

## INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF AUSTRALIA'S QUARANTINE AND BIOSECURITY SERVICES

### SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF PERTH ZOO

In general, we would request that the following issues be considered, in order to adequately represent the needs of the Australian Zoo and wildlife community:

- Increased priority given to the importation of zoo and exotic animals, with greater recognition of the economic, cultural and biodiversity-related importance of Australia's wildlife and zoo industry.
  - On a specific level, we feel there is a need for Quarantine and Biosecurity to alter the priorities of the Import Risk Analysis (IRA) process, as they pertain to exotic and zoo animals. The present circumstances appear to place zoo industry needs at a far lower priority than those of domestic and production animals, to the extent that the importation process for zoo animals is delayed by years, as other "priorities" draw resources away from the zoo IRA process. Examples of this include:
    - Rodent IRA, Bovid IRA, Primate IRA and to a lesser extent elephant semen IRA.
  - In general, there is a desire to see the zoo industry's needs with respect to importation of exotic animals raised to a higher priority within the Q and BS process. At present, severe delays and limitations in the importation process mean it is genetically and practically impossible to maintain viable breeding groups of some of the important species held in the regions zoos.
- Clearer communication, consistency and focus within Australian state and federal organisations with a quarantine and biosecurity responsibility, and increased collaboration between Australian agencies and overseas agencies, to improve project progression and efficiencies for all parties.
- Appropriate responses to apparent emergence of exotic diseases (now commonly diagnosed in Australia),
  - For example, avian diseases:
    - Internal papillomatosis virus, Pacheco's Disease and Proventricular Dilatation Syndrome
  - Reptile diseases:
    - Inclusion Body Disease of Boids (IBD) and Ophidian Paramyxovirus (OPMV)
  - These diseases should be listed and treated as Notifiable Diseases as they are of great significance to both captive and free-ranging wildlife in Australia.
- Increased support and prioritization for diagnostic laboratories working with wildlife and exotic animal diseases within Australia
- Greater emphasis and increased recognition that quarantine and biosecurity issues involving Australian wildlife form part of the core business of the Australian Quarantine and Biosecurity agencies, and as such should be prioritized and supported as appropriate. In particular, there is a need for:
  - Greater understanding of the possible implications that a lack of wildlife disease awareness, investigation and response may hold for both Australia's unique biodiversity, Australian's tourism industry, Australia's production and related animal industries and for human health, both within Australia and globally. The poor and

delayed response to wild bird deaths in the Esperance region of WA is one recent example of the inadequacies of the current situation.

- Greater appreciation of the importance of gathering baseline information on wildlife disease issues
- Increased support for investigation and determination of wildlife disease issues when they emerge
- Increased post-border surveillance for exotic disease in wildlife (outside Quarantine Approved Premises)
- In summary, there is a need to develop a robust infrastructure, with determined responsibilities, funding and support so that appropriate surveillance and/or active investigation of wildlife disease and health issues within Australia can occur.