 10pm. WAPOL expressed concern that 'recreational shooting on public land will inevitably see a significant rise in these types of complaints, whether justified or not'.[252]

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248 Mary Gray, Member, Wildflower Society of WA Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 20 August 2014, p4.

249 Id.

250 Submission No 312 from Department of Parks and Wildlife, 21 March 2014, p16.

251 Supplementary information from WA Police, 18 June 2014, p5.

252 Ibid, p6.

4.70 However, WAPOL believed this could be managed within existing resources:

> *The only other aspect is that, from an operational policing perspective, the likelihood of persons being on crown land, particularly after hours, and coming into contact with other members of the public or other shooters and the capacity for accidental discharge of firearms may require a police response. We do not anticipate that, from our research around Australia, to be particularly onerous and it could be dealt with within existing resources. Provided those issues around licensing aspects are well addressed, we see no issues with this particular initiative*.[253]

4.71 The Committee notes that no modelling has taken place regarding the resourcing requirements of setting up a recreational hunting system in Western Australia.

LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT A RECREATIONAL HUNTING SYSTEM IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

4.72 A range of amendments to a number of acts or regulations may be required for a recreational hunting system to be introduced in Western Australia, regardless of its size or scope. These amendments are likely to include:

- *Firearms Act 1973,* s11A
- *Land Administration Act 1997*, s 267(2)(h)
- *Land Administration (Land Management) Regulations 2006*, regulations 13(1) and (4)
- *Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002*, regulation 12(3a)

OTHER COMMENT REGARDING THE ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL BENEFITS OF RECREATIONAL HUNTING SYSTEMS

4.73 It was clear that hunters in Western Australia are keen to have the opportunity to hunt on public lands in this state. About 280 of the more than 440 submissions received by the Committee were pro-hunting. The SSAA summarised the views of these submitters:

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253 Craig Ward, Assistant Commissioner State Crime, Western Australia Police, *Transcript of Evidence*, 18 June 2014, p2.

> *Our internal survey showed that 80 per cent of our members hunt or would like to hunt.*[254]

4.74 SSAA also highlighted the economic benefits of recreational hunting in other states:

> *You need to look at other states and the flow on effect to local communities, like in places like Matlock up in the hills with the deer hunters, and Kerang with the duck shooters especially. The amount of money and volume that goes into that small community is phenomenal.*[255]

4.75 Similarly, the Western Australian Field and Game Association noted that hunters from this state frequently travel because of the limited opportunities here:

> *At the moment, many Western Australians travel to Victoria and New Zealand in particular because recreational hunting activities here are very limited. Tasmania is another state that encourages recreational hunting on what I will call public land … the systems work exceedingly well in Victoria and Tasmania, and New Zealand.*[256]

4.76 In terms of direct benefits to firearms dealers, recreational hunting would provide a significant benefit to the local industry:

> *It is a very different style of shooting and* [recreational hunters] *would have to purchase very different equipment … I would put the value at, in total, between 150 and 200 per cent of the value of the firearm. So if the firearm cost $1000, the accessories purchased would be between $1500 and $2000 at an average.*[257]

COMMITTEE CONCLUSION

4.77 After considering the evidence, the Committee takes the view that the question of the introduction of a recreational hunting system in Western Australia is one that has many differing viewpoints in the Western Australian community. There are those who would be keen to see a system implemented. Conversely, there are those who would be keen to ensure a system is never implemented. It is because of these differing views that the Committee has not been able to reach a unanimous decision in its recommendations.

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254 Matthew Godson, Special Projects Officer, Pest and Wildlife Management, Sporting Shooters Association of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p4.

255 Ronald Bryant, President, Sporting Shooters Association of Australia WA Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p2.

256 Howard Barks, Hunting and Habitat Director, Western Australian Field and Game Association Inc, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, p1.

257 Zaine Beaton, Manager, Beaton Firearms, *Transcript of Evidence*, 13 August 2014, pp1-2.

Recommendation 1: The Committee recommends that the Government introduce a two-year trial of recreational hunting on public land in Western Australia, taking into consideration the following issues that should be addressed:

- **native title and legislative requirements**
- **carrying out a thorough risk management assessment**
- **measuring the impact on feral animal numbers**
- **measuring the impact on the local economy and tourism in nearby areas**
- **implementing an online booking and GPS tracking system following the New South Wales model.**

The trial should be located in two separate areas, such as a reclaimed pastoral station in the Mining and Pastoral region and a state forest in the South West land division.

Hon Liz Behjat MLC
Chairman

10 March 2015

APPENDIX 1

RESEARCH ON HUNTING AND HUNTERS

1.1 Compared to other developed nations, there has historically been little quantitative data on recreational hunting in Australia.[1] It has been suggested that this is partly a result of different hunting regulations in different states, and because even in jurisdictions where game hunting is licenced, not all forms of hunting requires a licence.[2] Nevertheless, such research is important for wildlife management because 'the actions and attitudes of Australian recreational hunters are likely to have impacts on wildlife welfare as well as populations and habitats.'[3] It is also helpful for planners and economists to have a more detailed understanding of the economic impact of hunting, so that appropriate services can be provided to hunters and the communities around hunting areas.

1.2 Some recent studies have provided improved detail on recreational hunters in relation to both their expenditure and their reasons for hunting. These are considered below. There are also some reports from other jurisdictions which contain information which might be useful for comparative purposes with Australian data.

Recreational Game Hunting: Motivations, Satisfactions and Participation: New Zealand

1.3 The Centre for Land, Environment and People, based at Lincoln University in New Zealand, published a series of reports on hunters and hunting in the lead up to the establishment of the Game Animal Council, which was established in that country in November 2013.[4] The objectives of the report on the motivations, satisfactions and participation of recreational game hunters were to 'review New Zealand and international literature to identify the main motivations for participating in hunting, to identify the factors that influence hunter satisfaction, and to make an initial assessment of New Zealand participation levels.'[5]

1.4 The report provides background on the history of measuring hunter satisfaction, which has mainly been conducted by wildlife agencies so they can find ways of managing wildlife to provide satisfying hunting experiences.[6] However, the ways of understanding motivation and satisfaction has changed, and it is now understood that there are multiple motivations for hunting, as well as multiple ways in which hunters derive satisfaction for the hunt itself.[7] It should be noted that most of the studies referred to are focused on deer or big game hunting.

1.5 The report identifies two categories of variables relating to hunter satisfaction: the first are 'situational' variables, such as 'deer density, hunter density and the probability of taking shots and seeing deer', and 'subjective' variables, such as 'enjoying nature, and time with friends and family.'[8] The interaction of these factors means that 'a hunter who was unsuccessful in harvesting an animal could still determine that the hunt was of reasonable quality due to a number of other

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1 See N Finch, P Murray, J Hoy and G Baxter, 'Expenditure and motivation of Australian recreational hunters', *Wildlife Research*, 41, 2014, pp76-77.

2 Ibid., p77.

3 Ibid.

4 http://www.doc.govt.nz/about-doc/role/statutory-and-advisory-bodies/game-animal-council/, (viewed on 13 October 2014).

5 Amelia Woods and Geoffrey N. Kerr, *Recreational Game Hunting: Motivations, Satisfactions and Participation*, Report No 18, Land Environment and People: Lincoln University, June 2010, p1.

6 See ibid., pp4-5.

7 See ibid., pp5-6.

8 Amelia Woods and Geoffrey N. Kerr, *Recreational Game Hunting: Motivations, Satisfactions and Participation*, Report No 18, Land Environment and People: Lincoln University, June 2010, p6.

satisfactions being met, for example the enjoyment of being outdoors and solitude, while another hunter may fund this a poor quality hunt.'[9]

1.6 In relation to the motivation of hunters, one study cited in the report suggested that there are three categories: achievement oriented hunters, who are 'motivated by the attainment of a particular goal, which may be harvesting an animal for meat, a trophy or a display of skill'; affiliation oriented hunters, who 'participate in hunting with the primary purpose of fostering personal relationships with friends, family or hunting companions'; and appreciation oriented hunters, who 'are motivated by a desire to be outdoors, escape everyday stress or to relax.'[10] The report noted that 'hunters are often achievement oriented when they begin hunting, and becom[e] more affiliation or appreciation oriented as they get older.'[11]

1.7 Various studies of hunter motivation, mostly from the US, show that 'being in or experiencing nature has been consistently ranked the most important hunter based motivation, with the social aspect of time with family or hunting companions coming second.'[12] This correlates with the information gathered in New Zealand-specific studies, which show that 'it is not essential for most hunters to kill an animal to have a successful hunt, even for multi-day trips entailing greater investment of time and effort.'[13] Instead, the 'role of the outdoor experience is prominent.'[14] One study provided the following illustration of why New Zealand hunters enjoy hunting:

> *It's during this outdoor activity that we experience all those other tangible and intangible rewards when we 'go bush'. It's while on our forays and expeditions that we have 'adventures' and these bring about a certain extension to ourselves. We come face-to-face with the environment and the natural realm and we enjoy the myriad of things that are different 'favourites' for each one of us ... There are so many components that go into making a hunting 'experience' and this is why it is hard to isolate any single reason why we hunt.*[15]

1.8 Another hunter, expressing similar sentiments regarding the satisfaction of being in nature, added that 'there is no room here for the ghoul who revels in pain, bloodshed and death.'[16]

1.9 Nevertheless, the report notes that 'whilst hunting success is not the primary motivating factor for participation, continued lack of success reduces participation.'[17]

Sport Fishing and Game Hunting in Canada: An Assessment on the Potential International Tourism Opportunity

1.10 The Canadian Tourism Commission compiled a report on the current value and potential international tourism opportunities of recreational hunting and fishing in Canada. The report provides a summary of existing data in the provinces, stating that 'sport fishing and game hunting is already significant, helping to power tourism and the economy during off-peak seasons, and to

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9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., p9.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., p11.

13 Ibid, p14.

14 Ibid, p15.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid, p16.

17 Amelia Woods and Geoffrey N. Kerr, *Recreational Game Hunting: Motivations, Satisfactions and Participation*, Report No 18, Land Environment and People: Lincoln University, June 2010, p39.

part of Canada that normally receive fewer tourism benefits.'[18] The provincial statistics for hunting state that:

- In Quebec in 2004, there were more than 400,000 hunters generating C$300 million[19] in economic benefits.[20]
- In Ontario in 2000, the hunting industry created C$1.5 billion in economic activity and employed 20,000 people.[21]
- In Alberta in 2008, 99,001 hunters held hunting licences: 7 per cent of these were from outside Canada. Hunters from Alberta 'spent C$102.5 million in direct hunting expenditure', with a further C$7 million spent by hunters from outside the province.[22]
- In 2005, more than 5,000 hunters from outside British Columbia came to hunt in the province: 86 per cent of these were from the US, with Germany also being a significant source of hunting tourists.[23] Hunters spent C$116 million in 2003, with resident hunters spending C$70 million of this.[24]
- In 2010, Manitoba had issued more than 250,000 current hunting and fishing licences. While the province did not separate hunting from fishing in their statistics, except to say that ten per cent of licence holders both hunted and fished, while 24 per cent hunted exclusively.[25]
- In 2006 in Saskatchewan, hunting was estimated as generating a total of more than C$107 million, and being responsible for 1011.8 Full Time Equivalent positions.[26]

1.11 The report also noted that US anglers and hunters visiting Canada 'normally participate in many other outdoor activities, especially those with a nature theme: wildlife viewing, hiking, climbing and paddling.[27]

2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation

1.12 The United States of America conducts one of the most thorough audits of hunters and hunting expenditure through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This survey has been undertaken every five years since 1955, and its purpose is to collect:

> *information on the number of anglers, hunters, and wildlife watchers, how often they participate, and how much they spend on their activities in the United States.*[28]

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18 http://en-corporate.canada.travel/sites/default/files/pdf/Research/Product-knowledge/Product-research/07082013_the_hunting_landscape_rev1.pdf (viewed on 13 October 2014).

19 As at October 2014, the Canadian dollar was worth $1.02 Australian dollars.

20 http://en-corporate.canada.travel/sites/default/files/pdf/Research/Product-knowledge/Product-research/07082013_the_hunting_landscape_rev1.pdf, p5.

21 Ibid., p5.

22 Ibid., p6.

23 Ibid., pp6-7.

24 Ibid., p7.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., p9.

27 Ibid., p13.

28 U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, *2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*, Revised February 2014, pvii.

1.13 The report has used comparable survey methodology since 1991. The survey collates data collected in different states, so state comparisons are easily available.[29]

1.14 The survey defines hunters as 'sportspersons who only hunted plus those who hunted and fished', and includes 'not only licensed hunters using rifles and shotguns, but also those who have no license and those who engage in hunting with archery equipment, muzzleloaders, other primitive firearms, or pistols or handguns.'[30]

1.15 There were 13.7 million hunters active in the United States in 2011, equating to about 6% of the population.[31] The most popular animals hunted were big game such as elk, deer and wild turkey: 85% of hunters pursued these animals.[32] In addition, 33% hunted small game such as squirrels, rabbits, and quails; 19% hunted migratory birds; and 16% hunted 'coyotes, groundhogs and raccoons.'[33] (The numbers indicate that some hunters hunted different types of animal.)

1.16 Hunters expended an average of $2,484 (US) per year on hunting trips, including equipment, licences, land leasing, hardware, vehicles and camping equipment.[34]

1.17 In relation to the type of land on which people hunted, the majority (8.4 million) hunted only on private land; 1.7 million hunted on only on public land; and 3.2 million hunted on both private and public land.[35]

1.18 In contrast with Australia, 89% of hunters are male and 11% female.[36] In terms of age, the group with the highest participation rate in the U.S. was 45 to 54 year olds, who comprised. 3% of all hunters.[37] The majority of hunters were Caucasian: 12.9 million out of a total of 13.7 million.[38]

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29 http://www.census.gov/prod/www/fishing.html, (viewed on 23 July 2014).

30 U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, *2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*, Revised February 2014, p2.

31 Ibid., p6.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid., p28.

36 Ibid., p29.

37 U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, *2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*, Revised February 2014, p29.

38 Ibid., p31.

APPENDIX 2

STAKEHOLDERS INVITED TO MAKE A SUBMISSION, SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

Stakeholders invited to make a submission:

1. Mr Ron Alexander, Director General, Department of Sport and Recreation
2. Hon Terry Waldron MLA, Minister for Sport and Recreation
3. Mr Karl O'Callaghan, Commissioner of Police, Western Australia Police
4. Hon Liza Harvey MLA, Minister for Police
5. Mr Jim Sharp, A/Director General, Department of Parks and Wildlife
6. Hon Albert Jacob MLA, Minister for Environment
7. Mr Rob Delane, Director General, Department of Agriculture and Food
8. Hon Ken Baston MLC, Minister for Agriculture and Food
9. Mr Piers Verstegen, Director, Conservation Council of Western Australia
10. Mr Rob Gillam, President, Pastoralists and Graziers Association
11. Mr Dale Park, President, Western Australian Farmers' Federation
12. Ms Lynne Bradshaw, President, RSPCA (WA)
13. Mr Ron Bryant, President, Sporting Shooters' Association of WA
14. Mr Colin Murphy, Auditor General, Office of the Auditor General
15. Mr Jeff Stuart, Secretary, Australian Deer Association (WA)
16. Mr Brian Backhouse, President, West Australian Field and Game Association Inc.
17. Secretary, West Australian Firearm Traders Association
18. Mr John Mapleson, President, Western Australian Shooting Association
19. Mr Steven Rose, Project Officer - Organisational Development, Department of Sport and Recreation
20. Mr Victor Schilo, Treasurer, International Practical Shooting Conf (WA) Inc.
21. Ms Denise Page, Secretary, WA Clay Target Association
22. Ms Lynette Bienkowski, Secretary, WA Pistol Association Inc.
23. Mr Michael Farrell, Executive Officer, WA Rifle Association
24. Ms Sue McKenna, Secretary and WASA Delegate, West Australian Small Bore Rifle Association Inc.
25. Mr Digby Corker, Chair, Pilbara Recognised Biosecurity Group
26. Mr Merv Wortley, Chair, Kimberley Recognised Biosecurity Group
27. Mr David Gooch, Chair,Carnarvon Recognised Biosecurity Group
28. Mr Ashley Dowden, Chair, Meekatharra Recognised Biosecurity Group
29. Mr Trevor Hodshon, Chair, Goldfields Nullarbor Recognised Biosecurity Group
30. Ms Cherry Hayward, Chairperson, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council
31. Mr Victor Mourambine, Chairperson, Yamatji Land and Sea Council
32. Ms Dianne Logan, Chairperson, Goldfields Land and Sea Council

Submissions received:

1. Mr Mike Butcher, Managing Director, Animal Pest Management Services.
2. Mr Ross Allanson, Private Citizen
3. Dr Neil Burrows, Private Citizen
4. Mr Bruce Teede, Private Citizen
5. Mr Alex Taylor, Commercial Sales and Lease, Giles Jones Real Estate.
6. Mr Peter Turner, Private Citizen
7. Ms Danielle Courtin, Private Citizen
8. Ms Louise Grigson, Private Citizen
9. Mr Trevor Ruwoldt, Private Citizen
10. Mr Malcolm Jenkinson, Private Citizen
11. Unknown
12. BD Wilson, Private Citizen
13. Mrs Margaret Cala, Serpentine Jarrahdale Residents & Ratepayers Association Inc
14. Mr Adam Thorn, Private Citizen
15. M & P Wilson, Private Citizen
16. Mrs Joan Payne, Private Citizen
17. Mr Jeff Stuart, Secretary, Australian Deer Association (WA Branch)
18. Mrs Helen Barnes, President, Waterbird Conservation Group Inc
19. Hon Liza Harvey MLA, Minister for Police
20. Mr Alfred Frater, Private Citizen
21. Mr Troy Morris, Field Representative, Bowhunting Division of WA, Australian Bowhunters Association
22. Mr Mark Appelt, Private Citizen
23. Mr Dave Keating, Private Citizen
24. Mr Paul Bloxham, Private Citizen
25. Ms Liz Appelt, President, Chidlow Marsupial Hospital Inc
26. Mr Steve Gray, Private Citizen
27. Mr Damian Buller, Private Citizen
28. Mr John Marshall, Private Citizen
29. Mr Rhys Ryan, Private Citizen
30. Mr Doug Potts, Private Citizen
31. Mr Jack Rooney, Private Citizen
32. Mr Bill Wilkinson, Private Citizen
33. Mr Mike Wood, Chairman, Bibulmun Track Foundation
34. Mr Charles McHugh, Private Citizen
35. Mr Hans Boukelund, Chief Executive Officer, Goldfields Land and Sea Council
36. Ms Corinne Van Burgel, Private Citizen
37. Mr Bruce Hale, Private Citizen
38. Mr Matt Graham, Private Citizen
39. Ms Naomi Rakela, Private Citizen

40. Ms Kellie Simone, Private Citizen
41. Ms Sally Hedderwick, Private Citizen
42. Ms Margaret Smith, Private Citizen
43. Ms Nicola Elton, Private Citizen
44. Mr Albert Mah, Private Citizen
45. Ms Ashleigh Jennifer, Private Citizen
46. Mr Graham Zemunik, Private Citizen
47. Ms Julia Rogers, Private Citizen
48. Ms Nicole Millar, Private Citizen
49. Ms Sara Murphy, Private Citizen
50. Ms Annette Leeder, Private Citizen
51. Ms Michelle Williams, Private Citizen
52. Ms Alison John, Private Citizen
53. Ms Anita Relo-Fisher, Private Citizen
54. Ms Catherine Reindler, Private Citizen
55. Ms Naomi Martin, Private Citizen
56. Ms Gail Luitingh, Private Citizen
57. Ms Gaye Reeves, Private Citizen
58. Ms Caroline Franklin, Private Citizen
59. Ms Maria Stzelecka, Private Citizen
60. Ms Ann Ward, Private Citizen
61. Mr Michael Hurtado, Private Citizen
62. Mr Joel Ryan, Private Citizen
63. Ms Maralyn Lindsay, Private Citizen
64. Ms Jennifer Collings, Private Citizen
65. Ms Charme Galvin, Private Citizen
66. Mr Kevin Matthews, Private Citizen
67. Ms Christine Chinnery, Private Citizen
68. Ms Josephine Norman, Private Citizen
69. Ms Moira Mrowinski, Private Citizen
70. Ms Siobhan Paget, Private Citizen
71. Ms Olga Pope, Private Citizen
72. Ms Meredith Scobie, Private Citizen
73. Ms Beverley Jeffs, Private Citizen
74. Mr Leith Maddock, Private Citizen
75. Mr Remus Parish, Private Citizen
76. Mr Jarrad Heritage, Private Citizen
77. Mr Sean Glisson, Private Citizen
78. Mr Mike Mazza, Private Citizen
79. Ms Beatrice Laufer, Private Citizen
80. Ms Liz Johnson, Private Citizen
81. Mr Daron Harvey, Private Citizen

82. Mr Shawn Lowley, Private Citizen
83. Mr Garrett Cobby, Private Citizen
84. Mr Chris Evans, Private Citizen
85. Mr David Brougham, Private Citizen
86. Mr Anthony Smith, Private Citizen
87. Mr Alan Featherstone, Private Citizen
88. Mr William Dickson, Private Citizen
89. Mr Matthew Boots, Private Citizen
90. Mr Tim Chester, Private Citizen
91. Mr Nicholas Reed, Private Citizen
92. Mr Malcolm Jenkinson, Private Citizen
93. Mr Shane Murray, Private Citizen
94. Mr Brian Tuffin, Private Citizen
95. Mr David Briggs, Private Citizen
96. Ms Kirby Guy, Private Citizen
97. Mr Charles Smith, Private Citizen
98. Mr Cameron Metzke, Private Citizen
99. Mr Charles Smith, Private Citizen
100. Unknown
101. Mr Ken Elphick, Private Citizen
102. Mr Neil Purser, Private Citizen
103. Mr Joe Guivarra, Private Citizen
104. Mr David Kerr, Private Citizen
105. Mr Adam Harffey, Private Citizen
106. Mr Kris Townsend, Private Citizen
107. Mr Bradley Yates, Private Citizen
108. Mr Nigel Lees, Private Citizen
109. Mr Michael Broadbent, Private Citizen
110. Mr Peter van Maale, Private Citizen
111. Mr Robert Crouchley, Private Citizen
112. Mr Bill Mason, Private Citizen
113. Mr Neville Rennie, Private Citizen
114. Mr Jason Mercer, Private Citizen
115. Mr John Lindsay Smith, Private Citizen
116. T Atkinson, Private Citizen
117. Mr Paul Palladino, Private Citizen
118. Ms Katrina Love, Private Citizen
119. Mr Stephen Genovese, Private Citizen
120. Mr Grant MacLeod, Private Citizen
121. Mr Murray Whitson, Private Citizen
122. Mr Ken Elphick, Private Citizen
123. Mr Malcolm Ruwoldt, Private Citizen
124. Mr Michael Voorsluis, Private Citizen

125. Mr Marty Wenham, Private Citizen
126. Mr Aaron Kay, Private Citizen
127. Mr Larry May, Private Citizen
128. Mr Richard Palmer, Private Citizen
129. Mr Bruce Hill, Private Citizen
130. Mr Mark Milentis, Private Citizen
131. Mr Mal Reid, Private Citizen
132. Mr Trevor Ruwoldt, Private Citizen
133. Mr Brendan McKeaig, Private Citizen
134. Mr Russell Lewsey, Private Citizen
135. Mr Michael Treble, Private Citizen
136. Mr Hadyn de Jonge, Private Citizen
137. Mr Craig Franklin, Private Citizen
138. Ms Pamela Kemp, Private Citizen
139. Mr Rob Wood, Private Citizen
140. Ms Lauren West, Private Citizen
141. Mr Chris Johnson, Private Citizen
142. Mr David Cotter, Private Citizen
143. Mr Greg Jack, Private Citizen
144. Mr Kris Wetton, Private Citizen
145. Mr Graeme Cowan, Private Citizen
146. Mr George Mikulecky, Private Citizen
147. Mr Robert Fraser, Private Citizen
148. Mr David Finnie, Private Citizen
149. Mr Samuel Beeton, Private Citizen
150. Mr Lewis Knight, Private Citizen
151. Mr Chris Grainger, Private Citizen
152. Mr Brett Hayhurst, Private Citizen
153. Ms Julie Dall, Private Citizen
154. Mr Kingsley Highet, Private Citizen
155. Ms Jodie Parry, Private Citizen
156. Mr Joshua Falcetta, Private Citizen
157. Mr Bevan Steele, Private Citizen
158. Mr Astrid Coleman, Private Citizen
159. Mr Simon Omotosho, Private Citizen
160. Mr Scott Hill, Private Citizen
161. Mr Graham Wicks, Private Citizen
162. Mr Gary Traine, Private Citizen
163. Mr William Grainger, Private Citizen
164. Ms Tamara Beck, Private Citizen
165. Mr Glenn Lazaroo, Private Citizen
166. Mr Kyle Booy, Private Citizen

167. Mr Anthony Manuel, Private Citizen
168. Mr Ron Thomas, Private Citizen
169. Mr Synjon Anstee-Brook, Private Citizen
170. Mr Scott Tillotson, Private Citizen
171. Mr Wayne Higgs, Private Citizen
172. Mr Bruce Fisher, Private Citizen
173. Mr Maurizio Casadio, Private Citizen
174. Mr Niel Maartens, Private Citizen
175. Mr Sam Hackling, Private Citizen
176. Mr Ron Bryant, State President, Sporting Shooters Association of Australia WA (Inc)
177. Mr Murray Bow, Vice Chairman, Shooters and Fishers Party (WA) Inc
178. Mr Frederick Pryor, Private Citizen
179. Mr David Briggs, Private Citizen
180. Ms Jodie Briggs, Private Citizen
181. Mr Keith Mills, Private Citizen
182. Mr Eric Buehrig, Private Citizen
183. Mr Nev Kent, Private Citizen
184. Mr Gary Starcevich, Private Citizen
185. Mr Brad Wilsea, Private Citizen
186. Ms Jill Harrison, Private Citizen
187. Mr Eric Hooper, Private Citizen
188. Mr Phillip Knott, Private Citizen
189. Mr Bruce Yeoward, Private Citizen
190. Mr Jim Dawson, Private Citizen
191. Ms Leanne Smith, Private Citizen
192. Ms Penny McKeague, Private Citizen
193. Mr Andrew Bosma, Private Citizen
194. Mr John Blair, Private Citizen
195. Mr Steve Hogan, Private Citizen
196. Mr Dan McMahon, Private Citizen
197. Mr Bruce Meyer, Private Citizen
198. Mr Phillip Nix, Private Citizen
199. Mr Phil Morony, Private Citizen
200. Mr Nesbit Anderson, Private Citizen
201. Mr Ben Pike, Private Citizen
202. Mr Tristan Hartridge, Private Citizen
203. Mr Martin Mach, Private Citizen
204. Mr Stephen Dear, Private Citizen
205. Mr Leon Rakai, Private Citizen
206. Mr Horace Keswick, Private Citizen
207. Mr Steve Downey, Private Citizen
208. Mr Jeff Knight, Private Citizen

209. Mr Andrew Fairclough, Private Citizen
210. Mr Robert Daniel, Private Citizen
211. Mr Kevin Thomas, Private Citizen
212. Mr Bruce Tuffin, Private Citizen
213. Mr Craig Halsted, Private Citizen
214. Ms Agatha Prior, Private Citizen
215. Ms Suzanne Richardson, Private Citizen
216. Mr Gary Weston, Private Citizen
217. A Inaus, Private Citizen
218. Ms Barbara Mills, Private Citizen
219. Mr Jay Steer, Private Citizen
220. Ms Dana Tonello-Scott, Private Citizen
221. Mr Stephen Barrett, Private Citizen
222. Mr Kevin Caimanos, Private Citizen
223. Mr Robin O'Neil, Private Citizen
224. Mr Wayne White, Private Citizen
225. Mr Mark Westlake, Private Citizen
226. Mr Mark Smithe, Private Citizen
227. Ms Amanda Elphick, Private Citizen
228. Mr Earl White, Private Citizen
229. Mr Michael From, Private Citizen
230. Mr Christopher Warwick Brown, Private Citizen
231. Ms Elisabeta Micallef, Private Citizen
232. Mr Richard Edwards, Private Citizen
233. Mr Brendan Karow, Private Citizen
234. Mr Brett Vincent, Private Citizen
235. Ms Rainbow Gold Wilson, Private Citizen
236. Mr Mark Duong, Private Citizen
237. Mr Richard Adams, Private Citizen
238. Mr Paolo Randazzo, Private Citizen
239. M Scally, Private Citizen
240. Mr Jeff Timbuk, Private Citizen
241. Mr Gordon Heron, Private Citizen
242. Mr Greg Gibson, Private Citizen
243. Mr Blair Montague, Private Citizen
244. Ms Hectate Jay, President, Federation of Western Australian Bushwalkers Inc
245. Mr Howard Barks, Hunting and Habitat Director, The West Australian Field and Game Association Inc
246. Mr Fred Hort, Private Citizen
247. J McConville, Private Citizen
248. Mr Derek Hall, Private Citizen
249. Mr Lawrie Poole, Private Citizen

250. Mr Marius Smith, Private Citizen
251. Mr John Gill, Private Citizen
252. Mr Steve Coetzee, Private Citizen
253. Mr Tristan Barker, Private Citizen
254. Mr Steve Borley, Private Citizen
255. Mr Aiden Ruwoldt, Private Citizen
256. Mr Paul Patterson, Private Citizen
257. Mr Alex Te Wierik, Private Citizen
258. Mr Michael Barry, Private Citizen
259. Mr Frank Thornber, Private Citizen
260. Mr Greg Little, Private Citizen
261. Ms Jan van Niekerk, Private Citizen
262. Ms Julia Carryer, Private Citizen
263. Mr Marc Deas, Private Citizen
264. Ms Erlanda Deas, Private Citizen
265. Mr Malcolm Jenkinson, Private Citizen
266. Ms Sharon Jenkinson, Private Citizen
267. Mr Mark Mazza, Private Citizen
268. Mr Kevin Moir, Private Citizen
269. Mr John Imrie, Private Citizen
270. Mr Geoff Harcombe, Private Citizen
271. Ms Cyndi Mulders, Private Citizen
272. Ms Maurice Dessauvagie, Private Citizen
273. Mr Paul Owens, Chairman, Warren Catchments Council Inc
274. Mr Grant Macleod, Private Citizen
275. Ms Heather Dewar, Private Citizen
276. Ms Peta Rakela, Private Citizen
277. Mr David Osborne, President, Perth Bushwalkers Club (inc)
278. Ms Glenys Oogjes, Executive Director, Animals Australia
279. Mr Jamie Bennett, Executive Officer, Outdoors Australia
280. Mr Richard Walker, Private Citizen
281. HN Hill, Private Citizen
282. Mr Timothy Evans, Private Citizen
283. Mr Darren King, Private Citizen
284. Mr Glen Buder, Private Citizen
285. Mr Graham Pow, Private Citizen
286. Mr David Thornton, Private Citizen
287. Mr Jason Webb, Private Citizen
288. Mr Daren Philippe, Private Citizen
289. Mr James Mitchell, Private Citizen
290. Mr Lance Anderson, Private Citizen
291. Mr Johnny Tough, Private Citizen
292. B Beaton, President, WA Firearm Traders Association

293. Mr Len de Sales, Private Citizen
294. Mr Ian Blevin, Private Citizen
295. Mr Daniel Strijk, Private Citizen
296. Mr Christopher Allen, Private Citizen
297. Ms Lucy Radzikowska, Wool Executive Officer, the Western Australian Farmers Federation (Inc)
298. Mr Stephen Larsson, Private Citizen
299. Mr Rob Filippi, Private Citizen
300. Ms Lynne Bradshaw, President, RSPCA (WA)
301. Mr Mike Wood, Private Citizen
302. Mr Stephen Pass, Acredited Professional Shooter, Pro Shot Feral Control
303. Mr Trevor Hodshon, Chairman, Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association Inc
304. Mr Ross Wood, Executive Officer, Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association Inc
305. Ms Anthea Shodley, Private Citizen
306. Ms Anne Fergusson-Stewart, Private Citizen
307. Mr Michael Smith, Private Citizen
308. Mr P. T. D. Peake, Secretary, Shooters Union Western Australia
309. Mr John Jury, Private Citizen
310. Ms Ingrid Sieler, A/ Chief Executive Officer, Parks Forum
311. Mr Zaine Beaton, Manager, Deaton Firearms
312. Mr Jim Sharp, Director General, Department of Parks and Wildlife
313. Mr Glen Kelly, Chief Executive Officer, South Western Aboriginal Land Council
314. Mr Eddy Wajon, President, Wildflower Society of Western Australia Inc
315. Ms Heather Lord, Private Citizen
316. Ms Lynn Howell, Private Citizen
317. Ms Fiona Priskich, Private Citizen
318. Ms Manida Blackwell, Private Citizen
319. Ms Meghala Nair, Private Citizen
320. Mr Robert Glisenti, Private Citizen
321. Ms Ira Kroll, Private Citizen
322. Ms Jehni Thomas-Wurth, Private Citizen
323. Ms Grace Gentilli, Private Citizen
324. Ms Annie Kewe, Private Citizen
325. Ms Meg Trew, Private Citizen
326. Ms Lynda Purser, Private Citizen
327. Ms Carla Howells, Private Citizen
328. Ms Denise Lockett, Private Citizen
329. Ms Kathy Smith, Private Citizen
330. Ms Traci Myers, Private Citizen
331. Ms Tasha Hennings, Private Citizen

332. Mr Ben Clayton, Private Citizen
333. Ms Antonella Mostaccio, Private Citizen
334. Ms Marie-Louise Brown, Private Citizen
335. Mr Josip Knezevic, Private Citizen
336. Ms Libby Griffin, Private Citizen
337. Ms Penny Bell, Private Citizen
338. Ms Susana Averis, Private Citizen
339. Ms Sandie Rawnsley, Private Citizen
340. Ms Kirsty Millar, Private Citizen
341. Ms Amanda Coles, Private Citizen
342. Ms Maggi Aird, Private Citizen
343. Ms Amy Prendergast, Private Citizen
344. Ms Shauna Duncan, Private Citizen
345. Ms Nicci Murphy, Private Citizen
346. Ms Helen Ivory, Private Citizen
347. Ms Jade Wilkes, Private Citizen
348. Ms Helen Deane, Private Citizen
349. Ms Karen Gardon, Private Citizen
350. Ms Diane Robinson, Private Citizen
351. Ms Candice Gillam, Private Citizen
352. Mr Alexander Stein, Private Citizen
353. Ms Nicola James, Private Citizen
354. Ms Julie Smith, Private Citizen
355. Ms Penelope Burns, Private Citizen
356. Ms Amanda Houstoun, Private Citizen
357. Ms Melissa Eddy, Private Citizen
358. Ms Michelle Peirce, Private Citizen
359. Ms Melissa Mchugh, Private Citizen
360. Ms Imogen Coyle, Private Citizen
361. Ms Vicki Reasbeck, Private Citizen
362. Ms Josephine Walter, Private Citizen
363. Ms Lara Devenish, Private Citizen
364. Ms Hayley Cope, Private Citizen
365. Ms Donna Boshart, Private Citizen
366. Ms Genevieve Jeffreys, Private Citizen
367. Mr Franklin Hynes, Private Citizen
368. Ms Lyn Kitchen, Private Citizen
369. Mr Cai Fenton, Private Citizen
370. Ms Sandra Thompson, Private Citizen
371. Ms Deanne Gregory, Private Citizen
372. Ms Wendy Dugmore, Private Citizen
373. Ms Paula Dugmore, Private Citizen
374. Ms Lavana Linsday Skilton, Private Citizen

375. Ms Roberta Vlaar, Private Citizen
376. Ms Nat Hardwick, Private Citizen
377. Mr Phillip Fox, Private Citizen
378. Ms Marnie East, Private Citizen
379. Ms Caroline Clark, Private Citizen
380. Mr Andy Donker, Private Citizen
381. Ms Roberta Dimario, Private Citizen
382. Ms Diane Cupples, Private Citizen
383. S. M. Powell, Private Citizen
384. Ms Janine Pierre, Private Citizen
385. Ms Katy Lemon, Private Citizen
386. Ms Amanda McLennan , Private Citizen
387. Ms Karron Swinn, Private Citizen
388. Ms Jess Pope, Private Citizen
389. Mr Bev Pope, Private Citizen
390. Mr Michael Hart, Private Citizen
391. Ms Shauna Duncan, Private Citizen
392. Ms Leah Ingrey, Private Citizen
393. Ms Dawn Lyddy, Private Citizen
394. Ms Claire Styles, Private Citizen
395. Ms Marylene Glover, Private Citizen
396. Ms Pamela Parry, Private Citizen
397. Mr Emily Austin, Private Citizen
398. Mr Garth Norman, Private Citizen
399. Ms Melissa Carryer, Private Citizen
400. Mr Russell Thomas, Private Citizen
401. Mr Delwyn Julien, Private Citizen
402. Mr Toby Webb, Private Citizen
403. Mr Laurens West, Private Citizen
404. Mr Rhys Nathanielsz, Private Citizen
405. Mr Wayne Caldwell, Private Citizen
406. Mr Kevin Thomas, Private Citizen
407. Mr Andrew Bowers, Private Citizen
408. Mr Hermanus Goosen, Private Citizen
409. Mr Laurie Maiolo, Private Citizen
410. Ms Jana Morato, Private Citizen
411. Mr Colin MacLean, Private Citizen
412. Mr Michael Burkett, Private Citizen
413. Mr Christian Sieber, Private Citizen
414. Mr Denis Knight, Private Citizen
415. Mr Damien McDonnel, Private Citizen
416. Mr Brad Gifford, Private Citizen

417. Mr Keith Brooks, Private Citizen
418. Mr Brett Capolicchio, Private Citizen
419. Mr Allan MacDougall, Private Citizen
420. Mr Dylan Manns, Private Citizen
421. Mr Stephen Elliott, Private Citizen
422. Mr Wayne Sweetman, Private Citizen
423. Mr Marti Michalek, Private Citizen
424. Mr Andrew Shepard, Private Citizen
425. Mr Colin Manns, Private Citizen
426. Mr Justin Gan, Private Citizen
427. Mr James Everett, Private Citizen
428. Mr Stephen N, Private Citizen
429. Mr Aaron Mead, Private Citizen
430. Mr Bronson Rogers, Private Citizen
431. Mr Troy Spaanderman, Private Citizen
432. Ms Erin Didmond, Private Citizen
433. Mr Martin Dagnall, Private Citizen
434. Mr Jarad George, Private Citizen
435. Mr Phillip Cook, Private Citizen
436. Mr Neil MacPherson, Private Citizen
437. Mr Don Horn, Private Citizen
438. Mr Mike Bodey, Private Citizen
439. Mr Michael Bodey, Private Citizen
440. Mr Rouald Swartz, Private Citizen
441. Mr Colin Slattery, Director General, Department of Lands
442. Ms Denise Lockett, Private Citizen

Public hearings:

The Committee held public hearings with the following witnesses. Transcripts of the public hearings are available at the Committee's website at www.parliament.wa.gov.au/pub.

1. Department of Lands
    - Mr Colin Slattery, Director General
    - Mr Tony Richman, Manager, Strategic Police
    - Ms Sandra Eckert, General Counsel
    - Dr Rob Edwards, Project Officer
    - Mr Anthony DeBarro, Executive Director

2. Department of Parks and Wildlife
    - Mr Jim Sharp, Director General
    - Mr Kerry Gillen, Assistant Director, Regional and Fire Management Services

- Mr Peter Sharp, Director, Parks and Visitor Services Division
- Dr Geoff Stoneman, Director, Forest and Ecosystem Management

3. Department of Agriculture and Food
    - Mr Robert Delane, Director General
    - Mr Viv Read, Acting Executive Director, Invasive Species
    - Ms I-Lyn Loo, Senior Policy Officer, Invasive Species

4. Western Australian Police
    - Dr Karl O'Callaghan, Commissioner of Police
    - Mr Craig Ward, Assistant Commissioner State Crime
    - Mr Richard Rejek, Senior Research and Legislation Officer

5. Sporting Shooters Association of Australia WA Inc
    - Mr Ronald Bryant, President
    - Mr Matthew Godson, Special Projects Officer, Pest and Wildlife Management

6. Western Australian Field and Game Association Inc
    - Mr Howard Barks, Hunting and Habitat Director

7. Australian Deer Association
    - Mr Jeff Stuart, WA President
    - Mr Mark Mazza, WA Vice President

8. Beaton Firearms
    - Mr Zaine William Beaton, Manager

9. Tourism Western Australia
    - Mrs Stephanie Buckland, Chief Executive Officer
    - Mr Myles Kane Boardman, Government Relations and Policy Manager
    - Mr Justin Vaughan, Director, Executive and Strategic Services

10. RSPCA WA
    - Mrs Lynne Bradshaw, President
    - Mr David Van Ooran, Chief Executive Officer

11. Bibbulman Track Foundation
    - Mr Mike Wood, Chairman
    - Ms Louise Yeaman, Board Member

12. Wildflower Society of WA Inc
    - Dr Eddy Wajon, Past President
    - Mrs Mary Gray, President, Urban Bushland Council

13. Conservational Council of WA
    - Mr Piers Verstegen, Director
    - Mr Peter Robertson, Senior Campaigner, Wilderness Society (WA) Inc

Private hearings:

In addition to the foregoing public hearings, the Committee held one private hearing. This private hearing was held on 14 May 2014 with the State Solicitor's Office.

THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT

MINORITY REPORT OF HON AMBER-JADE SANDERSON MLC AND HON DARREN WEST MLC

REPORT 23

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

REGULATED, LICENSED RECREATIONAL HUNTING SYSTEMS IN AUSTRALIA

March 2015

Minority Report of
Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLC and
Hon Darren West MLC

in regard to

Regulated, Licensed Recreational Hunting Systems in Australia

OVERVIEW

Minority findings and recommendations

1.1 The majority report seeks to present recreational shooting on public land as having potential benefit to the environment and tourism industries. Based on evidence presented to the committee a minority of the committee does not support this. We therefore reject the conclusions, findings and recommendations of the report.

1.2 Evidence presented to the committee demonstrates that recreational shooting can be dangerous, expensive to manage, potentially damaging to other industries, at odds with aboriginal hunting practices and with native title rights also highly ineffective as a means of controlling target species.

1.3 No government agency supported the introduction of a recreational hunting system in either hearings or submissions to the committee.

Minority Finding 1: Western Australia has vast areas of remote terrain which can be difficult to access and monitor. This and other factors outlined below make a recreational hunting scheme unviable for the controlling of pest animals. Furthermore the tourism benefits and cost benefit of the introduction of any such scheme are not proven.

Comparisons with other jurisdictions

1.4 Victoria has free roaming game animals and a game hunting culture dating back over 100 years, vastly different environmental considerations and pest animals are managed with coordinated programs under a separate Act. The recreational hunting scheme and

licences relating to game hunting are heavily subsidised and no cost benefit analysis was made available to the Committee.

1.5 Recreational hunting on public land in NSW has had a chequered history since its inception in 2002 culminating in the disbanding of the NSW Game Council in 2013 recommencing in 2014 under a new Game Council.

Minority Finding 2: A minority of the committee views it as neither relevant nor helpful to make comparisons between different Jurisdictions. Western Australia has vast areas of remote terrain which can be difficult to access and monitor.

Potential environment contributions

1.6 Evidence was received that recreational shooters are an expensive and highly inefficient means of controlling target species. At a minimum, recreational shooters require extensive supervision from government agencies, it is anticipated that this would be from officers in the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

1.7 This effort by DPaW officers would be better deployed for more effective conservation measures.

1.8 Evidence was also provided that recreational shooters have a vested interest in not eradicating a population of a pest species, to increase the availability of animals to shoot in future years.

1.9 Evidence was presented that in some cases animals are set free in bushland areas to 'seed' an area for future hunting. Examples were provided of pigs being released in the south-west forests. It was found the pigs had the same DNA as pigs held in piggeries north of Perth, suggesting they had been translocated.

Minority Finding 3: Consistent evidence presented to the committee demonstrated that recreational hunting will have little to no discernable impact on pest management, indeed could hinder coordinated and targeted programs.

Minority Finding 4: Native Animals can either inadvertently or deliberately become the victims of recreational shooters.

Minority Finding 5: Allowing recreational hunting on Crown Land has the potential to contribute to the spread of disease such as dieback and exacerbate other biosecurity concerns.

Minority Finding 6: There are already existing opportunities for recreational hunters to engage in shooting of pest animals through coordinated programs with DPAW and with the permission of private landholders. Engaging recreational hunters by private landholders is limited and is used to reduce numbers rather than eradicate pests.

Chapter 4: Issues regarding the implementation of a licensed recreational hunting system in Western Australia

1.10 Evidence was presented that recreational shooting could conflict with native title and Aboriginal hunting rights. Evidence from the South West Land and Sea Council and the Goldfields Land and Sea Council highlighted this.

Minority Finding 7: Allowing recreational shooting on public land would be inconsistent with the rights afforded to traditional owners through the Native Title Act and would potentially trigger a future act.

Minority Finding 8: The amount of legislative change required and numerous negotiations of Indigenous Land Use Agreement for even a small gazetted trial site would be an expensive and complex process. The benefits and support of such a scheme are not demonstrated to justify such a path.

1.11 There exists a problem with illegal hunting on private land, national reserves and crown land. These activities disrupt the lawful activities of other users, cause fear and intimidation, contribute to pest animal problems and are difficult to monitor and prosecute.

Minority Finding 9: The minority believe there is no evidence that a regulated recreation hunting system would address this problem.

1.12 There exists considerable concern about animal welfare, in the community. The Committee heard evidence that recreational hunters will not necessarily have the appropriate skill to dispatch animals safely and humanely.

Minority Finding 10: The introduction of a recreational scheme could further compromise animal welfare and would require extensive monitoring.

1.13 Bushwalkers, mountain bike riders, horse riders and nature enthusiasts enjoy legitimate access to public lands. Evidence was presented to the committee expressing a high degree of concern that these activities could conflict with in the presence of recreational shooters.

Minority Finding 11: The proposal to allow recreational shooting on public land is rejected by Western Australians who currently access public land for a wide range of activities without any fear of encountering recreational shooters.

Minority Finding 12: Given the level of anxiety shown by current users of public land it would be reasonable to foresee a reduction of numbers of these users should recreational shooting be adopted. This could have a negative economic and social impact on these areas and communities.

1.14 Evidence was heard that WA currently markets its wilderness areas as vast and safe. Western Australia has made significant investments in marketing the state as an eco-tourism and environmental destination.

Minority Finding 13: Introduction of recreational hunting on public lands could jeopardise this image and harm the environment tourism industry.

WA Police fail to act on Auditor General's report

1.15 WA Police were asked about questionable gun licensing practices identified by the Auditor General's report of June 2013. The Auditor General's report stated:

> *one property owner had provided property letters (a property letter is a letter declaring the right of an individual to shoot on a particular property) to over 270 applicants over the past 17 months. We noted that these firearms had all been purchased from the same firearms dealers. Similarly we found another case where over 80 property letters had been provided by the same property owner for firearms purchased from a single dealer.*

1.16 The Auditor General found evidence of people paying for bogus property letters, however based on evidence provided to the committee, WA Police have failed to tackle this questionable practice.

Conclusion

1.17 For good reason, the Australian community has repeatedly rejected American style gun culture. Following the tragic events at Port Arthur in 1996 the Australian community has keenly adopted tough controls on gun ownership. An introduction of recreational hunting system would require a weakening of gun ownership licensing requirements.

Minority Recommendation:

Based on evidence presented to the committee and considerations stated above, the Minority recommends that recreational hunting not be permitted on unallocated Crown Land.

Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLC **Hon Darren West MLC**

10 March 2015 **10 March 2015**