

# CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR ERP 17 – NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SEIZURE AND HOLDING OF WILDLIFE

Proposals due **3 August 2018** to [office@bnhcrc.com.au](mailto:office@bnhcrc.com.au)

## INTRODUCTION

The Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (hereafter the CRC), in conjunction with our client, the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (Victoria) (DELWP) is seeking expressions of interest for the following project.

### **National guidelines for the seizure and holding of wildlife**

## PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Develop national guidelines for the seizure and holding of wildlife for state/territory governments and other associated agencies.
2. Identifying the key roles and provide advice on the skills and training that is likely to be required to allow those responsible for the seizure, and holding of seized wildlife to safely fulfil their roles and responsibilities

## BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

1. Some members of the community find the keeping of native and non-native wildlife attractive for a range of reasons and motives. While most provide good standards of care and are prepared to work within national and state laws for the take, keeping and trade in of wildlife, this is not always the case. This leads to a number of risks, including mishandling and cruelty, illegal take, holding, theft and trade
2. When these circumstances are detected, DELWP and other wildlife agencies often have a need to seize wildlife for the purposes of welfare, evidence and/or quarantine
3. Seizures can involve many types of fauna including crocodiles, large mammals, birds and herps (snakes and lizards). Numbers range from individuals to several thousand animals in instances where major smuggling rings are uncovered
4. Seized animals can be severely traumatised and in compromised states of health. They may include smuggled wildlife of unknown provenance that presents human health and biosecurity risks. They may be venomous and/or vicious. They need to be equally

considered as someone's personal possessions and evidence until any investigation and potential legal proceeding have concluded.

5. DELWP and many other agencies that have wildlife management and compliance responsibilities have insufficient facilities and capabilities, and poorly defined standards to manage these requirements and risks
6. Use of existing facilities such as zoos and sanctuaries is often not feasible because of issues such as biosecurity. Furthermore, seizures often involve surge events that cannot be easily catered for via organisations using day to day rostering arrangements. Initially at least, risk needs to be managed and assessed often in locations remote from major facilities and involve many animals that are traumatised and in poor health. Ongoing care and management of seized wildlife can go on for more than six to 24 months while court proceedings occur. As well as providing necessary standards of care, seized wildlife remain valuable to the individual involved in the case, on the black market and are evidence that maybe necessary to execute a successful prosecution. High standards of security are required to manage the risks of tampering and theft
7. The costs and requirements for developing requisite infrastructure, capabilities and standards for personnel, infrastructure, husbandry and disposal are not well defined. Seizure events place significant stress on compliance organisations and many are not well equipped to deal with the initial and ongoing issues associated with major seizure events
8. Knowledge and capability for the keeping of wildlife exists in a range of zoos, sanctuaries, and quarantine centres. Following major bushfires in 2003 and 2009 in Victoria, fire and emergency agencies and animal health departments have invested in significant research and development, training and emergency infra-structure to improve the care of domestic and native wildlife affected by bushfire.
9. This project aims to develop national guidelines on the seizure and holding of the most commonly held and traded classes and orders of native and invasive wildlife. The guidelines will include elements such as housing, caging, atmospheric regulation, feeding, safe handling, security, document / evidence management, transport and disposal. They will also detail design and layout options for permanent and temporary wildlife enclosures that can cater for a range of seizure scenarios to assist agencies with the capability and infrastructure planning, as well as seizure response planning

## SCOPE

### INCLUSIONS

1. Guidelines – including critical elements for organisational policies and procedures
2. Competencies and training curriculum; housing, transport, caging, atmospheric regulation, feeding and safe handling, cleaning and disposal
3. Security and safety for seized wildlife, both to protect the wildlife and to preserve the chain of custody of the wildlife to a standard that will allow them to be used as evidence in legal proceedings

4. Security and management of documents and other evidence to a standard required to support legal proceedings
5. Design and layout requirements for permanent and temporary wildlife enclosures, including approaches to rapidly increase capacity for safe and compliant housing of wildlife
6. Indicative costs for each of the elements of the guidelines, including:
  - a. seizure and holding of wildlife
  - b. Scaling capacity for mass seizure events
  - c. Provision of security for evidence, including wildlife, documents and other materials
  - d. Training of relevant staff to undertake essential roles
  - e. Re-housing or other forms of release, removal or disposal of wildlife from housing facilities

**EXCLUSIONS**

7. Purchase of equipment / stores

**PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS**
**Key Steps**

Key Steps	Lead	Due Date
1. Develop detailed project plan.	Provider	1 month
2. Define / agree on scenarios for seizures.	Provider	2 months
3. Develop guidelines /plans for safe and secure keeping of seized wildlife – engage with DELWP/Parks Victoria(PV) officers, AELERT Members and relevant agencies/experts.	Provider	8 months
4. Develop guidelines and plans for infrastructure design and development for secure wildfire facilities – engage with DELWP/PV officers, AELERT Members and relevant agencies/experts.	Provider	12 months
5. Training and competence requirements for the seizure and holding of wildlife – including husbandry, management of documents and evidence – engage with DELWP/PV officers, AELERT Members and relevant agencies/experts.	Provider	14 months
6. Summary report describing program implementation costs.	Provider	16 months
7. Summary briefings, projects updates and seminars.	Provider	18 months

## Expected Outputs

1. Guidelines for the housing, caging, atmospheric regulation, feeding, safe handling, wildlife security, document / evidence management, transport and disposal of seized wildlife and biosecurity management
2. Guidelines for infrastructure design and development for secure wildlife facilities, including scalability for large seizures
3. Training and competence requirements for the seizure and holding of wildlife – including husbandry, management of documents and evidence, and disposal
4. Guidelines and plans for the establishment for emergency facilities for holding seized wildlife
5. Estimates of material requirements and other costs required to effectively implement the guidelines
6. Regular reporting, including initial planning, progress and project communications materials, including briefs and presentations developed - partners and stakeholders informed.

## Quality Control

### Final report and other project outputs

It is the expectation of the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and our client DELWP that the material delivered as part of this project will meet the highest scientific standards and will be suitable for internal and external distribution.

It is a requirement of this project that the final report (and any supporting material) is 'submitted to the States' satisfaction'. To ensure the final report meets this expectation it will be subject to up to two rounds of review (with a minimum of two weeks for each review) by DELWP. Research organisations are required to ensure an internal peer review process is undertaken prior to the draft final report being submitted for DELWP consideration.

Before the report is final report is submitted to the State's representative for approval it must also have been

- Through an independent peer reviewer approved by the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Project Manager
- Professional proof read and copy edited

These steps must be arranged by the research organisation costed as part of project budget and completed within the project timeframe.

**Reports that have not been independently peer reviewed and professionally proof read and copy edited will not be considered final.** A copy of the independent peer review and the researcher response to any comments must be provided to the CRC.

## Communication

To further assist with the quality assurance, it is expected that:

- The project team will utilise a consultative approach when developing the overall framework and data management processes/criteria, and will demonstrate this by documenting engagement activities within the relevant reports. This will involve seeking input from DELWP subject matter experts to ensure development of a framework and processes that are fit for purpose.
- The research team leader will give periodic presentations (e.g. annually) to key stakeholder groups (Ecological Risk Assessment Working Group, Landscape Evaluators Working Group) to gain critical feedback on project milestones.

Any further quality control processes that are required for this piece of work, as well as key success measures, will be agreed with the DELWP Policy Lead as part of the planning process.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PROCESSES

### Contractual Arrangements

This project is being delivered under an Agreement in place between the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre and the Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning (DELWP) in the State of Victoria. Under this Agreement the CRC is responsible for the delivery of a number of bushfire related research projects. The contract put in place between the CRC and the research organisation selected to undertake this work will reflect the terms of the Agreement between DELWP and the CRC.

A copy of the draft contract the CRC will provide to the successful research organisation is provided with this document. This contract should be reviewed as part of the EOI process. This is a standard agreement, and any changes will be at the sole discretion of the CRC. If you would like to request amendments to any of the terms and conditions set out in the proposed contract, details of the proposed changes and the reason the changes are requested must be included with the submitted response. In considering, this contract and proposing changes please note we have been advised by DELWP that (i) changes to provisions relating to the ownership of Intellectual Property will only be varied to take account of substantial in-kind contribution from the successful research organisation/s and (ii) no changes can be made to the publications approvals processes.

### Project Governance

Each project is carried out under the supervision of a Project Control Board (PCB) and in accordance with the governance arrangements agreed between CRC and DELWP.

While the contractual relationship for the delivery of this project will be between the research organisation and the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC there will also be a strong relationship

between the research team and DELWP staff. Communication is an important element of the success of this project and Researchers will be required to maintain strong links with both the DELWP Policy Lead and the CRC Project Manager though out the project.

A governance plan has been prepared which shows the roles and responsibilities of each of the participants. The successful research team will be required to comply with the processes and expectations as set out in that document.

### Project Planning

The project overview included in this document describes the way the DELWP subject matter experts believe the project can most successfully be undertaken. Alternative approaches can be considered. Any alternative approaches must ensure the delivery of the required outputs including any intermediate outputs identified in this document.

Following acceptance of a project proposal the successful research organisation must prepare a detailed project plan and risk treatment plan **using the DELWP template**. This plan must be approved by the DELWP Policy Lead and will become an attachment to the contract. The project plan must be approved within 3 months of the notification of the acceptance of the project proposal.

### Reporting

The successful research organisation will be required to make at least one presentation (and possibly two) annually to the Project Control Board or other nominated DELWP group during the life of the project.

Research organisations will also be required

- to provide a poster for the annual AFAC/BNHCRC conferences;
- detailed progress reports on a quarterly basis; and
- and contribute to the Project Evaluation Report

Dates for submitting Quarterly Progress Reports

Period covered	Report required
1 July to 30 September	24 October
1 October to 31 December	24 January following calendar year
1 January to 31 March	24 April
1 April to 30 June	24 July

## SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

### Submission Requirements

Research teams responding to this Call for Expression of Interest are required to submit their response, including:

A draft project proposal (of about 4-6 pages) clearly addressing the requirements of the specifications set out in this document. Proposals must include achievable timelines, which will be used to monitor progress. A statement of capability demonstrating the ability of the proposed project team to undertake the work. This statement of capability should include the names and experience of key team members and their proposed contribution to the project. (The capability statement should not exceed 4 pages). In addition to the proposal the EOI package should include:

- A separate project budget including details of any in kind contribution from the research organisation.
- A separate statement of acceptance of the terms and conditions of the proposed contractual arrangements. If such arrangements are not acceptable details of any changes must be included with the submitted response.

### Additional information

- Research bids from a consortium of research organisations with expertise in the relevant fields are specifically encouraged.
- Attached is a draft contract which we ask your organisation to review. In your response to the EOI you should identify any items in this contract that will require attention /amendment should your organisation be selected to undertake this piece of work. This contract is based on the Head Agreement between DELWP and the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and as such there is very limited scope to make changes to the draft contract.

**The total maximum budget for this project is \$90,000 (excl GST) and all work must be completed by 31 January 2020.**

Any research proposal once submitted will be treated as commercial in confidence.

Applications, must be submitted to: [office@bnhcrc.com.au](mailto:office@bnhcrc.com.au) by 3 August 2018.

## Evaluation Criteria

After the closing date the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC along with the DELWP policy lead will review proposals against the evaluation criteria below and make a recommendation to the State's representative on the most appropriate organisation to undertake this work. The evaluation criteria provide an indication of those matters that should be included in the project proposal and associated documentation. Details are provided below.

Successful applicants will be advised by 27 August 2018 and it is expected work on the project will commence no later than 17 September 2018.

The decision of the BNHCRC and our client DELWP will be final. The BNHCRC reserves the right not to offer the work, or only allocate a proportion of the available funding, if a proposal does not meet the client's needs. The Project Control Board reserves the right to invite any other specific researchers as it sees fit to submit proposals before or after the closing date.

Evaluation Criterion	% weighting
<b>Research Capability</b> The capacity and capability to deliver an excellent applied research project in a Victorian environment.	15
<b>Project Proposal</b> A clear demonstration that the research team has an understanding of the project scope through the proposed research approach The proposal must also include an indicative timetable of work and interim milestones/project outputs as described in this document <b>Quality Control</b> Clear documentation of quality control processes including proposed internal and external reviewers. Identification of copy editors and proof readers.	50
<b>Industry Engagement</b> Strong Track record of industry engagement with the ability to support and influence bushfire management in Victoria through interaction with land and fire agency personnel <b>Victorian Focus</b> Ability to undertake research in Victorian environments individually and/or in cooperation with land and fire managers	15
<b>Value for Money</b> Delivery of required outcome within available budget along with the ability to leverage the funds provided with in-kind contributions or supplementary opportunities. The evaluation team will consider the membership of the project team and the proposed roles and time commitment.	20

#### Attachments

1. Call for expression of interest in this project
2. Copy of the Governance Arrangement
3. BNHCRC subcontract including project plan template and evaluation report template
4. Quarterly report template
5. DELWP report template