

Guidance Note: Applications for Pest Animal Approved Collections (Zoo) Permits

PURPOSE

The *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CaLP Act) prohibits the keeping, selling, releasing and importation into Victoria of declared pest animals without permission.

A person wanting to use declared pest animals for the purpose of public exhibition in a static collection in Victoria must apply for, and be granted a pest animal approved collections (zoo) permit.

This guidance note will provide an overview for persons considering applying for a permit. Additional and more comprehensive guidance as to the information required from an applicant is contained within the application form.

GENERAL

Permission to privately bring into Victoria, sell or keep declared pest animals for their exhibition in zoos will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and in line with nationally agreed principles of risk management.

The translation of these principles in the permitting of pest animals in zoos results in consideration of:

1. Collection and benefit;
2. Risk assessment and management; and
3. Animal welfare and husbandry

An application form must be completed to apply to keep, sell or bring a pest animal into Victoria for exhibition in a static collection (zoo). The application form is available on the [Agriculture Victoria](#) website or by contacting the pest animal permit administrator on:

- telephone: 136 186
- email pestanimal.permit@agriculture.vic.gov.au
- or in writing
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
Pest Animal Permit Administrator
475 Mickleham Road
Attwood Victoria 3049

The applicant must be a natural person.

- The application form requires an applicant to submit a comprehensive package of information to allow the department to assess the proposed activity, arrangements for animal care and containment and the competency of the persons caring for the animals.
- A separate permit application, and fee is required for each pest animal species or a change in permitted arrangements.

Pest animal permits will not be issued for species to be brought into Victoria or kept for their exhibition in zoos where the department considers the associated risks to be greater than any demonstrable benefit.

A risk mitigation approach is used to assess applications to bring into Victoria or keep declared pest animals in zoos.

1. COLLECTION AND BENEFIT

The bringing into Victoria or keeping of pest animals within a zoo must be for animal exhibition (display) to the general public and must provide public benefit.

A zoo is considered to be a static exhibition of animals kept for the purpose of public display. It is expected that the display will be open to the general public (not invitation only) for at least 130 days in each of the following 6-month periods over a 12-month period—

- 1 October–31 March; and
- 1 April–30 September

The display where the animal is housed must be designed to facilitate public viewing and open for at least six hours per day during the daylight hours on each day the premises is open to the public, unless adequate justification can be provided as to why this is not possible.

It is expected that educational information will be provided at the place of display of the animal(s).

1.1 Permission to import into Victoria

Separate permission is required to bring a pest animal into Victoria. The application form to keep a pest animal has a separate section for use by a person intending to bring pest animals into Victoria.

1.2 Permission to sell

Separate permission is required to sell a pest animal in Victoria.

A person permitted to keep a pest animal must apply for permission to sell that animal.

2. RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Assessment of applications by the department will consider the risks posed by the bringing into Victoria and keeping of pest animals and the strategies implemented to mitigate that risk.

There are certain keeping arrangements where the risks to Victoria outweigh any potential public benefit. The department will not consider pest animal approved collections (zoo) permit applications for:

- pest animals declared as prohibited under the CaLP Act
- pest animals declared as schedule 4A established (red fox and European hare) under the CaLP Act.

2.1 Risk assessment

The risk associated with the bringing into Victoria, selling or keeping of pest animals will be considered when assessing an application.

To assess potential environmental, economic or social risks of species applied for and to determine if those risks outweigh the public benefits, the application assessment will include consideration of:

- the species' CaLP Act declaration
- the species' threat category according to the Australian list of threat categories of non-indigenous vertebrates as endorsed by the Environment and Invasives Committee (EIC)
- any relevant nationally endorsed species risk assessment
- Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) listing
- Location of the authorised premises
- Security of the authorised premises
- Relevant attributes of individual animals (e.g. source (wild or captive bred), quarantine status, age, sex)

- Breeding potential including local existing populations of the species or species with which hybridisation is known to occur
- For permits to sell, the authority of the receiving establishment
- Any reason for keeping in addition to display, such as participation in species management plans
- Australasian Species Management Program (ASMP) category for the species.

Applicants should note; under the precautionary approach, detailed in the EIC [Guidelines for the Import, Movement and Keeping of Non-indigenous Vertebrates in Australia](#), any species that has not been assessed previously is considered to be in the extreme threat category and should be treated accordingly, until a risk assessment is developed and endorsed.

2.2 RISK MANAGEMENT

2.2.1 Restrictions on breeding and keeping mixed sex populations

Breeding is prohibited for all declared pest animal species except in limited circumstances.

Where breeding is applied for, applicants must outline population management practices such as planned breeding and contraception and disposal, and meet biosecurity, animal welfare and conservation objectives.

The applicant must identify, where applicable, the appropriate ASMP program category or Zoo and Aquarium Association (ZAA) endorsed species management plan under which the pest animal is an active participant.

Reproductively viable, mixed sex populations of declared pest animal species categorised as an extreme threat by the EIC will only be considered where the purpose of keeping has a public benefit in addition to display. Such benefit may include participation in an ASMP.

2.2.2 Arrangements for animals no longer required

The applicant must demonstrate appropriate arrangements are in place for pest animals in the event of them becoming surplus to requirements or the decision being made to no longer maintain the collection.

2.2.3 Identification of animals

All pest animals applied for under this permit type must be permanently identified.

2.2.4 Capability of the applicant and key personnel

The applicant must demonstrate appropriate resources are available to ensure the ongoing security, care and health of pest animals.

The applicant and key personnel must provide details of their competency as proficient keepers and experience relevant to the species listed on the application.

A registered veterinarian (in Victoria) with relevant experience, or access to experts with relevant experience, who will provide veterinary care and advice regarding health management and disease prevention must be nominated.

2.2.5 Containment of animals

The applicant must demonstrate that containment infrastructure will:

- securely contain pest animals at all times
- be relevant to the species kept and be in accordance with current best practice
- prevent unauthorised movement of animals and people
- prevent unauthorised entry (deliberate or accidental) to animal enclosures.

2.2.6 Contingency planning

The applicant must have appropriate contingency plans in place for:

- biosecurity
- disruption to normal supply
- natural threats
- escaped animals.

The applicant must provide an undertaking that adequate insurance, that is appropriate to the collection, will be maintained at all times.

3. ANIMAL WELFARE

While the purpose of pest animal permits is to reduce the risks associated with the keeping of declared pest animals, the welfare of those animals must be taken into account. Before granting a permit, the department must be satisfied that the welfare of pest animals has been appropriately considered.

The applicant must demonstrate how the proposed care, containment facilities and display of the animals complies with relevant codes of practice, guidelines, standards and species husbandry manuals. This includes demonstrating how the proposed arrangements comply with the [Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines - Exhibited Animals](#), including any relevant taxon guidelines.

ACCESSIBILITY

If you would like to receive this publication in an accessible format, please telephone the pest animal permit administrator on 136 186.
