

# CONSERVATION & HUNTING

ISSUE 13 – FEBRUARY 2019



## Hunting tradition

Activists under a cloud

Up and up for deer hunting

Resetting Duck Season



# Restrictions without purpose



**Bill Paterson**  
Field & Game  
Australia chairman

Field & Game Australia advocated to the Game Management Authority (GMA) for a full-length season and a full bag of 10 birds per day, but their advice to the Agriculture Minister Jaclyn Symes was for restrictions and that is the way she went.

The GMA reasoning for a reduced season (hot dry summer, reduced breeding, fewer game birds present) is simplistic and FGA does not agree with it.

The next assumption is key. GMA's view is that when duck numbers are low, fewer must be harvested or you risk lowering the breeding population. To ensure this happens, they reduce the bag limit. This action is taken despite the expert scientific view that hunting does not have an impact on the sustainability of duck populations. Water and habitat are the real influencers.

The FGA view is that when duck numbers are low, fewer are harvested. This is backed up by the harvest data the GMA compiles after each duck season, regardless of reductions.

You can't hunt ducks that are not there. We all know that.

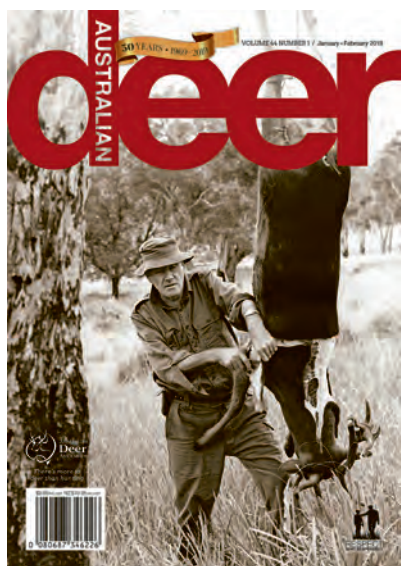
However, every hunter believes that he or she is better than the average hunter and that in a poor season they could get 10 birds a day. This belief, no matter how unrealistic, is what prompts them to drive long distances and spend millions of dollars in rural areas.

Just like buying a lottery ticket, you chase the dream, not the reality.

Reducing bag limits and season length does nothing to manage duck populations across Australia, but it does impact the hunters' motivation to travel and spend. Putting the lower bag limit on opening weekend is a clear attempt to try to reduce the concentration of hunters on that weekend, but have decision makers thought through the impact on rural economies?



# Looking forward



2019 marks the 50th anniversary of the Australian Deer Association. This will, naturally and justifiably, lead to some reminiscing and re-living of past glories.

All of that is important and worthwhile, we have a lot to celebrate and a lot of people can quite rightly feel very proud of the part they have played over the past half a century.

Our focus however is to not have that celebration give way to navel gazing, the past is important, but, more important is how we position ourselves to carry our shared values into the next fifty years.

We have relaunched our popular magazine Australian Deer with a cracking photo of Arthur Bentley on the front cover. We could

think of no more suitable image to usher in our 50th year than that of the man who was, for so long, the 'spiritual leader' of the Australian deer scene.

There are now more ADA office bearers and volunteers who never met Arthur Bentley than there are who knew him—such is the passage of time. What all of our members have shared are the values on which Arthur built the Australian Deer Association. The respect for our quarry, love of the environment and commitment to access is as strong today as it was in 1969. It is the tie that binds us.



**David Voss**  
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# Activists erode trust

The emergence of evidence revealing Animals Australia offered financial inducements to secure video and photographs of distressed sheep to support its campaign against the live export trade raises serious questions about the continued status of this activist organisation.

Animal rights activists are driven by an extreme ideology where it seems the ends justify the means.

Animals Australia calls them “strategic investigations” that shed much needed light on the actions of cruel animal industries, but as National Farmers’ Federation president Fiona Simson pointed out following the live export revelations, they also cast serious doubt over the integrity of the organisation and its motivations.

“When a cash reward is offered, it can act as an incentive to potentially misrepresent or manufacture circumstances where animals are indeed suffering,” she said.

This would not be the first occasion on which Animals Australia has been associated with an ends-justifies-the-means approach to pursuing its objectives.

Field & Game Australia, whose duck hunting members are subjected to extreme campaigns by Animals Australia, supports action to;

- suspend the charitable status of Animals Australia pending an independent and public audit of its activities;
- suspend Animals Australia membership of any statutory or advisory bodies
- remove Animal Australia’s tax-deductible status and terminate its membership of

any advisory or statutory bodies if it is demonstrated that Animals Australia has engaged in unethical or illegal behaviour in pursuing its campaigns.

We believe a government or any of its agencies or instrumentalities should not give legitimacy to or appear to be condoning the behaviour of such an organisation by consulting it or recognising it in any forum.

We think it would be even more disturbing if a government or any of its agencies or instrumentalities accepted it as a de-facto investigator by relying on apparent evidence it produces of alleged illegal activity.







# Chicken and egg reveals survey bias

Australians consume 17 million eggs every day but the industry has been under constant scrutiny over how those eggs are produced. Two surveys conducted independently by CSIRO reveal the gulf between activists claims and reality.

The first survey of community attitudes by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) was targeted, gathering responses from a diverse and representative group of Australians.

A research panel was used to access a group of 5440 people who reflect the broader Australian population on specific Australian Bureau of Statistics data.

The second survey was open and online and predictably, as hunters well know, it was promoted by animal activist organisations and hijacked.

Between August and September 2018, 8037 surveys were collected and after cleaning the survey data, 7876 responses were analysed for inclusion.

The two samples were not combined because the two surveys produced vastly different demographics and results.

"If we had combined them, these differences would have been lost and our ability to analyse and understand the findings for the Australian adult population as a whole would be compromised," the report states.

Rather than eroding the value of the survey, the two different outcomes provided a valuable opportunity for scrutiny and comparison.

According to the report, compared to the representative sample, the open sample was older, more educated, more likely to be female, less likely to have bought eggs in the last week, reported themselves to be more informed about the egg industry, and more likely to receive information about the egg industry from animal welfare groups

such as the RSPCA or Animals Australia. A much higher proportion of participants in this sample also indicated that they did not eat eggs (approximately 20 per cent).

The open sample was generally more negative in their views about the egg industry than the representative sample and rated the reputation of the egg industry lower, expressed very low faith in the egg industry's responsiveness to community sentiment, and more than 40 per cent of the open sample disapproved of the industry overall, compared to approximately 10 per cent of the representative sample.

Hen welfare was the greatest divergence between the surveys, but the question of why was also answered: in rating their agreement with the item "my attitude towards the egg industry is a matter of principle", almost all participants in the open sample were in strong agreement.

The representative sample included many positive comments about eggs in general, and comments about the positive qualities of eggs as a nutritious staple.

In the open sample, the comment ratio was significantly higher. The main areas of comment distinct from the representative sample were about questioning the existence of the industry at all and that disposing of male chicks in the egg supply chain was wrong and should stop. There were also quite a few comments to the effect that eggs do not have nutritional value for people and are therefore not required in the food supply chain.

The reality is very different.

The outcomes of the representative survey showed Australians value agriculture, food

security and the egg industry. Eggs were seen to be an affordable, nutritious staple in the Australian diet, while the industry itself was seen to be responsive to community sentiment. Hen welfare was rated as important but when asked to consider all of the benefits and costs associated with the egg industry, there was strong support for the industry overall.

Open survey participants were much less supportive of the egg industry and held much stronger views around hen welfare but it is clear from the research that their views are extreme and not representative of the broader population.

Hunters are well versed in combating unrepresentative but extreme viewpoints but this research demonstrates how wide the gap is between animal activists and the rest of the population.

Regional Victorians Against Duck Shooting started their public campaign against Duck Season in December with a video containing dozens of direct quotes from people supposedly impacted by hunters, but not one quote had a name attached.

This organisation has, according to records of incorporation, only a handful of members and can't or won't publish what it claims is a long list of regional businesses opposed to duck hunting.

How many of the 300 or so likes on the Facebook video post came from regional Victorians who generally understand and appreciate the economic and social value of hunting even if they choose not to participate, and how many (like the open egg survey) are well educated, well off, inner city dwellers driven by principle and their extreme but unrepresentative views?





# Ducks and drakes isn't science

The announcement of a heavily modified 2019 Duck Season in Victoria is unjustified and due to a lack of transparency, unfathomable.

Field & Game Australia presented ample scientific and empirical data to support a full season for 2019. There is no science that indicates hunting has any impact on sustainability of waterfowl populations and we have seen and had reports of large concentrations of birds across the state.

Hunters know where the birds are and we expect increased hunter effort even with the reduced bag limit and shortened season. They won't be compensated for the limitations imposed on their hunting, nor there be a review of the decision.

What Victoria's 26 000 duck hunters do deserve is a better explanation given their understandable concern that the current season setting process is a political and social engineering exercise, not a process supported by sound science and data.

Where were Victorian duck counts? Where was the SA duck count data? Where was

the NSW duck count data? None of this data was provided to us and we have no way of knowing if it was even considered in the 2019 season setting process, it lacks any transparency.

We feel our submission was ignored, that a solution was already arrived at prior to our submission and the recommendation was reverse engineered to suit the solution.

At no point during the submission process or prior to the announcement were we informed of what the GMA or government position was or what their recommendation was.

Hence, we have requested to see the documentation, presentations, and recommendations that each of the relevant departments and Victoria's Game Management Authority produced as part of the season setting process.

In Victoria and South Australia, the most

recent Eastern Australia Aerial Waterbird Survey, climate, and habitat data are the starting point for season setting discussions.

This is a limited data set over a short timeframe which, as conveyed to us by a world renowned wildlife biologist, does not substitute for decades of wildlife management experience.

The GMA's response to hunter anger was to add a page of historical season data to its website to demonstrate that tinkering with seasons isn't unusual. Our question, based on known science and historical data is not whether it is common but why it is even deemed necessary.

We will get on with making sure the adaptive harvest model process is right, with appropriate people on the expert panel so we can get the politics out of season setting.



# Hunting is growing

In early January, Victoria's Game Management Authority (GMA) released its latest annual report on game licence statistics showing continuing growth in the number of licensed hunters.

The report shows a year on year increase of 2374 game licences for deer hunting. Since 1995 the number of licences for deer hunting has grown from 7708 to 36776—an increase of 29068 or nearly 400 per cent.

Over the same period licences for duck and quail hunting have risen by just under nine per cent.

For context, the population of the State of Victoria over the same period increased by around 30 per cent.

The other strong trend in Victoria over that period has been urbanisation—a factor

which has traditionally been considered to work against hunting. A heat map of deer hunters by local government area shows a heavy concentration through the South-Eastern corridor of Melbourne into the East of the State, suggesting that hunting remains strong and culturally acceptable in 'blue collar' outer suburbs and in large regional centres.

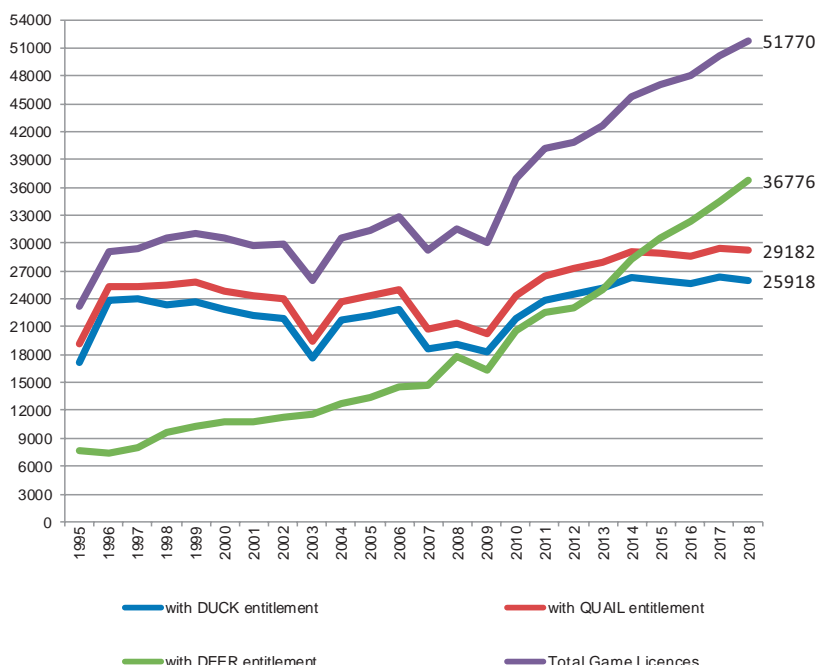
Duck hunters follow a similar pattern when licences are mapped but a member survey conducted by Field & Game Australia in late 2018 produced an interesting word cloud based on the main occupations of hunters.

The traditional trades are well represented

but so to are manager, engineer, accountant, public servant and technician.

Licences endorsed for deer hunting now make up more than 71 per cent of game licences in Victoria. The challenge for organisations such as the Australian Deer Association is to best represent the interests of this growing cohort of 'deer people'.

The majority of Game Licence holders are single category with 24068 (45 per cent) only hunting deer, 13965 (26 per cent) only hunting duck and a further 1005 (2 per cent) only hunting game birds not including duck.



## What is/was your occupation?

Public Service Security Salesman  
 Executive Communications **CEO** Manufacturing  
 Plant operator Office Worker Environmental  
**Accountant** Professional Business Owner  
 Labourer Paramedic **Tradesman** Moto  
 Mechanic **Contractor** Primary Production  
**Company Director** Boiler Maker  
 Welder Firefighter Officer Medical Practitioner  
 Management Technical **Retail** Police  
 Accountant Operations **Builder** Finance  
**Technician** Broker Project Management  
 Driver Electrical Contractor Truck Driver **Dairy**  
 Electrician General Manager Plumber Gardener  
**Farmer** Fitter Turner **Manager** Owner  
**Engineer** Civil Engineer **Sales** Nurse  
**Construction** Years Retired **Public**  
**Servant** Agronomist Self Employed Health  
 Bricklayer Operator **Carpenter** Mechanical  
 Engineer Consultant Mining Technical Officer  
**Teacher** Industry **Project Manager**  
 Warehouse Mechanic Boilermaker Supervisor  
 Trade Building Train Driver Fitter **Land**  
**Director** Truck Farm **Scientist** Production  
 Senior Maintenance Work Worker







# Hunting tradition

For hunters, there is a culture and tradition of respect, fellowship, and caring for the environment and one of the great privileges is passing that on to a new generation.

Andrew McClelland was first taken duck hunting by his uncles the year a fierce storm hit Lake Buloke. Opening weekend is a long-standing family tradition and this year, for the first time, he will have his own son Lucius in the hide next to him.

"I was 10 years old when I went to Lake Buloke that year; it was amazing, unbelievable, the sights and sound stayed with me and I have been hooked since then," Andrew said.

Andrew said he was careful not to push his son towards hunting.

"I think if you push them too hard, they push back; I've let him make his own decisions. He's really focused with school at the moment but duck hunting is something he wants to do," he said.

"I've taken him out a lot of times, just me and him, but he's also been out with the larger family group; it is how I learnt, my uncles taught me everything."

Lucius got his own shotgun for Christmas and Andrew said he'll use the lower bag limit to advantage during his first season, taking time to fill the bag and spending the time in between teaching him about the habitat, bird behaviour and

hunting etiquette.

"I want to take him to more swamps, travel a bit more and show him different habitats and also get him into calling," he said.

When asked what it will feel like having his son beside him hunting on opening morning, Andrew chokes back the emotion and is initially lost for words.

"It is something special; he's been in the hide with me before, but to have him actually hunting, he will be learning just like I did 20 years ago and I will be the one passing it on," he said.

It is a feeling known to thousands of hunters who over the generations have passed the same traditions from father to sons and daughters.

Lucius said his interest started aged eight when he would go hunting for rabbits and foxes with the extended family and, seeing his dad hunt ducks, it was something he decided he wanted to try.

"It is pretty exciting: I can be with Dad and hunt," he said.

"Dad hasn't pushed me to do duck hunting, it was me, as a person, that decided to do duck hunting."







# PFAS compensation push

**The PFAS Sub-Committee of the Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade has recommended the establishment of a flexible compensation scheme for property owners affected by contamination emanating from Defence bases.**

The Heart Morass near Sale has been contaminated by the nearby RAAF Base and the inquiry report highlighted the submission from Field & Game Australia's Wetlands Environmental Taskforce about the economic impact.

The report noted that the Wetlands Environmental Taskforce Public Fund (the WET Trust), which was established for the acquisition, rehabilitation and maintenance of Australian wetlands, described the Heart Morass, which it acquired in 2004, as its 'showcase property' and a 'jewel in the crown of Victoria's wetlands'.

However, the WET Trust submitted that, due to PFAS contamination caused by stormwater discharge from RAAF Base East Sale, and the detection of PFAS in duck, eel and carp in the area, the commercial value of the property as an asset on the Trust's balance sheet had reduced to zero."

It noted that the property had a Capital Improved Value of \$2.278million in a

'pristine, uncontaminated state' according to a 2018 property valuation notice issued by the local council. The WET Trust expressed its desire for restitution of the property to its uncontaminated state and for the Trust to be compensated for the economic loss to its asset.

The Committee's report makes nine recommendations, with a focus on improving the co-ordinated response to PFAS contamination, including that the Australian Government assist property owners and businesses in affected areas for demonstrated, quantifiable financial losses associated with PFAS contamination that has emanated from Defence bases through a compensation scheme flexible enough to accommodate a variety of individual circumstances.

While the compensation recommendation is a step forward, a recommendation on dealing with the potential health impacts of PFAS is likely to lead to an even more cautious approach by authorities if adopted.

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government review its existing advice in relation to the human health effects of PFAS exposure, including to acknowledge the potential links to certain medical conditions.

The Health Department's Chief Medical Officer, Professor Brendan Murphy, agreed during hearings that the current evidence base on the health effects of PFAS was 'weak and inconsistent', and justified a precautionary approach.

He initially emphasised that the known health associations were 'relatively low-grade', and that current evidence suggested 'no clinically significant adverse health outcome' associated with PFAS.

However, the review is likely to reflect the conservative view that existing data is limited and insufficient to say that clinically significant adverse health outcomes will never be shown in longer-term studies.





*Nigel Scullion competing in Field & Game Australia's annual politician clay target competition.*

# Top end; top shelf

There are many representatives in federal and state parliaments but retiring Northern Territory Country Liberal Party Senator Nigel Scullion is the sort of character that makes a parliament more representative.

In typical style, the unashamed hunter and fisherman had this to say when asked about his retirement plans.

"If I was a wild pig, a duck or a mud crab, I'd be starting to get nervous," Senator Scullion said.

"That's the only plan I've got: I'm going to eat more mud crabs, catch more barramundi, shoot more wild pigs. I have no plan beyond that, I'm retiring."

Born in London in 1956 Senator Scullion finished his education in Australia and moved to the Territory in 1985 working in mining, fishing, maritime salvage, security and engineering.

He spent six years living off the coast of Arnhem Land where he grasped the issues facing Australia's first people, particularly those living in remote areas.

Understandably, he viewed his appointment as Minister for Indigenous Affairs as the greatest honour of his 17 year parliamentary career.

"My path to public office wasn't a conventional one. I was just an everyday fisherman and some time buffalo shooter and I raised my three beautiful children Sarah, Daniel and Luke on a fishing boat off the coast of Gove and North East Arnhem Land," he said in a statement.

"John Howard famously said the Coalition

is a very broad church and the fact that it has allowed a bloke like me to sit around its Cabinet table shows just why it continues to be the party hard working Australian families keep putting their trust and faith in."

Senator Scullion has been a strong voice for the traditions of hunting and law abiding recreational firearm owners.

For urban dwellers, whose lives are distanced from the traditions of hunting, the bridge to understanding often comes from meeting a hunter. Those who bump into citizen Scullion fishing, scouring for mud crabs or hunting in the bush will no doubt get a warm Territorian smile and a good education.



# Victorian Sustainable Hunting Action Plan

## KPI report January 2019

Current progress (1 = Does not meet expectations 5 = Exceeds expectations) **\*ADA FGA comments**

OUTCOME: RESPONSIBLE, SAFE AND HUMANE HUNTING				
OBJECTIVE 1: PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE HUNTING			PERFORMANCE	
Responsible hunting actions are focussed on providing better information, education and training programs to hunters, collaborating with stakeholders to promote responsible hunting, and improving enforcement.	Clearly define "responsible" hunting. <b>*Not completed</b>	2	↓	
	Timely development and dissemination of key messages in advance of hunting seasons – duck, quail, deer. <b>*Duck season announcements still unnecessarily late. Great improvement in other messaging</b>	2	↑	
	Youth education programs developed with hunting organisations to address increasing urbanisation and create pathways to ethical hunting. <b>*No real progress</b>	2	→	
	Structured program to deliver key messages and education programs to dealer network; including non-toxic shot, SEP, WIT, deer education (ADA), deer hunting with hounds, firearm safety, marksmanship. <b>*Progressing well, particularly with SEP and ADA Hunter Education</b>	3	↑	
	Show genuine progress on enabling GMA enforcement officers to operate without Victoria Police support by 1 December 2017. <b>*No progress</b>	1	↓	
	Development and support of hunting tourism strategies with local government (e.g. Towong Shire hunting tourism strategy). <b>*Government worked productively with Towong Shire, however the Shire capitulated to a misinformation campaign. More work needed with sensible municipalities.</b>	2.5	→	
ACTIONS			STATUS	
1.1	Provide better access to information through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a single, comprehensive hunting website;</li> <li>improved distribution network for a new hunting manual; and</li> <li>the upgrading of the game licensing system to allow for more targeted messaging to hunters.</li> </ul> <b>*V2.0 of Victorian hunting app progressing, licensing system in development</b>		↑	
1.2	Educate and train new hunters by reviewing and releasing a comprehensive manual on how to hunt in Victoria. <b>*V2.0 of Hunting Manual in development. Current manual in place and well received</b>		↑	
1.3	Improve compliance and enforcement through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a clear compliance policy;</li> <li>targeting resources to ensure compliance and prevent illegal behaviour by hunters;</li> <li>improvement of 136 186 help line for proactive reporting of illegal activity;</li> <li>agreed standards for compliance across all government departments and agencies; and</li> <li>reporting on convictions for illegal hunting.</li> </ul> <b>*More strategic approach to compliance welcome but scope and resourcing still inadequate and structural issues not properly addressed</b>		↓	
1.4	Work with hunting stakeholders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue delivering the 'RESPECT: Hunt Responsibly' program;</li> <li>organise volunteer resources to complement professional agencies in peak seasons, providing peer regulation;</li> <li>expand distribution of hunting information to hunting organisations and retail businesses; and</li> <li>attend relevant outdoor events to promote responsible hunting.</li> </ul> <b>*Information sharing and attendance at events etc. has improved, however organisation of volunteer resources has not commenced in any meaningful way</b>		↓	
1.5	Update hunting-related welfare codes to ensure hunting practices are humane and encourage the considerate treatment of animals that are hunted and used for hunting. <b>*Some progress shown</b>		→	
1.6	Improve firearm carriage, transport and storage compliance by working with Firearms Safety Foundation (Victoria) to develop information and run relevant safety courses. <b>*GMA have developed some excellent material</b>		↑	
OUTCOME: FULL UTILISATION OF GAME				
OBJECTIVE 2: GROWING HUNTING'S BENEFITS			PERFORMANCE	
Hunting's benefits will be maximised by using social media to announce upcoming seasons and variations, making game meat processing easier, monitoring economic benefits and facilitating tourism.	Government to communicate environmental, economic and social benefits of hunting, mirroring the approach applied to "Target 1 Million" recreational fishing initiative. <b>*Very minimal promotion and certainly not a mirror in tone or substance of "Target 1 Million"</b>	1	→	
	Incorporate benefits from hunting within State Government tourism communications, top five local government area by economic benefits (refer to the 2014 DEPI economic benefits of hunting report). <b>*Not attempted</b>	1	↓	
	Variations to hunting seasons are by exception only, and underpinned by contemporary, science-led, management frameworks agreed by government and relevant hunting organisations. <b>*Variations to species and opening times for ducks has not met this standard</b>	2	→	
	Commercial processing of wild deer for personal use effective 1 December 2017. <b>*Was attempted and delayed by parliamentary process. Commercial processing for commercial use has progressed</b>	3	↑	
	Measurable progress with commercial processing of wild duck, quail, and exotic game birds demonstrated by 1 December 2017. <b>*Not progressed</b>	1	→	
ACTIONS			STATUS	
2.1	Improve seasonal announcements by effectively communicating information to stakeholders when seasonal variations are required or areas are temporarily closed to hunting. (Early advice will be provided through the Victorian Game Hunting App, Twitter and Facebook). <b>*2017 Duck season announcement was unreasonably late</b>		↓	
2.2	Facilitate game meat processing by investigating and reducing barriers to the processing of wild harvested game meat to allow optimal use of game harvest. <b>*Progressed well. Final piece is the amendment to allow non-commercial processing of all game meat</b>		↑	
2.3	Monitor social and economic benefits by conducting a study every five years to determine the contribution of hunting to the economy. This will inform investment decisions, and improve services and regulatory outcomes. <b>*Planned and progressing</b>		↑	
2.4	Promote regional hunting opportunities through targeted communication with relevant regional agencies and organisations. <b>*Not adequately attempted. Some efforts made.</b>		↓	



OUTCOME: INCLUSIVE REGIONAL GROWTH			
OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVING HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES			PERFORMANCE
Hunting opportunities will be improved by providing clear information on where, when and what people can hunt, improving access to hunting locations, expanding pest and game hunting opportunities, and working with Traditional Owners.	Government and agencies websites and other channels to incorporate information relevant to hunting, updated at the time of each announcement. <b>*Good progress, particularly on GMA website</b>	3	↑
	'State Game Reserve' status and 'hunting' icon to be used on all physical signage and printed or electronic references (e.g. 'Wildlife Reserve' the current primary classification and avoids use of 'State Game Reserve'). <b>*Progressing well. Confidence that project will be completed</b>	4	↑
	Government maps to include reference where there are hunting opportunities. <b>*Progressing well and expected in January 2019. Only exception is licensed land where DELWP policy does not reflect the legal status of the land</b>	3	↑
	Scope of expanded game and pest animal hunting opportunities to be communicated to relevant hunting organisations by 30 June 2017. <b>*Progress including 90,000ha of deer hunting in Eastern Victoria, continuation of balloted hunting on Snake Island and the addition of the Kerang State Game Reserve. No formal process in place and engagement is still piecemeal and opportunistic</b>	4	↑
	Prioritise action to create or improve access, where currently limited, to State Game Reserves <b>*Progressing well through signage project</b>	3	↑
	Scope how hunting and Traditional Owners can be mutually inclusive by 30 June 2017 <b>*Progress demonstrated in Boort Management Plan and Gunaikurnai Management Plan</b>	2.5	↑
	Erect and maintain clear and appropriate signage on entrance points to all National Parks where seasonal deer stalking is permitted. <b>*Progressing well. Confidence that project will be completed</b>	4	↑
ACTIONS			STATUS
3.1	Improve hunting location knowledge through the following actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>developing a map set for Victoria showing where different game hunting can occur on public land;</li> <li>improving signage on State Game Reserves; and</li> <li>improving signage on other public land where hunting is permitted including National Parks and high-use State Forests.</li> </ul> <b>*Excellent progress</b>		↑
3.2	Provide better hunting access through the following actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improving physical access to State Game Reserves; and</li> <li>reviewing opportunities to use existing helipad facilities in alpine regions (excluding areas reserved under the National Parks Act 1975) to facilitate improved access to areas where hunting is permitted.</li> </ul> <b>*Helipad action is flawed by the exclusion of National Parks. This is seen as a deliberate bureaucratic impediment which should be addressed</b>		↓
3.3	Expand pest hunting by exploring further hunting opportunities by game licence holders at State Game Reserves, subject to appropriate pest control protocols. <b>*Progressed well. Scope needs to be extended beyond duck season</b>		→
3.4	Expand game hunting by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>removing restrictions on hunting other deer species in areas reserved under the National Parks Act 1975 where Sambar Deer hunting is already permitted;</li> <li>promoting hunting opportunities in Victoria to niche tourist markets, both interstate and internationally, including expanding delivery of game licence accreditation (e.g. WIT) to provide for interstate hunters; and</li> <li>exploring options to expand hunting in Victoria in partnership with Traditional Owners, land managers and relevant stakeholders.</li> </ul> <b>*Progressing well</b>		↑
3.5	Partner with Traditional Owners to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue to build participation in land management and conservation, and</li> <li>develop a Victorian Traditional Owner Game Hunting Strategy.</li> </ul> <b>*Needs more work. Involvement has been driven by hunters, not government</b>		↓
3.6	Develop an online game licensing system that allows online processing and payment of game licences. <b>*Progressing well</b>		↑

OUTCOME: SECURE THE FUTURE OF HUNTING			
OBJECTIVE 4: ENSURING SUSTAINABLE HUNTING			PERFORMANCE
Sustainable hunting will be secured through sound research, habitat improvement, working with hunting organisations on control programs, developing a deer management strategy, and improving data collection.	Deliver audit of State Game Reserves to hunting organisations by February 2017. <b>*Completed</b>	4	↑
	Science-led approach to develop habitat improvement for State Game Reserves, including food sources. <b>*Pilot project in development</b>	2.5	→
	Develop a draft deer management strategy and put to external review by properly qualified game managers by December 2017, allowing sufficient response time for external stakeholders to seek independent expert advice. <b>*Project late but well developed</b>	4	↑
	Investment in game management research demonstrated by government, incorporated within regulator and policy development. <b>*Game management research strategy developed. Requires funding</b>	3	↑
ACTIONS			STATUS
4.1	Undertake research, monitoring and evaluation through the following actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A strategy to better understand the distribution, abundance and recruitment of game species and the impact of hunting activity;</li> <li>basing policy and decisions on relevant data and information regarding abundance as opposed to point-in-time location;</li> <li>researching land and habitat management techniques to benefit native game species;</li> <li>tagging, banding and monitoring game to better understand movements and breeding cycles;</li> <li>assessing relationships between hunting seasons and local ecosystems around hunting reserves; and</li> <li>implementing the Waterfowl Conservation Harvest Model to ensure the sustainable management of game ducks.</li> </ul> <b>*Partially progressed. Moving from political decisions to data based decisions is the ongoing challenge</b>		→
4.2	Improve State Game Reserve habitat by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>building on an audit of all State Game Reserves;</li> <li>developing management principles to maintain quality habitats; and</li> <li>establishing two demonstration sites, in collaboration with hunting organisations.</li> </ul> <b>*Pilot program under development</b>		→
4.3	Develop a deer management strategy that sets a strategic plan to maintain sustainable hunting opportunities, while reducing the impact of deer on biodiversity on all land tenures in the state. <b>*Progressing well</b>		↑
4.4	Improve control programs by working with accredited volunteer shooters to contribute to pest and deer control programs by establishing additional agreements with hunting organisations. <b>*Progressing well</b>		↑
4.5	Improve data collection by exploring new ways and technologies to collect hunting activity information. <b>*Undeveloped. Has great potential</b>		↓
4.6	Support the National Hunting Archive by helping the Archive to develop an electronic catalogue system of historical information that can be accessed by the public. <b>*Funded</b>		→



# FIELD & GAME AUSTRALIA

Preserving Cultural Traditions



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### OUR MISSION:

*"To be the most effective organisation in the promotion of hunting, recreational shooting and habitat conservation."*

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- A knowledgeable and unified voice
- All party support and acceptance
- Consistency in media messages
- New opportunities to shoot
- A code of ethics and high standards of conduct



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