

## Keeping Venomous Snakes Policy

### What guides this Policy?

The *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* provides for a permit system to keep native animals (including reptiles) in captivity. The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) promotes fair and reasonable access to wildlife within parameters that address the conservation status of species, proper accountability for possession and appropriate standards of husbandry.

DEWNR promotes the concept of private individuals being able to keep native animals as long as the animal is legally acquired and the person has sufficient experience and knowledge and appropriate facilities to keep the animal.

Authority to keep and trade in protected reptiles is given under Section 58(1) of the Act. Conditions relating to the keeping and trading in native fauna and keeping of records are applied under the *National Parks and Wildlife (Wildlife) Regulations 2001*.

### ***National Parks and Wildlife (Wildlife) Regulations 2001***

#### **18—Standards for keeping protected animals**

(1) A person who keeps a protected animal must—

- (a) keep the animal in a cage or enclosure that is adequate in size and is constructed and maintained so as to—
  - (i) provide adequate shelter in all circumstances; and
  - (ii) prevent the animal from escaping; and
  - (iii) protect the animal against predators; and
  - (iv) enable the cage or enclosure to be locked or otherwise secured against intruders; and
  - (v) as far as is practicable, facilitate the inspection of the animal by a warden under the Act; and
- (b) ensure that the cage or enclosure in which the animal is kept—
  - (i) is maintained in a clean and sanitary condition; and
  - (ii) except when the person is present—is securely locked or otherwise secured against intruders; and
- (c) keep an adequate supply of clean water in the cage or enclosure; and
- (d) provide sufficient and appropriate food in the cage or enclosure; and
- (e) not keep the animal with another animal that is likely to injure or kill it; and
- (f) protect the animal from weather conditions that would be likely to cause it distress; and
- (fa) provide the animal with adequate heat or ultra-violet light from an artificial source if the animal is of a species that requires such heat or light for its wellbeing; and

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- (g) not permit the animal to suffer distress from any other cause that can reasonably be avoided; and
- (h) produce the animal for inspection at the request of a warden.

## What is the scope of this Policy?

This Policy applies to all DEWNR staff in the administration of matters on behalf of the SA Government, Minister and Department relating to the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 (the Act); specifically permits for the keeping of venomous snakes (Elapidae). Keeping venomous snakes in captivity can present potential risk to handlers and public.

This Policy has been developed in the interests of minimising this risk by ensuring that venomous snakes are housed appropriately and only kept or accessed by persons with knowledge and skills to ensure that animal and human welfare requirements are met.

## Who is responsible for what?

**Chief Executive:** Approval of this Policy.

**Group Executive Director Strategy and Advice:** Approves the Procedure that accompanies this Policy.

**Executive Director Conservation and Land Management:** The periodical review of this Policy.

**Fauna Permit Unit:** Granting permits involving the keeping of native animals.

## What steps do I need to take to comply?

- DEWNR staff who have not undertaken a recognised course in venomous snake handling must not, under any circumstances, handle venomous snakes.
- Any trained DEWNR staff undertaking any activities involving snakes must comply with the DEWNR Safe Work Practice – Outdoor Activity: Snake Handling (Venomous and Non-Venomous).
- DEWNR's Fauna Permit Unit will only issue permits to keep venomous snakes to applicants who meet the required criteria.

## What steps do the public need to take to comply?

Anyone who wishes to keep a venomous snake in captivity must hold the relevant permit(s) issued by DEWNR.

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## Other relevant documents

- DEWNR's Keeping Venomous Snakes Procedure
- DEWNR's Venomous Snake Intervention (Snake Catching) Policy and Procedure
- DEWNR's General Guidelines for the Management of Protected Wildlife in Captivity in South Australia.
- DEWNR: Snake Safety Fact Sheet:  
[www.environment.sa.gov.au/managing-natural-resources/Plants Animals/Living with wildlife/Snakes](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/managing-natural-resources/Plants_Animals/Living_with_wildlife/Snakes)
- DEWNR Safe Work Practice – Outdoor Activity: Snake Handling (Venomous and Non-Venomous)
- DFW Safe Work Practice – Emergency Management: Snakes and Snake Bite Procedure.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tim Goodes'.

Tim Goodes

**A/CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Date: 01 September 2015

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