



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, INDUSTRY & ENVIRONMENT

Macropod Rehabilitation Training Standards for the Volunteer Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector



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Introduction

Wildlife rehabilitation organisations and their volunteers play a critical role in the rescue and rehabilitation of sick, injured and orphaned macropods in New South Wales. Each year over **8000 macropods on average** are rescued. Volunteers participating in their care are trained to ensure animals are managed humanely and have the best chance of rehabilitation and release back into the wild.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), has collaborated with leading macropod rehabilitation providers to prepare these macropod rehabilitation training standards for use by trainers in the NSW wildlife rehabilitation sector. These training standards build on the high level of expertise that already exists within the sector and have been designed as a guide to evaluate, develop and support new and existing training. The intended outcome is to ensure minimum training standards are in place for volunteers across the sector, as recommended in the NSW Volunteer Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector Strategy (DPIE 2020). This will give greater certainty about the quality of care afforded to macropods in rehabilitation.

These standards must be used for delivering introductory training for macropod rehabilitation. They describe the knowledge and skills that such training must include to ensure volunteers meet the requirements of the NSW Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Macropods (the Macropod Code). Any person with an authority to rescue and rehabilitate macropods in New South Wales must be trained to these standards and be assessed as competent.

These training standards have been ordered into three suggested core areas of training. Training programs can be structured in their entirety to replicate the standards, or can be broken down to cover individual or multiple standards, or can be based on certain roles within macropod rehabilitation. Irrespective of the structure used, all training must include the standards relevant to a role and must cover the duties this role would be expected to perform upon completion of the training.

All training must be compliant with the Macropod Code. It must have a written assessment component, be competency-based, and be accompanied by ongoing in-field support from experienced macropod rehabilitators.

Once a person is trained to these standards, they can undertake advanced refresher training and professional development opportunities as determined by their licensed wildlife rehabilitation organisation.

Additional information on training to these standards can be found in the companion Macropod Rehabilitation Training Standards for the Volunteer Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector: Trainers' Guide (DPIE 2021). The trainers' guide has been designed to support the sector develop their training in line with these standards.

Structure of the standards

There are 11 macropod rehabilitation training standards, organised into the following structure:

- **Objective** is the aim of each standard.
- **Learning outcomes** are the knowledge and skills a learner will have obtained and be able to demonstrate upon completion of training.
- **Sections in the Code** identify sections in the *Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Macropods* that are applicable to each standard.

Prerequisites

As required by the Macropod Code, new wildlife rehabilitators must undertake an introductory training course. For generalist groups this would be covered in their induction training. For macropod-specific groups this can be completed as separate induction training or incorporated into Standard 1: The framework for macropod rehabilitation in New South Wales.

Definitions

Advanced refresher training: a standard in each Code of Practice requires wildlife rehabilitators to complete additional training every three or four years depending on the species. In the *Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Macropods* refresher training must be completed every three years.

Code of Practice: specifies the minimum standards of care needed to protect the welfare of animals in rehabilitation. There is a general code and species-specific codes. The Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Macropods is the relevant code for macropods.

Competency: is defined by the Australian Skills Quality Authority as the consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments.

Learning outcomes: a clear statement of what a learner is expected to be able to do, know about and value at the completion of a unit of study, and how well they should be expected to achieve those outcomes.

Macropods: are animals classified as members of the superfamily Macropodoidea. These are a group of herbivorous marsupial mammals comprising kangaroos, wallabies, wallaroos, pademelons and rat kangaroos. All have long, flat, soft feet and weakly developed forelimbs.

Objective: The aim of each standard.

Prerequisites: Something that requires something to happen or be completed before the other; for example, some advanced courses require a prior subject or course to be completed before a learner can enrol in them.

Professional development: Activities that develop or maintain skills or knowledge. Examples could include workshops, conferences, mentoring, independent research and courses.

Standards: are a level of accepted quality.

Macropod rehabilitation standards: Core areas of training

There are 11 macropod rehabilitation standards organised into three core training areas.

Core training area	Relevant standard
Foundations of macropod rehabilitation	Standard 1: The framework for macropod rehabilitation in New South Wales
	Standard 2: Work health and safety (WHS) requirements of macropod rehabilitation
	Standard 3: Record keeping
	Standard 4: Biology and behaviour of macropods
	Standard 5: Stress management in macropods
Rescue of macropods	Standard 6: Rescue of macropods
	Standard 7: Transport of macropods
	Standard 8: Assessment of macropods
Rehabilitation of macropods	Standard 9: Rehabilitation of adult macropods
	Standard 10: Rehabilitation of macropod joeys
	Standard 11: Release of macropods

Foundations of macropod rehabilitation

Standard 1: The framework for macropod rehabilitation in New South Wales

Objective: To familiarise learners with the relevant policies and procedures for macropod rehabilitation and provide them with an understanding of the framework that exists to support and regulate macropod rehabilitation in New South Wales. Learners must be aware of and understand the NSW Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Macropods (the Macropod Code).

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 1.1 Discuss the Macropod Code.
- 1.2 Ensure organisational policies and procedures applicable to macropod rehabilitation are defined and understood by learners.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the Code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and demonstrate understanding of the Macropod Code • identify organisational policies and procedures for macropod rehabilitation • recognise the objectives of macropod rehabilitation. 	All

Standard 2: Work health and safety requirements of macropod rehabilitation

Objective: To ensure that learners are able to prioritise their safety and that of the people around them when undertaking macropod rescue and rehabilitation.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 2.1 Explain the Work health and safety (WHS) risks associated with the site, equipment or activity and how they can be minimised.
- 2.2 Explain the WHS risks associated with handling and restraining macropods and how they can be minimised.
- 2.3 Discuss the WHS risks associated with zoonotic diseases relevant to macropods and how they can be minimised.
- 2.4 Discuss rehabilitator wellbeing and the potential mental health impacts of wildlife rehabilitation.

Learning outcomes	Section in the Code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify WHS risks associated with macropod rehabilitation • employ techniques to minimise the WHS risks to themselves and other people. 	3. Rescue 5. Euthanasia 6. Care procedures 7. Husbandry

Standard 3 Record keeping

Objective: To explain the record keeping requirements for macropod rehabilitation.

To comply with this standard, rehabilitation organisations must:

- 3.1 Explain the NPWS reporting requirements.
- 3.2 Explain organisational reporting requirements.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the Code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep records in accordance with NPWS and organisational requirements. 	12. Record keeping

Standard 4: Biology and behaviour of macropods

Objective: To ensure detailed knowledge of macropods is taught to learners. This is done by providing learners with the foundational tools to understand macropod biology and behaviour and how these aspects inform interactions with macropods undergoing rehabilitation.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 4.1 Explain features of macropod biology including anatomy, physiology, social structure, stages of development and habitat and relate them to macropod rehabilitation.
- 4.2 Provide the tools and understanding required to identify different species of macropods.
- 4.3 Provide the tools and understanding required to identify normal behaviours in macropods.
- 4.4 Provide the tools and understanding required to recognise signs of abnormal behaviour in macropods.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the Code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relate macropod biology and behaviour to macropod rehabilitation • recognise signs of normal behaviour in macropods • recognise signs of abnormal behaviour in macropods. 	All

Standard 5: Stress management in macropods

Objective: To communicate the importance of managing stress in macropods and to provide mechanisms for minimising this stress.

To comply with this standard, rehabilitation organisations must:

- 5.1 Explain the effects of stress on a macropod at various stages of rescue and rehabilitation and any differences between macropod species.
- 5.2 Discuss myopathy in relation to stress in macropods.
- 5.3 Provide the tools and understanding required to recognise the signs of stress in a macropod.
- 5.4 Discuss methods for minimising stress on a macropod at various stages of rescue and rehabilitation.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the Code
<p>Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise signs of stress in macropods and its impact • apply methods for minimising stress on a macropod. 	<p>3. Rescue 4. Transport 5. Euthanasia 6. Care procedures 7. Husbandry 8. Housing 10. Release considerations</p>

Rescue of macropods

Standard 6: Rescue of macropods

Objective: To ensure learners have the skills to safely, efficiently and humanely rescue a macropod.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 6.1 Outline common reasons for macropod rescue.
- 6.2 Detail how to perform an assessment, including the use of the decision tree in the Macropod Code, to establish the appropriate course of action.
- 6.3 Detail the correct method and equipment required to capture, handle and rescue a macropod, as suitable to the species and common rescue situations, conditions and age of a macropod.
- 6.4 Detail how to rescue a macropod to humanely minimise pain, stress and potential injury.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the Code
<p>Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • list the common reasons why macropods require rescue • assess a rescue situation and plan the rescue of a macropod • safely rescue a macropod using correct equipment • determine the type of intervention required at a rescue site. 	<p>2. Case assessment 3. Rescue 4. Transport 5. Euthanasia</p>

Standard 7: Transport of macropods

Objective: To ensure learners have the skills to safely, efficiently and humanely transport a macropod.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 7.1 Demonstrate how to appropriately contain a macropod for transport based on different sizes, ages and conditions.
- 7.2 Outline how to secure the transport container to prevent escape and further injury.
- 7.3 Detail suitable transport conditions, including ambient temperature, to safely transport a macropod.
- 7.4 Discuss the most suitable personnel or location that a macropod should be transported to, based on different ages, conditions and organisational policies.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the Code
<p>Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare a carrier for transport of a macropod • outline the transport conditions required to safely transport a macropod • understand the appropriate personnel or location to transport a macropod to, based on different ages, conditions and organisational policies. 	<p>2. Case assessment 3. Rescue 4. Transport 5. Euthanasia</p>

Standard 8: Assessment of macropods

Objective: To equip learners with the skills necessary to assess the health status of a macropod.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 8.1 Explain how to conduct an initial assessment of a macropod.
- 8.2 Explain the requirements of a thorough assessment of a macropod.
- 8.3 Provide the tools and understanding required to identify developmental stages in macropod joeys.
- 8.4 Emphasise the need to seek prompt advice and assistance for a macropod from a coordinator, veterinarian or other relevant personnel, as appropriate to its condition.
- 8.5 Distinguish symptoms of and ways to determine common diseases and injuries affecting macropods.
- 8.6 Explain how to manage an injured or diseased macropod based on the severity of its condition.
- 8.7 Outline criteria and approved methods for humane euthanasia.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the Code
<p>Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct an initial assessment of a macropod • assess the health status of a macropod and recognise stages, symptoms and severity of common diseases and injuries • determine the appropriate course of action for a macropod based on its condition • outline criteria for and approved methods of euthanasia. 	<p>5. Euthanasia 6. Care procedures 7. Husbandry 8. Housing</p>

Rehabilitation of macropods

Standard 9: Rehabilitation of adult macropods

Objective: To provide learners with an understanding of the requirements for the rehabilitation of adult macropods, and equip learners with the skills to provide quality rehabilitative care for adult macropods at the relevant stages of rehabilitation.

Note: The rehabilitation of adult macropods is only advised where suitable facilities and access to veterinary consultation for the prescription of sedatives are available.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 9.1 Explain the importance of and process for quarantining individual macropods entering rehabilitation.
- 9.2 Discuss the effects of stress and the stress-mitigation techniques required to safely rehabilitate an adult macropod.
- 9.3 Detail the facilities required to safely rehabilitate adult macropods, relevant to stages of housing (intensive, intermediate and pre-release).
- 9.4 Describe appropriate equipment and furniture for stages of housing.
- 9.5 Illustrate disease control and hygiene practices appropriate to stages of housing.
- 9.6 Explain how to appropriately provide food and water based on the condition of a macropod.
- 9.7 Detail common conditions and diseases that affect macropods.
- 9.8 Discuss how to monitor a macropod in accordance with stages of housing and condition.
- 9.9 Demonstrate how to complete a husbandry plan.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the Code
Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outline the requirements for adult macropod rehabilitation • demonstrate correct set-up for housing macropods • provide food and water appropriate to age and condition of a macropod • monitor a macropod undergoing rehabilitation • apply hygiene and disease control processes to macropod rehabilitation • complete a husbandry plan for an adult macropod. 	2. Case assessment 5. Euthanasia 6. Care procedures 7. Husbandry 8. Housing

Standard 10: Rehabilitation of macropod joeys

Objective: To provide learners with the specialised knowledge required to rehabilitate a macropod joey.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 10.1 Specify key stages of joey development.
- 10.2 Describe appropriate housing for a macropod joey based on stage of development.
- 10.3 Discuss appropriate food and feeding methods for a joey based on species and stage of development.
- 10.4 Explain the importance of maintaining records on growth, behaviour, feeding and toileting of joeys throughout the rehabilitation process.
- 10.5 Detail common conditions and diseases that affect macropod joeys.
- 10.6 Illustrate disease control and hygiene practices appropriate to stages of housing.
- 10.7 Demonstrate how to complete a husbandry plan for a macropod joey.
- 10.8 Describe mechanisms to reduce stress and encourage natural behaviours in macropod joeys.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the Code
<p>Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outline the requirements for macropod joey rehabilitation • identify stages of development for macropod joeys and relate these to rehabilitation • apply hygiene and disease control processes to macropod joey rehabilitation • reduce stress and encourage natural behaviours in macropod joeys • prepare a hand-raised macropod for release. 	<p>2. Case assessment 5. Euthanasia 6. Care procedures 7. Husbandry 8. Housing</p>

Standard 11: Release of macropods

Objective: To ensure learners understand suitability for release and criteria for releasing a macropod.

To comply with this standard, a rehabilitation organisation must:

- 11.1 Discuss release considerations for macropods including timing and site selection.
- 11.2 Explain how to determine a macropod’s suitability for release.
- 11.3 Detail the correct techniques and equipment for releasing a macropod.

Learning outcomes	Sections in the Code
<p>Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess a macropod for release suitability • competently release a macropod. 	<p>9. Suitability for release 10. Release considerations</p>