

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 31

Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates

Outcome: Outcome 5

Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division

Topic: Kangaroos – Surveys and Reports

Hansard Page: N/A

Question Date: 27 November 2013

Question Type: Written

Senator Rhiannon asked:

The mapping of kangaroo survey transects in NSW, Queensland and South Australia shows that surveyors fly over non-shooting areas such as national parks and state forests. These counts are then used to calculate kangaroo densities which are applied to surrounding farmland where actual transect data generally show very low to zero presence of kangaroos. The non-shooting area is then subtracted from the state total of shooting areas to return higher densities in the commercial zones.

- a) Is the Minister aware that surveys and survey reports are carried out by contracted consultants and do not undergo the formal peer review process?
- b) Is the Minister aware that the (recently) former head of NSW DEC's Kangaroo Management Program admitted, earlier this year, that the department has never checked the scientific validity of either the survey methodology or the data from kangaroo surveys in NSW, and has never requested or held that information?

For example, the author of the 2009 and 2012 NSW Central Tablelands survey reports states in his reports he did not fly over any National Parks or State Forests, however release of the survey transects grid coordinates in the last 12 months, clearly shows nearly half of the transects overfly National Parks and State Forests:

- c) This is just one example, will the Minister will investigate this gross misrepresentation of kangaroo populations, given the Minister signs off state Kangaroo Management Plans?

Answer:

- a) The Minister requires that each survey methodology is undertaken in accordance with the relevant approved management plan. The process by which each state conducts its surveys and develops their survey reports is a matter for the state.
- b) No. The matter raised should be directed to the New South Wales Government.
- c) The Minister has no evidence that the information provided in any state's management plan is misrepresented.