



Koala News



Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland Bayside Branch
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New Koala conservation legislation for South East Queensland

On Monday 31 May 2010, the Queensland government released the new state planning instruments to protect Koala habitat and manage conflicts with urban development in South East Queensland: the *South East Queensland Koala Conservation State Planning Regulatory Provisions* and accompanying *State Planning Policy 2/10: Koala Conservation in South East Queensland* take effect immediately and apply to assessable development applications as of 31 May 2010.

The policy forms part of the Queensland Government Koala Response Strategy announced in December 2008, which overarching goal is "to increase the extent of mature and actively regenerating Koala habitat by 2020".

The aim of the policy is to ensure that Koala habitat conservation is taken into account in planning processes and to assist in the long term retention of viable Koala population in SEQ, contributing to a net increase in Koala habitat in SEQ.

Implementation of the policy will be through local planning instruments such as local planning schemes, management programs, actions and policies, as well as structure plans and master plans. Local planning instruments must at minimum reflect the Koala conservation outcomes prescribed in the policy, but may exceed the requirements or standards set out in the policy.

The provisions specify prohibited development and that which is assessable. Assessable development must demonstrate compliance with a set of assessment criteria specific to the type of development and the regulatory mapping.

These criteria regulate or prohibit clearing of Koala habitat trees in defined areas, and

require development applications to demonstrate Koala-friendly measures such as providing safe Koala movement opportunities in the site design, not increasing the risk of death or injury to Koalas during construction, ensuring landscaping activities provide food, shelter and movement opportunities for Koalas.

Under certain circumstances where clearing of Koala trees might be tolerated, some types of development (such as but not limited to linear infrastructure, community infrastructure, extractive industry in the assessable development area) will have to provide an offset package in accordance with the new offset policy, on the basis of 5 trees for every mature Koala habitat tree removed, or an equivalent cash contribution.



The regulatory maps identify 'Assessable Development Areas' in the local councils of the Sunshine Coast, Moreton Bay, Ipswich, Brisbane, Redland, Logan and the Gold Coast. In the Redlands, most of the mainland is identified as assessable development area; however none of the islands are identified.

The policy, provisions and regulatory maps can be found online on <http://www.dip.qld.gov.au/koalas>. The offset policy is available on http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/wildlife-ecosystems/wildlife/koalas/koala_crisis_response_strategy/documents/offset-netgain.pdf.

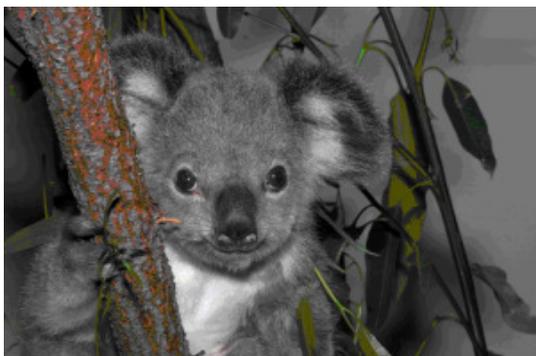
Kelly & Jazzy – The Sequel

(Story courtesy of Julie Z)

This is an update on Kelly and Jazzy, who came into care in August 2009 as tiny babies about 20cm long and around 175 grams in weight. Nine months down the track, there is good news and bad news. Sadly, Jazzy's health deteriorated suddenly and quickly. She seemed to frequently have severe pain in her abdomen and she was not passing faecal pellets as she should. Her pain was so severe that she was grinding her teeth continuously, so specialist vet care was sought. She spent a few days in the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital in mid-April where abdominal surgery was carried out after 3 to 4 days of medication and 24 care after which she was diagnosed with Koala Retrovirus. Her condition was severe and life limiting so the difficult decision to euthanase her was made. Her foster mother, Evelynn, made the 4 hour round trip to the zoo to spend a couple of precious hours comforting Jazzy and holding her for the last time.

Jazzy's illness was due to KoRV, or Koala Retrovirus, which overwhelmed her body. The Australian Wildlife Health Network states that all Queensland koalas are infected with this retrovirus, but many live long productive lives regardless. Unfortunately, this was not the case for Jazzy, despite the excellent care, treatment and compassion that both she and her carer received at the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital.

After spending most of her life with Jazzy, Kelly fell into depression which led to thrush, weakening her immune system to the point that she succumbed to a cryptosporidium outbreak. Although the initial prognosis was poor, Kelly is showing signs of recovery, but this will be an ongoing process. Treatment is continuing but Evelynn says that Kelly's behaviour has returned to normal, and the latest x-rays show that her crypto affected lungs are showing a slight improvement. There is hope for her yet, so we remain cautiously optimistic.



Kelly goes it alone

KOALA RETROVIRUS

Koala Retrovirus (KoRV) is an inherited virus of koalas. It has not been detected in other species. The prevalence of KoRV varies across the range of koalas in Australia. It is present at a prevalence of 100% in QLD populations, 20-60% in a limited survey of Victorian animals and not present at all on Kangaroo Island (South Australia). Further survey work is underway to characterise the KoRV prevalence across the koala population and to determine whether horizontally transmitted forms of the virus exist in addition to the inherited form.

KoRV has been associated with leukaemia, lymphoma and immunosuppression in koalas but has not yet been proved as the definitive cause of these diseases. In South East QLD the virus is present in all animals as inherited DNA proviruses integrated into the animals DNA. The rate of deaths from pre-leukaemia, leukaemia and lymphoma is reported to be up to 60% of mortality in captive colonies and 3-5% in the wild.

The clinical signs of leukaemia or lymphoma include: enlargement of one or more peripheral lymph nodes or thymus, spontaneous haemorrhage, weight loss, polydipsia, soil pica, inappetance, diarrhoea, paralysis, CNS signs. Animals may display pale or blue mucous membranes and signs of respiratory distress if there is concurrent anaemia. The clinical course of lymphoid neoplasia is rapidly progressive with most animals requiring euthanasia within a few weeks of diagnosis. Immunosuppression may manifest as opportunistic infections, persistent infections, typhlocolitis or loss of pouch young

No treatment is currently available. Attempts at chemotherapy for koalas with neoplasia have been unsuccessful. Koalas with neoplasia, anaemia or chronic infectious diseases should be managed symptomatically.

There is no vaccine available for KoRV and very little is known about the transmission potential of the virus.

Source: Rachael E Tarlinton, BVSc. Department of Microbiology, University of Queensland, St Lucia 4068

You can donate to research currently underway at Australia Zoo via info@wildlifewarriors.org.au

If you would like to contribute to future editions of the Koala News, please contact Paulette Jones
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