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| Send your completed form and supporting documentation to:  **Agriculture Victoria**  **Wildlife and Small Institutions Animal Ethics Committee**  **Executive Officer**  **475 Mickleham Road**  **Attwood VIC 3049**  **Or by email:** [**wsi.aec@ecodev.vic.gov.au**](mailto:wsi.aec@ecodev.vic.gov.au) |  |

**General information**

The Wildlife and Small Institutions Animal Ethics Committee (WSIAEC) offers ‘restricted access’ to individuals undertaking collection, taking, banding and marking of wildlife for research purposes*.* These applicants are exempt from licensing under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* (POCTA Act), but must hold a research permit issued by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in accordance with section 28A of the *Wildlife Act 1975* (Wildlife Act). The applicant must be the person who will hold the research permit.

*Collection, taking, banding and marking of wildlife does not include the collection of biometric data. If your activities involve collection of biometric data such as body weight and measurement, a scientific procedures licence and unrestricted access to the WSIAEC is required to apply to undertake such procedures.*

The WSIAEC will consider the ethical acceptability of the proposed use of animals, balancing the potential effects on the wellbeing of animals with the potential benefits of the project. Should the WSIAEC approve the project, the applicant must obtain a wildlife research permit prior to commencing animal use. Projects may be approved for up to three years.

An application fee applies for WSIAEC consideration of this application. This fee must be paid prior to the project being presented to the WSIAEC.

Please refer to the Guide for describing procedures and activities to the AEC for assistance with this form. Click [here](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/animal-health-and-welfare/animals-used-in-research-and-teaching/animal-ethics-committees/wildlife-and-small-institutions-animal-ethics-committee) to download the applicant guide.

**Committee use only**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Project Title |  | | |
| Date Received |  | Application Number |  |
| Approval | Yes / No | Approval Date |  |
| Applicant |  | Expiry Date |  |
| Affiliated organisation |  | Service Agreement | Yes / No |

**Application**

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| Project Title |  | | |
| Applicant name (must be the same individual who will hold the associated wildlife permit) |  |  |  |
| Affiliated organisation (if applicable) |  |  |  |
| Proposed Start Date\*  (DD/MM/YYYY) |  | Proposed Finish Date  (DD/MM/YYYY) |  |

\*animal use must not commence until WSIAEC approval and all other relevant approvals are in place.

1. **Persons undertaking animal use on the project**
2. List all people who will be undertaking activities using live animals within the project. Include all investigators, including volunteers and trainees. (Please add rows for additional investigators.) **Note each of these persons must complete the declarations at sections 10 and 11**.

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|  | Name | Qualifications |
| Applicant |  |  |
| Associated Investigators |  |  |
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1. Are there any actual or potential interests (including relationship, financial or affiliation) that may affect judgements and decisions regarding the wellbeing of animals involved in this project?

Yes  No

If yes provide a brief summary including how conflict of interest will be managed.

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1. **Glossary / Acronyms**

This application must be written in plain English, use of scientific language should be avoided If there are scientific terms or acronyms that must be used, provide a glossary below or provide explanation within the text throughout.

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1. **Aims, benefits and justification of the project**
2. Provide a concise overview of the project, explaining the scientific significance in relation to the project design.

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1. Describe the aims of the project.

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1. Provide information about the benefits of the outcomes of the project and how these benefits will be measured.

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1. Are there any features of this proposal that raise special ethical considerations?

Yes  No

If yes summarise below.

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1. Has this or similar work been undertaken by you or other investigators?

Yes  No

If yes, how is this work different and what will it contribute to existing knowledge?

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1. How has information obtained from previous, similar work been incorporated into the design of this project in order to minimise the impact to animals?

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1. **Animal use**
2. Provide an estimate of the numbers and the species of animal to be used based on experience, available information and previous trapping or capture success rates. Bycatch animals must be included in this estimate and clearly indicated. Please group animal numbers by method of capture. For projects using remote sensing cameras, the *number of animals to be used* column should provide an estimate of the number of images for each species likely to be observed.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Species  common name | Species scientific name | Location of animals | Number\* of animals to be used over the duration of the approved project (max 3 years) |
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*\*The number of animals approved by the WSIAEC must not be exceeded and must not commence until WSIAEC approval and all other relevant approvals are in place.*

1. Are any of the species listed above considered endangered under relevant legislation including:

* *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Victoria)*
* *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Commonwealth)

Yes  No

If yes, provide specific justification as to why there is a need to survey this species and, information about how the impact to the species will be managed.

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1. Consideration must be given to the principle of replacement as defined in the [*Australian Code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th Edition 2013*](https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-care-and-use-animals-scientific-purposes)(Australian Code). Provide information about:

* why the use of animals is essential to achieve all the stated aims of this project
* any potential alternatives to replace impact to animals in all or part of this project; where these alternatives are not used provide justification as to why they are not suitable
* the knowledge sources accessed e.g. web databases, scientific literature.

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1. Will any of the individual animals be subject to recurrent use, for example repeated capture?

Yes  No

If yes:

* justify the reuse of the animal(s) and include details of the previous activity(s) they were involved in
* provide details of strategies to avoid recapture or reduce its impact.

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1. Summary of animal use. Tick the boxes that describe the nature of the proposed work. No other procedures are allowed under this application. To undertake scientific procedures as defined by the POCTA Act a relevant licence must be obtained along with unrestricted access to the WSIAEC.

Observation involving minor interference i.e. non-invasive behavioural studies of animals in the wild (e.g. spotlighting & bird census),

Simple trap and release projects (no measuring or biometric data collection)

Techniques with the potential to cause behavioural changes (e.g. baited camera traps; call playback- birds; active search – log / rock rolling),

1. **Statistical justification and project design (principle of reduction)**

Projects must be designed to minimise animal usage and must ensure adequate numbers of animals to reach statistical significance. Failure to do so will result in animal wastage and is not consistent with the principle of reduction. Reducing the number of animals used must not result in greater harm, including pain and distress, to the animals used.

1. Provide an overview of how the project is designed in relation to its aims. Use flow charts or timelines to assist the WSIAEC as applicable.

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1. Provide justification for the number (including repetitions) of animals proposed, based on experimental design and statistical considerations. Provide a table if this will assist the WSIAEC to understand the request.

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1. Has this project been endorsed by a statistician/ biometrician?

Yes  No

If yes provide the name of this person and relevant qualification.

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| Statistician /Biometrician  Qualification |  | Date |  |

If no explain below why such endorsement has not been obtained or, as applicable, refer to the relevant State and Commonwealth Government survey guideline(s) that will inform this project.

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1. **Description of the design and procedures**

Consideration must be given to the principle of refinement as defined in the [Australian Code](https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-care-and-use-animals-scientific-purposes) in all stages of project design; methods used must alleviate or minimise potential pain and distress, and enhance animal wellbeing.

Ensure the declaration for each person in section 10 and 11 includes each procedure described.

*The application must be a ‘stand-alone’ document. All relevant information must be included within the application. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) must not be referenced within an application. For further information on referencing documents within an application, refer to the WSIAEC applicant guide*

*The WSIAEC expects that field manuals are developed for all projects involving the use of wildlife in the field. The exception is for projects with limited animal use (for example one or two species with one or two low impact procedures). These manuals may be provided to the WSIAEC (this is encouraged) however such documents do not form part of the approved project and are not approved by the WSIAEC.*

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1. Indicate by checking the relevant box(s) if any of the following techniques are used.

Observation involving minor interference:

Spotlighting

Bird census

Camera trap

Roost exit survey – bats

Nest box inspections

Remotely piloted aircraft (drone)

Other, provide description

Click here to enter text.

Simple trap and release projects:

Mass capture techniques (eg cannon netting)

Fyke nets

Gill nets

Mist nets

Dip nets

Elliot or cage traps (non hook bait application only)

Harp trap

Pitfall and / or funnel traps

Hair tubes / funnels

Other, provide description (opera house traps must not be used)

Click here to enter text.

Techniques with the potential to cause behavioural changes:

Call playback – birds

Active search - log / rock rolling

Other, provide description

Click here to enter text.

1. List and provide details of the method(s) used to observe / capture animals. If confinement devices are used (nets / traps etc.) provide details including the maximum amount of time an animal will be held within a trap. If baited cameras are used, provide details of the composition of bait. All methods of trapping must comply with relevant legislation including the POCTA Act and associated Regulations.

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1. Provide sequential details of what happens to the animal(s) from the time they are captured until the conclusion of the use for each method of capture. Include the sequence and timing of events. Flow charts, clearly set out tables and time lines will assist the WSIAEC to understand the impact to animals.

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1. Are animals are to be marked or banded?

Yes  No

If yes provide information about the method used and where on the body the animal will be marked. *Note: PIT tagging (microchipping) and methods of marking involving removal of live tissue are considered scientific procedures. A scientific procedures licence and unrestricted access to the WSIAEC is required to apply to undertake such procedures.*

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1. Detail strategies used to protect non-target species and, where applicable, dependant young and the environment; include information about methods and implementation.

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1. Is it possible animals may need to be humanely killed in reasonably anticipated circumstances that are not related to the project aims (for example injuries and disease)? *Ensure the information provided is consistent with the animal monitoring forms to be used for this project (see Appendix 1 for examples)*.

Yes  No

If yes complete the following table. Note: the WSIAEC does not consider use of CO2 or decapitation as an appropriate method of humane killing in the field. If more than one method may be used include all methods as additional rows to the table.

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| Reason an animal may require euthanasia | Criteria for euthanasia | Method of euthanasia | How will death be confirmed? |
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1. Are animals to be transported?

Yes  No

If yes complete the following table.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Why is transport necessary? |  | | |
| Method of transport | | Container / cage type and description. | How will negative impact to animal wellbeing be avoided and managed |
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1. **Animal welfare**

Identify all potential adverse impacts on the animals’ wellbeing; how these impacts will be minimised; and the welfare of the animal monitored and managed. Bycatch and non-target species affected by the activities associated with the project must be considered.

1. What adverse impacts may there be on the animals as a result of the procedures to be carried out? Provide as a list or table if this will assist the WSIAEC to determine the impact of each procedure; [see (c) for measures to reduce impact].

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1. What, if any, adverse impacts may there be on the animals as a result of the age or reproductive state of the animal? [see (c) for measures to reduce impact].

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1. What measures are in place to reduce any adverse impact on the animals?

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1. Detail the methods including parameters monitored and frequency of monitoring of animals during all aspects of the study including capture, holding and release.

Where capture devices are used (such as nets and traps) you must:

* specify the frequency of trap monitoring
* detail how access to traps, by animals, will be prevented during times when monitoring is not undertaken or environmental conditions are unfavourable
* provide evidence that monitoring is consistent with the survival requirements of both bycatch and target animals.

*Records of monitoring must be maintained and available for inspection.*

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1. Detail what will be done if unforeseen complications or other problems are identified including criteria for intervention or treatment. Include the signs and symptoms that will initiate intervention and the nature of the action to be carried out.

Include with this application the monitoring form(s) you will use to document animal wellbeing for this project. You must indicate the parameters you will monitor and what action will be taken in response to identification of abnormalities. Examples of parameters to be monitored and associated actions applicable to wildlife are provided at appendix 1. These may be modified to suit or an alternate monitoring system used.

In the event of negative animal welfare impacts that were not anticipated in this application an adverse event report must be submitted to the WSIAEC.

*Specify the monitoring parameters and associated actions below or in project specific monitoring form attached to this application or confirm the form at Appendix 1 is to be used for this project*

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1. Does the project present any health risks to other animals (non-target species)?

Yes  No

If yes, what precautions will be employed to minimise this risk?

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1. **Human welfare**
2. Have all participating personnel been fully advised of the hazards to human health and provided with appropriate personal protective equipment, training, vaccinations and monitoring?

Yes  No

If no, state why not and how risk to human health will be managed.

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1. **Biosecurity**
2. Provide details of procedures and materials used to control the risk of spreading invasive or infectious organisms during fieldwork.

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1. **Declaration of applicant**

Applicant name:Click here to enter text.

business owner / employee  volunteer

Project title.

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List any current WSIAEC approved projects in which you are involved.

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List any current projects, approved by another AEC, in which you are involved.

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For each technique / procedure described within this project that you will be involved with provide details of your experience include, as applicable, arrangements for training.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Technique / procedure – list each procedure separately (add rows as required) | Species (or class of species) | No. of times you have performed this procedure with this species or class of species. | | | Trainer name (if experience <20 or not competent)  Trainer must be competent and listed as investigator on project  Records of training must be maintained |
|  |  | <20 | 20>100 | >100 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
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* I hereby declare that I have the appropriate qualifications and experience to perform the procedures described in this project; or have arranged for appropriate training and will be assessed as competent prior to undertaking procedures unsupervised; or have arranged for competent person(s) to undertake the procedures.
* I have read and understand my obligations under the [*Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/LTObject_Store/ltobjst10.nsf/DDE300B846EED9C7CA257616000A3571/7389351AE63C1255CA25810F0014E1EA/$FILE/86-46aa093%20authorised.pdf)and associated Regulations 2008 and other relevant legislation and [*Australian Code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th edition 2013*](https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-care-and-use-animals-scientific-purposes)(Australian Code).
* I, and all co-investigators are familiar, and will comply, with the requirements of the Australian code.
* I accept responsibility for the ethical conduct of the project proposed above.
* I acknowledge that the use of animals is ultimately my responsibility but this may be delegated to suitably trained and experienced persons as approved by the WSIAEC.
* I will ensure all investigators undertaking animal use on this project are approved by the WSIAEC prior to commencing such use.
* I will keep such records as required under the Australian Code and other relevant legislation.
* I will report to the WSIAEC as required by the [Australian Code](https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-care-and-use-animals-scientific-purposes) and any conditions set by the WSIAEC.
* I will continuously review this project applying the principles of replacement, reduction and refinement and inform the WSIAEC and request a modification to this project as appropriate.
* Adequate resources are available to undertake this project.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Signature of applicant  (Person with ultimate responsibility for the project) |  | Date |  |

1. **Declaration of co-investigator(s)**

Must be completed by all persons, other than the applicant, involved with the use of animals within this application. Make additional copies as required.

Where investigators are required to join the project after approval, this declaration must be submitted to and approved by the WSIAEC, prior to this person commencing work on the project.

Name:Click here to enter text.

employee  volunteer

Project title

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List any current WSIAEC approved projects in which you are involved.

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List any current projects, approved by another AEC, in which you are involved.

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For each technique / procedure described within this project that you will be involved with provide details of your experience include, as applicable, arrangements for training.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Technique / procedure – list each procedure separately (add rows as required) | Species (or class of species) | No. of times you have performed this procedure with this species or class of species. | | | Trainer name (if experience <20 or not competent)  Trainer must be competent and listed as investigator on project  Records of training must be maintained |
|  |  | <20 | 20>100 | >100 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
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* I hereby declare that I have the appropriate qualifications and experience to perform the procedures described in this project; or have arranged for appropriate training and will be assessed as competent prior to undertaking procedures unsupervised.
* I have read and understand my obligations under the [*Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/LTObject_Store/ltobjst10.nsf/DDE300B846EED9C7CA257616000A3571/7389351AE63C1255CA25810F0014E1EA/$FILE/86-46aa093%20authorised.pdf)and associated Regulations 2008 and other relevant legislation and [*Australian Code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th edition 2013*](https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-care-and-use-animals-scientific-purposes)(Australian Code).
* I am familiar, and will comply, with the requirements of the Australian code
* I accept responsibility for the ethical conduct of the project proposed above.
* I acknowledge that the use of animals is the ultimate responsibility of the chief investigator but this may be delegated to suitably trained and experienced staff as approved by the WSIAEC.
* I have read this application and fully understand the nature, limitations and extent of the proposed work described within.
* I will keep such records as required under the [Australian Code](https://nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-care-and-use-animals-scientific-purposes) and other relevant legislation.

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| Signature of co-investigator |  | Date |  |

**Appendix 1 – Example Wildlife field study score and associated action DELETE IF NOT APPLICABLE**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Clinical sign** | **Score 0 (normal)** | **Score 1 (minor change from normal)** | **Score 2 (moderate change from normal)** | **Score 3 (severe change from normal)** |
| **Activity** | normal | isolated, abnormal posture, possibly vocalising | Huddled / active only when provoked OR overactive, strongly vocalising | inactive when provoked OR moribund OR fitting |
| **Alertness** | normal | dull or depressed | little response to handling | unconscious |
| **Body condition** | normal | thin | loss of body fat and some muscle | **emaciated**\* |
| **Breathing** | normal | rapid, shallow | rapid, abdominal breathing | laboured, irregular |
| **Coat / skin** | normal | coat rough, minor hair / feather thinning with otherwise normal skin | unkempt, wounds, hair / feather thinning with skin changes, minor superficial wound(s) | deep OR large bleeding or infected wounds, OR severe self mutilation |
| **Hydration** | normal | skin less elastic | skin tenting | skin tenting & eyes sunken |
| **Body openings** | normal | slight swelling or redness | swelling or redness but no impact to normal function | bleeding from any orifice including mouth, ears, anus, cloaca. |
| **Movement / gait** | normal | slight incoordination OR abnormal gait | Uncoordinated / lameness | staggering OR limb dragging OR paralysis |
| **Skeleton / bones / wings**  **(exoskeleton if applicable)** | normal | healed fractures or deformities no impact to normal function | healed fractures or deformities slight impact to normal function | fractures or deformities where normal function is not possible |

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| **Score** | **Action** |
| Single score 3 | Unless immediate supportive care or treatment can be provided that is likely to result in significant improvement, the animal must be euthanased immediately. If supportive care or treatment is instigated the animal is to be checked after 30 mins, or an appropriate time taking into account species specific needs and if significant improvement is not seen the animal is to be euthanased. If showing improvement continue monitoring until the animal and time of day is suitable for release.  Animals suspected of carrying disease must be appropriately stored after euthanasia and a veterinary pathologist opinion sought.  \***Emaciated** – animals that are emaciated due to current environmental conditions may be released if there is reasonable expectation of survival after release. |
| Single score 2 | If there is a reasonable expectation the animal will survive after release, it may be immediately released. If supportive care such as food, water or warmth will increase / improve the wellbeing of the animal, provide this and then release. If the animal is not expected to survive after release it must be euthanased. |
| Single score 1 | The animal may be released. |
| Cumulative score >9 | If there is a reasonable expectation that the clinical score reflects the impact of trapping and confinement and the animal will survive on release, the animal may be released. If supportive care that will improve the animal’s wellbeing on release can be provided this must be provided before release. Otherwise the animal must be euthanased immediately. It is unacceptable to release an animal that is unconscious, fitting, has obvious recent broken bones or large deep wounds or significant bleeding from any orifice. All such animals must be immediately euthanased. |
| Cumulative score 3-9 | If there is a reasonable expectation the animal will survive after release it may be immediately released. If supportive care such as food, water, warmth or expert veterinary care will increase or improve the wellbeing of the animal, provide it and then release, if and when appropriate. If the animal is not expected to survive on release it must be euthanased. |
| Cumulative score 1-3 | The animal may be released. |