



PROCEDURES TO MINIMISE THE RISK TO WESTERN RINGTAIL POSSUMS DURING VEGETATION CLEARING AND BUILDING DEMOLITION

IMPORTANT: Contact Dept. of Parks and Wildlife Bunbury on 9725 4300 prior to clearing commencing.

These procedures are generally for development activities that occur on smaller lots (<2ha). The clearing of vegetation on larger lots should be discussed with Parks and Wildlife.

Identify trees to be retained

Clearing of native vegetation within the proposed development site should avoid any unnecessary clearing of trees. Trees retained within the development site, proposed Public Open Space and within road verges provide valuable habitat for WRP. Trees to be retained should be marked so that they are clearly recognised by clearing contractors.

Suitable expertise on-site

A suitably experienced zoologist or WRP rehabilitator ('possum spotter') should be onsite when clearing is being undertaken, that is, during the entire duration of the clearing. The 'possum spotter' is to provide advice and direction to contractors undertaking the clearing in relation to WRP matters. The contract manager or supervisor is the person responsible for all work undertaken and the safety of all personnel on site at all times.

It is suggested that the 'possum spotter' attend the site the day before clearing commences to be familiar with the location of any WRP and dreys. A person who is required to handle WRP during a clearing event that is part of development proposal should hold a Regulation 15 (fauna relocation and/or education) or a Regulation 17 (scientific/study) license, depending on circumstances.

Advice to clearing contractors

Prior to clearing, clearing contractors should be properly inducted by the 'possum spotter' about the identification and protection of trees to be retained, trees to be cleared and about the likely presence of WRP among trees and other vegetation that will be cleared. No dogs should be taken on the site.

Tree removal

The 'possum spotter' with the clearing supervisor is to inspect all trees to be removed and agree on a process and timetable for clearing. Trees that have WRP currently in them may need to be left for a subsequent day when the tree may be vacant. Where possible clearing should be undertaken in a systematic manner that minimises disruption to WRP. If there is suitable habitat adjoining the development site, a clearing pattern that encourages the movement of WRP to this habitat should be adopted.

In moderate or high-density sites, if a machine operator sees a WRP in a tree that is about to be cleared, trees should be bumped or shaken firstly. Following this the machine operator should wait and observe the tree for a short time. If present, the shaking of the tree may cause any WRP and other fauna to move and, hopefully, opportunity to safely evacuate. It would also increase the chance that the machine operator will see the animal/s prior to pushing down the tree.

In the event that a WRP is observed in a tree that is about to be cleared and there is a tree marked for retention near the tree which is to be cleared, then the tree should be gently lowered to the ground to give the animal opportunity to safely evacuate. The animal/s then need to be encouraged to move towards and occupy the trees to be retained.

If there are no trees to be retained within proximity of a tree that has a WRP and needs to be cleared, then the WRP can be removed by the 'possum spotter' using an elevated platform or by lowering the tree to the ground. The WRP is to be relocated to the nearest suitable habitat.



Dreys should be inspected prior to clearing and possibly removed. Dreys that remain in the tree during clearing have to be checked as soon as possible as baby WRP may remain in the drey.

Clearing should be undertaken on a face so as to drive WRP towards suitable habitat.

Services

The proponent will need to identify where underground services are to be installed and to ensure any detrimental impact from these services is minimised.

Understorey vegetation

There will always be a possibility that WRP, Southern Brown Bandicoots, etc, will be found in under and midstorey vegetation. Care needs to be taken when clearing this vegetation with a check to be undertaken by foot prior to machines entering the areas and clearing this vegetation.

Injured WRP

If contractors encounter injured WRP during clearing operations, then the 'possum spotter' needs to be notified immediately so that arrangements can be made for the welfare of the injured animal.

Stockpile practices

Contractors need to be made aware that displaced WRP may shelter within stockpiled vegetation. Therefore, to minimise any accidental injury or death of WRP, personnel involved in the removal or disposal of stockpiles need to be made aware of and be prepared for the potential presence of WRP. If WRP are encountered then Parks and Wildlife needs to be immediately notified. Any dreys in fallen trees are to be removed prior to stockpiling as WRP have been known to return to their dreys/trees.

The preference is that vegetation is not stockpiled but removed on the same day clearing occurs. If vegetation is to be stockpiled on-site, then it is preferable to place it in cleared areas as far as possible from retained remnant vegetation. Chipping of removed debris is to be undertaken away from retained habitat to minimise the noise impacts on WRP.

In large clearing events where chipping will be undertaken over a number of days, it is preferred that the chipper remains in one position and vegetation is brought to the chipper as opposed to the chipper moving through the site. This is to consolidate the noise impacts in one area of the development site.

Buildings

Site workers are to be advised about the potential presence of WRP in derelict buildings and to stage works to minimise potential injuries to WRP during demolition works. Prior to clearing works commencing, the roof and ceilings on derelict buildings should be removed prior to demolition to allow for dispersal of WRP. Parks and Wildlife should be immediately notified of any WRP that may be inadvertently injured during demolition works.

There is a risk to WRP if rat or mouse baiting is undertaken prior to demolition. Appropriate methods of baiting need to be engaged if rats or mice are to be controlled prior to demolition. One method is to place the poison out of WRP reach, inside poly pipe secured to a beam in the roof space. The pipe should be about 1m long and no greater than 50mm in diameter. Another method is to place a plastic ice-cream container upside down over rat poison with small arches cut into the side of the container. The arches should be a maximum height and width of about 50mm and the container secured to a rafter.

Post Clearing Reporting

The proponent is to provide **Parks and Wildlife** with a report on the impact on WRP during the habitat removal process within 28 days of completion of vegetation clearing or building demolition works.

APPENDIX 4

POST VEGETATION CLEARING AND BUILDING DEMOLITION REPORT

Was DEC notified prior to clearing occurring

- YES / NO

Date and times clearing was undertaken

- Date / / from am/pm to am/pm

Name of clearing contractor

- Name - _____

Name(s) of the 'possum spotter'

- Name(s) - _____

Number of WRP observed/relocated

- ___ Observed / ___ Relocated

Location where WRP were relocated

- Location - _____

Number of dreys observed/removed

- ___ Observed / ___ Removed

Number of WRP injured/killed

- ___ Injured / ___ Killed

Name of rehabilitator/veterinarian surgery who holds the injured WRP

- Name - _____

Was the management/mitigation plan objectives met

- YES / NO

If NO, what was the reason(s)

- _____

Other comments

- _____
- _____
- _____

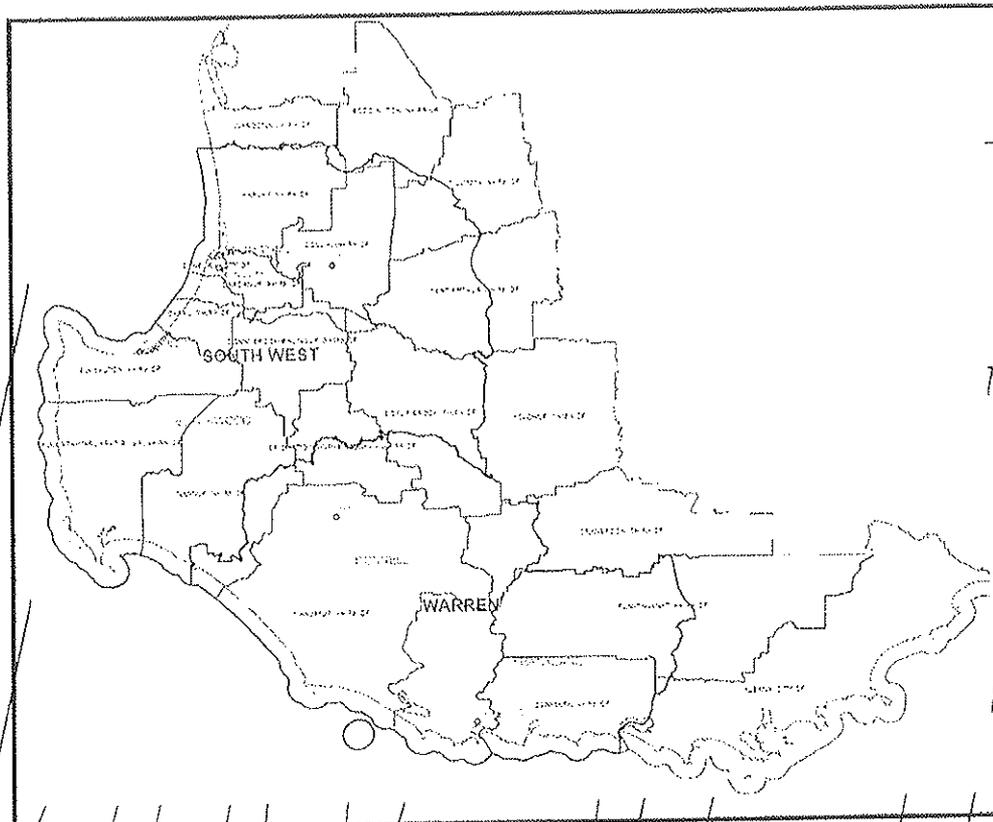
Name of person preparing the report

- Name - _____ Date - ___ / ___ / ___



APPENDIX 5

LOCATION OF LOCAL DEC OFFICES



BLACKWOOD DISTRICT

14 Queen Street
Busselton WA 6280
9752 5555

WELLINGTON DISTRICT

PO Box 809
Collie WA 6225
9734 1988

DONNELLY DISTRICT

PO Box 20
Pemberton WA 6260
9771 7988

FRANKLAND DISTRICT

South Coast Highway
Walpole WA 6398
9840 0400

SOUTH COAST REGION

120 Albany Highway
Albany WA 6330
9842 4500

SOUTH WEST REGION

PO Box 1693
Bunbury WA 6231
9725 4300

