



## **ACT Labor/Greens Government is loose with the truth about the annual kangaroo “cull”**

This ACT government has decided to go ahead with yet another kangaroo massacre this year, commencing tonight.

The slaughter is going ahead while a petition of 800-plus handwritten signatures from ACT residents, asking for an end to the killing of kangaroos on Canberra Reserves, is about to be delivered to the ACT Assembly tomorrow. The petition was collected over a period of only three weeks, and more signatures are being added all the time.

Additionally, a detailed complaint has been submitted to the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment about the cruelty to animals, the risk to human life and wellbeing, and the absence of any scientific basis for the government's massacre of kangaroos in the first place. A request to the Auditor General for an audit on the costs and benefits (if any) of the killing program has also been submitted.

Since 2009, the government has killed 28 thousand adult kangaroos, along with thousands more joeys who have been bludgeoned to death, decapitated or abandoned to die from hunger, thirst, cold and myopathy (a painful and lethal impact of stress to which kangaroos are particularly prone).

The kill-fest began under the pretence that it was a "conservation cull" and "necessary", despite the absence to any baseline data to support such assertions. Since then, every argument the government has used to try to justify the slaughter has been proven to be bunkum.

In fact, the government's own data, analysed by CSIRO (2014), showed that Canberra Nature Reserve ecosystems are better off where kangaroos were present at up to three per hectare, and that more than three per hectare were not present on any reserve studied.

The decision to kill again this year was made even though the government recently admitted that it has no idea how many kangaroos are left in the ACT.

Frankie Seymour, an environmental scientist and lifelong animal advocate who served on the ACT government's own Animal Welfare Advisory Committee for nearly 18 years, commented:

*We've lost count of the number of lies government spokespeople have told about the government's killing program but the worst has got to be the lie that the killing is humane because there is a Code of Practice.*



*Leaving aside the fact that this Code, for what little it's worth, is not enforced, the legal role of an "animal welfare" code of practice is not to prevent cruelty to animals but to permit acts of cruelty that would otherwise be prohibited under the Animal Welfare Act.*

In 2021, a citizen science study directly counted the actual number of kangaroos present on every reserve in the Canberra Nature Park. Far more thorough than anything the ACT government has ever attempted, this study has shown that the government's estimates of numbers of kangaroos present on the reserves are wildly exaggerated. This means the government is in fact killing a much higher proportion of kangaroos present than it claims to be killing.

Furthermore the government bases this proportion, itself, on the false premise of a breeding rate that is biologically impossible for kangaroos.

APA spokesperson, Robyn Soxsmith adds:

*The government has ignored this citizen science study, just as it ignored the 2014 CSIRO study; and just as it has ignored the traumatised residents of Farrer Ridge where tame and well-loved kangaroos were pretty much totally wiped out in 2021.*

*The government is so arrogant, it thinks it can continue to get away with this behaviour forever. It is up to all the informed citizens of the ACT to tell the government they will no longer tolerate this cruelty and environmental vandalism.*

Animal protectors, both individuals and from a range of organisations, confirm that they will, as usual, be out at the reserves every night of the massacre, monitoring and documenting the cruelty, the reckless shooting too close to homes and roads, and the ongoing damage to the environment.

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