



Australian Government

National Code of Practice for
the Humane Shooting of
Kangaroos and Wallabies for

Commercial Purposes

Endorsed by the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council

The Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC) consists of the Australian, State, Territory and New Zealand government ministers responsible for primary industries, natural resources, environment and water policy.

Addresses of relevant government authorities may be found on the final page.

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The Code is based on the knowledge and technology available at the time of publication and may need to be varied in the light of new knowledge. Suggestions on how the Code can be improved are welcome and should be forwarded to:

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This edition of the Code will be reviewed in five years time.

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PREFACE

The *National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes* sets an achievable standard of humane conduct and is the minimum required of persons shooting kangaroos and wallabies. The Code is implemented through education and relevant government authority legislation as appropriate.

The Code replaces the (*National*) *Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos* which was developed by Australian, State and Territory government authorities and endorsed by the former Council of Nature Conservation Ministers (CONCOM) in 1985. The 1985 Code was revised and the second edition was endorsed by CONCOM and published in 1990.

Since 1990, there has been a considerable amount of scientific research conducted into kangaroo behaviour and ecology and considerable changes in the kangaroo industry. A review of the Code allowed the determination of the minimum achievable standard of humane conduct under present circumstances.

In 2002, the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC) established a working group to review the 1990 Code. The NRMMC consists of the Australian, State, Territory and New Zealand government ministers responsible for primary industries, natural resources, environment and water policy.

The Working Group included representatives from Australian, State and Territory government authorities responsible for kangaroo management and welfare, the kangaroo industry, RSPCA and Animals Australia. The Working Group sought public comment on the revision of the Code and these comments were taken into account in the development of two separate codes, a commercial and non-commercial code.

This first edition of the commercial code was endorsed by NRMMC on the 7th of November 2008 and should be read in conjunction with the *National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Non-commercial Purposes*.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Code

This Code has been produced to ensure that all persons intending to shoot free-living kangaroos or wallabies for commercial purposes undertake the shooting so that the animal is killed in a way that minimises pain and suffering.

1.2 Definitions

In this Code, the terms 'kangaroo' and 'wallaby' mean all species of the family Macropodidae within the superfamily Macropodoidea which includes kangaroos, wallaroos (or euros), wallabies and pademelons.

For the purposes of this Code, a commercial purpose is where the animal shot is to be used as product to be sold within Australia or overseas.

1.3 Legislation

All shooting of kangaroos and wallabies, whether on public or private land, is subject to law. As the laws may differ between States and Territories, shooters must contact the relevant government authority in the State or Territory in which the shooting will occur for appropriate advice. Except where specifically exempted by law, States and Territories will require the shooter to have a licence or permit issued by a relevant government authority. The licence or permit will specify any conditions or restrictions that may apply.

The requirements of this Code do not override State or Territory animal welfare legislation. A lack of knowledge of relevant State or Territory animal welfare legislation is no defence against prosecution for animal welfare offences.

1.4 Structure of the Code

The Code is divided into six sections covering:

- **Introduction**
- **Technical specifications and procedures;**
- **Shooting for commercial purposes;**
- **Euthanasing injured kangaroos and wallabies**
- **Euthanasing pouch young and young at foot; and**
- **Shooting for special purposes.**

The Code also has three Schedules. These are:

Schedule 1: Minimum specifications for firearms and ammunition;

Schedule 2: Points of aim for a shot to the brain; and

Schedule 3: Points of aim for a shot to the heart.

In each section an introduction provides background to the conditions that must be adhered to by all persons shooting kangaroos and wallabies.

2. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS AND PROCEDURES

The range of firearms and ammunition available to licensed shooters in Australia is extensive, but only a small selection of firearm types are considered suitable for shooting kangaroos and wallabies under most circumstances (Schedule 1).

Across Australia, there are large differences in the terrain and prevailing weather conditions that might exist at the time of shooting. Commonsense is required to assess the prevailing conditions. Where the conditions are such as to raise doubts about achieving a sudden and humane death, **shooting must not be attempted.**

2.1 Centrefire and rimfire rifles

Centrefire rifles are specified for the shooting of all of the larger kangaroo species, with the exception of special circumstances where it might not be safe or practical to do so. Rimfire rifles are lower powered and do not have as long a range as centrefire rifles. In open areas, smaller wallaby species can be shot with either centrefire rifles or suitable rimfire rifle.

2.2 Ammunition

There is a large variety of ammunition that can be used in the firearms listed in Schedule 1. By varying the powder load or the projectile weight and type, the impact delivered to the target kangaroo or wallaby can be altered. For the purpose of the Code, the ammunition specifications provided in Schedule 1 reflect those for factory-loaded ammunition in 2008. As new brands and lines of ammunition become available, the ballistic properties of those products must be examined by the shooter to ensure that they are at least equal to those of the ammunition specified in Schedule 1. Sub-sonic ammunition must not be used.

2.3 Shooting procedures

More than one kangaroo or wallaby in a mob may be shot before the carcasses are retrieved by the shooter, provided that the shooter is certain that each kangaroo or wallaby is dead before another is targeted. Where an individual kangaroo or wallaby is injured, no further animals can be shot until all reasonable efforts have been made to locate and kill the injured animal (see Section 4). Shooters should avoid shooting female kangaroos and wallabies where it is obvious have dependent young except in special circumstances (ie the female kangaroo or wallaby is sick or injured or needs to be killed for management and/or ecological reasons). If a female kangaroo or wallaby is shot then any dependent young at foot must be shot as soon as possible to avoid dispersal in accordance with the methods in Section 5. Shot female kangaroos and wallabies must be thoroughly examined for pouch young as soon as the carcass is retrieved and, if present, the young must be killed in accordance with the methods in Section 5.

2.4 Conditions

The minimum specifications for firearms and ammunition are set out in Schedule 1. The following conditions for the shooting of kangaroos and wallabies must be met. **Where the conditions set out below can not be met, or where there is any doubt about achieving a sudden and humane death, shooting must not be attempted.**

Goal

- (i) When shooting a kangaroo or wallaby, the primary objective must be to achieve instantaneous loss of consciousness and rapid death without regaining consciousness. For the purposes of the Code, this is regarded as a sudden and humane death.

Firearms and Ammunition

- (i) Kangaroos and wallabies must only be shot with a combination of firearms and ammunition that complies with or exceeds those minimum specifications in Schedule 1.
- (ii) The combination of firearm and ammunition selected for the environmental conditions in which the shooter operates must ensure that sudden and humane death of the target animal is consistently achieved.
- (iii) A rifle must be fitted with a telescopic sight and be sighted in against an inanimate target before commencing each day or night's shooting. The telescopic sight should be re-adjusted on an inanimate target as often as required during each shooting session.
- (iv) Self-loading or semi-automatic rifles must not be used at any time.
- (v) Sub-sonic ammunition must not be used.

Shooting platform

- (i) Kangaroos and wallabies must not be shot from a moving vehicle or other moving platform.

Target animal

- (i) The target kangaroo or wallaby must be standing (injured animals excepted) and clearly visible.
- (ii) The target kangaroo or wallaby must be stationary (injured animals excepted) and within a range specified in Schedule 1 that permits accurate placement of the shot.
- (iii) Shooters should avoid shooting female kangaroos or wallabies where it is obvious that they have pouch young or dependent young at foot except in special circumstances (i.e. the female kangaroo or wallaby is sick or injured or needs to be killed for management and/or ecological reasons).

Point of aim

- (i) A shooter must aim so as to hit the target kangaroo or wallaby in the brain (see Schedule 2).
- (ii) A shooter must not aim so as to hit the target kangaroo or wallaby in any other part of the body than that specified in (i) above.

Follow-up

- (i) The shooter must be certain that each kangaroo or wallaby is dead before another is targeted.
- (ii) If a kangaroo or wallaby is still alive after being shot, every reasonable effort must be made immediately to locate and kill it before any attempt is

made to shoot another animal. The injured kangaroo or wallaby must be euthanased in accordance with the methods outlined in Section 4.

- (iii) If a female kangaroo or wallaby is shot then any dependent young at foot must be shot as soon as possible to avoid dispersal in accordance with the methods in Section 5.
- (iv) Once a female kangaroo or wallaby has been killed then its pouch must be thoroughly examined and any pouch young must be euthanased in accordance with the methods in Section 5.

3. SHOOTING FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES

At present five States have approved management plans for commercial kangaroo or wallaby harvesting for export – New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia. The species currently commercially harvested are:

- Red kangaroo (*Macropus rufus*), harvested in NSW, Qld, SA, WA
- Eastern Grey kangaroo (*M. giganteus*), harvested in NSW, Qld
- Western Grey kangaroo (*M. fuliginosus*), harvested in NSW, SA, WA
- Common Wallaroo or Euro (*M. robustus*), harvested in NSW, Qld, SA, WA
- Bennett's Wallaby (*M. rufogriseus rufogriseus*), harvested in Tas.
- Tasmanian Pademelon (a species of wallaby) (*Thylogale billardierii*), harvested in Tas.

In all commercial situations kangaroos and wallabies must be shot in accordance with the conditions described in Section 2.4 above. Commercial kangaroo and wallaby harvesting is regulated by State legislation and commercial kangaroo and/or wallaby shooters are licensed under that legislation. As a condition of their licences commercial shooters can only sell carcasses of animals that have been shot in accordance with this Code. Shotguns cannot be used for commercial harvesting in any State.

3.1 Competency

Commercial kangaroo and wallaby shooters are required to pass a competency test before they are permitted to shoot kangaroos and/or wallabies. The standards for the competency test vary between States and Territories, but all must demonstrate that a shooter can consistently place shots into a suitable sized target area at the distances used in the field. The distance to the target and the size of the target used in the competency test may vary depending on the species and calibre of rifle being used. The purpose of the testing is to ensure that each person is capable of shooting with sufficient accuracy to meet the animal welfare standards set out in this Code. Prior to competency testing shooters should have received training in both shooting kangaroos and the euthanasia of pouch young.

4. EUTHANASING INJURED KANGAROOS AND WALLABIES

Injured kangaroos and wallabies should be euthanased quickly and humanely to alleviate suffering, in accordance with the conditions described in Section 4.1.

4.1 Conditions

The minimum specifications for firearms and ammunition are set out in Part A or B of Schedule 1. The following conditions apply:

- (i) Injured animals must be killed by a method that will achieve a rapid and humane death, preferably by a shot to the brain (see Schedule 2).
- (ii) Under circumstances where a shot to the brain of an injured animal is impractical or unsafe, a shot to the heart is permissible (see Schedule 3).
- (iii) In circumstances where, for dispatch of an injured kangaroo or wallaby, a shot to either the brain or heart is impractical or unsafe (such as when the animal is moving but not able to stand), a heavy blow to the base of the skull with sufficient force to destroy the brain (see Schedule 2) is permissible. To ensure a humane kill, a suitably hard and heavy blunt instrument must be used.
- (iv) If the kangaroo or wallaby that is shot is female then any dependent young at foot must be shot as soon as possible to avoid dispersal, in accordance with the methods outlined in Section 5.
- (v) Once a female kangaroo or wallaby has been killed then its pouch must be thoroughly examined and any pouch young must be euthanased in accordance with the methods outlined in Section 5.

5. EUTHANASING POUCH YOUNG AND YOUNG AT FOOT

All target female kangaroos and wallabies, including injured and sick animals, must be thoroughly examined for pouch young. If a pouch young or young at foot is present, euthanasia must be carried out, and in accordance with the methods outlined below. These measures are to prevent the inhumane death of young that cannot survive on their own.

5.1 Conditions

The following conditions apply.

- (i) Where euthanasia is carried out using a blow to the head, the blow must be delivered with force sufficient to crush the skull and destroy the brain. The blow should be delivered with a suitably hard and heavy blunt instrument. The shooter must confirm that there has been lethal damage to the brain and that the animal is dead.
- (ii) Immediately after euthanasia, the shooter is required to examine each animal to confirm death. The shooter must check that there is no body movement, breathing and heart beat to indicate that the animal is alive. The shooter must also check that there is no corneal reflex (where this is observable).

Description of Young	Acceptable Euthanasia Method
Small furless pouch young (fits within the palm of the hand)	Single forceful blow to the base of the skull sufficient to destroy the functional capacity of the brain. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> Stunning, immediately followed by decapitation by rapidly severing the head from the body with a sharp blade.
All furred pouch young	Single forceful blow to the base of the skull sufficient to destroy the functional capacity of the brain.
Young at foot	Single shot to the brain or heart where it can be delivered accurately and in safety using the firearms and ammunition specified in Part A or B of Schedule 1.

6. SHOOTING FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES

6.1. Shooting of animals in circumstances where it might be unsafe to use firearms listed in Schedule 1 Part A

In some cases, there may be a reason for shooting kangaroos where it is necessary to use combinations of firearms and ammunition other than those described in Part A of Schedule 1 of this Code. When a relevant government authority determines that it is not safe to use the firearms specified in Part A of Schedule 1 it may authorize licensed and competent shooters to use firearms specified in Part B of Schedule 1, so long as the goal of sudden and humane death can still be achieved in accordance with the conditions set out in this Code. Kangaroos and wallabies shot under these circumstances may, at the discretion of the relevant government authority, be used for sustainable purposes rather than left to lie in the field or be buried in accordance Local Government requirements.

6.2 Conditions: shooting of animals in circumstances where it might be unsafe to use firearms listed in Schedule 1 Part A

The following conditions are limited to the shooting of animals where it might be unsafe to use firearms listed in Schedule 1 Part A and where approval from the relevant government authority has been provided.

- (i) The provisions of this Code apply to the shooting of kangaroos and wallabies except in certain circumstances where the use of firearms specified in Part A of Schedule 1 might pose a safety risk to humans. In such circumstances the requirements of Part B of Schedule 1 apply.
- (ii) Approval of the relevant government authority is required for each circumstance and location.
- (iii) The waiving of any requirements of this Code shall not relieve the shooter of the absolute requirement to provide a sudden and humane death for the target kangaroos and wallabies.

SCHEDULE 1: Minimum specifications for firearms and ammunition

PART A – Kangaroos and wallabies shot for COMMERCIAL PURPOSES				
	Rifles (Bolt-action repeating or single-shot)			
Species	Calibre of Firearm	Cartridge Size	Projectile (Soft or Hollow Point only)	Maximum Range
Kangaroos and large wallabies: Red kangaroo (<i>Macropus rufus</i>), Eastern grey kangaroo (<i>M. giganteus</i>), Western grey kangaroo (<i>M. fuliginosus</i>) and Euro or wallaroo (<i>M. robustus</i>)	0.224" or 5.69mm	.222R, .223, .22/250 or larger	50 grain or heavier	200m
	0.204" or 5.18mm	.204 Ruger	40 grain	200m
Small wallabies: Bennetts wallaby (<i>M. rufogriseus</i>), Tasmanian Pademelon (<i>Thylogale billardierii</i>)	0.172 or 4.37mm	.17R	20 or 25 grain	100m
	0.224" or 5.69mm	.22H	45 grain	80m
	0.224" or 5.69mm	.222R, .223, .22/250 or larger	50 grain or heavier	200m
	0.224" or 5.69mm	.22 magnum	30 grain or heavier, hollow point only	80m
	0.224" or 5.69 mm	.22LR	32 grain or heavier, hollow point only. Sub-sonic ammunition must not be used.	50m

PART B – Euthanasia of injured kangaroos and wallabies, young at foot that are dependent on the mother and the mother has been killed, and shooting in specific circumstances where it might be unsafe to use firearms listed in Part A (subsections 6.1 and 6.2)				
As per specifications set out in Part A plus for:				
	Rifles (Bolt-action repeating or single-shot)			
	Calibre of Firearm	Cartridge Size	Projectile (Solid or Hollow Point only)	Maximum Range
Kangaroos and large wallabies	0.172" or 4.37mm	.17HMR	17 or 20 grain	80m
	0.224" or 5.69mm	.22M	30 grain or heavier, hollow point only	80m
	0.172" or 4.37mm	.17 R	20 or 25 grain	200m
	0.224" or 5.69mm	.22H	45 grain	80m
	0.224" or 5.69 mm	22LR	32 grain or heavier. Sub-sonic ammunition must not be used.	Less than 30m

Glossary

.17HMR = .17 projectile developed for the .22 Magnum cartridge necked down (Rim-fire)

.22H = .22 Hornet (Centre-fire)

.22M - .22 Magnum (Rim-fire)

.22LR = .22 Long Rifle (Rim-fire)

.17R = .17 Remington (Centre-fire)

.222R = .222 Remington (Centre-fire)

References: *Cartridges of the World*. 10th edition.

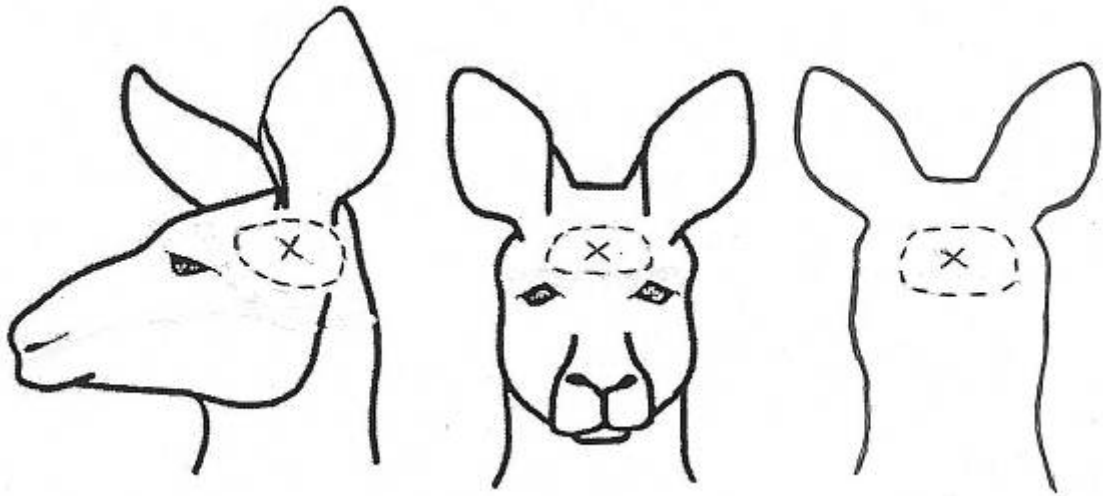
Frank, C. Barnes. Edited by Stan Skinner 2003.

Winchester Ammunition Product Guide 2003

<http://www.remington.com/products/ammunition/ballistics>

SCHEDULE 2:

Point of aim (X) for a shot to the brain and location of the brain (all kangaroos and wallabies)



SCHEDULE 3:

Point of aim (+) for a shot to the heart (applicable only as described for injured kangaroos and wallabies). Note that a shot to the heart should not be attempted from the rear of a kangaroo or wallaby as it will most likely strike the spine first and may deflect before hitting the heart, paralysing the animal but not killing it outright.



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