



CODE OF PRACTICE FOR EXHIBITED ANIMALS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

EXHIBITED ANIMALS

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PREFACE

The **Code of practice for exhibited animals in Western Australia** is based on the *General Standards for Exhibiting Animals in New South Wales* and has been adapted for use in Western Australia. It was prepared in consultation with the relevant industry organisations and State agencies.

This Code has been prepared to assist all persons handling or using animals for exhibition in Western Australia, and reference to this Code is made in Regulations provided under Section 25 of the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* for the purposes of a defence against cruelty. While the original NSW document on exhibited animals states that its purpose is to set minimum standards for the welfare of exhibited animals, this Code is not intended to be used for either audit or compliance purposes.

This Western Australian version of the code is based on current knowledge and technology. It will be reviewed in the future on a needs basis, to take account of advances in the understanding of animal physiology and behaviour, technological changes in animal husbandry and their relationship to the welfare of animals.

Further copies of this Code are available from the Department of Local Government and Regional Development or from the Internet at:
<http://www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au>

Acknowledgement

The Western Australian Department of Local Government and Regional Development acknowledges the contribution of NSW Agriculture in the preparation of this Code. To the extent that this Code incorporates material provided by NSW Agriculture, copyright in that material is and remains vested in the State of New South Wales, NSW Agriculture (2003).

PART 1 — GENERAL

1. Standards not exclusive

The standards outlined in this publication are minimum standards and do not exclude the exercise of sound judgement based on training, education and experience and the use of information commonly accepted and used in wildlife management.

2. Manner of display

Each animal must be exhibited in a manner that:

- (a) as far as possible provides a naturalistic setting which resembles the animal's habitat and provides for its behavioural and physical well-being;
- (b) provides the means for enrichment of the animal's behavioural activities in order to further its welfare, produce a more interesting educational exhibit and aid in the reduction of stereotypic behaviour;
- (c) provides recreational and educational opportunities which encourage an increase in public understanding of, and responsibility for, animals and their environment;
- (d) by the use of attendants and/or physical barriers, protects the animal from abuse and harassment by the viewing public; and
- (e) as far as possible, uses modern display techniques.

3. Shelter

Each animal must be provided with shaded, covered or sheltered areas appropriate to protect it from adverse conditions attributable to the climate and any other environmental factor.

4. Space

Each animal must be provided with sufficient space in all directions to enable it to:

- (a) take exercise;
- (b) be protected from undue dominance and conflict; and
- (c) be provided with its social, breeding and husbandry needs.

5. Enclosures

1. So much of an enclosure as is necessary to provide for the containment of any animal in the enclosure must be of sufficient strength to ensure that containment.
2. Housing in, or comprising, an enclosure must be structurally sound and must be kept in good repair.

6. Electrical and other equipment

Electrical apparatus and other plant and fixed equipment must be installed so that:

- (a) it does not endanger the animals; and
- (b) the animals cannot disrupt its operation.

7. Drainage

- (a) An animal enclosure must be provided with drainage that will quickly carry excess water away from the enclosure.
- (b) Unless it carries only surface water, an open drain must be inaccessible to the animals.
- (c) A collection drain must be provided for the enclosure and must be fitted with baskets of wire mesh sufficiently fine to prevent animal hair and faeces from entering the drain.
- (d) The baskets must be cleaned daily.

PART 2 — NUTRITION AND HYGIENE

8. Diet

1. Each animal must be offered a variety of wholesome and palatable food and water in quantities that are sufficient to provide for its good health and normal growth.
2. Veterinary advice must be obtained and followed in relation to the addition of food supplements to the ordinary diet of animals.
3. Food must be unspoiled and free from chemical and bacterial contamination.
4. Water for animals:
 - (a) must be either reticulated to, or changed daily in, each enclosure; and
 - (b) must not be allowed to become stagnant.

9. Food preparation

1. The area in which food for the animals is prepared:
 - (a) must be indoors or completely screened; and
 - (b) must be constructed of materials that will withstand steam-cleaning and chemical disinfection.
2. Thawing and preparation of the food must be done so that it retains its nutritive and wholesome qualities.

3. A toxic chemical or other harmful material must not be used or stored in the area used for preparing the food.
4. Subclause (3) does not apply to cleaning products or disinfectants used in cleaning the area, the food containers or the food preparation utensils.

10. Cleanliness relating to food and drink

1. High standards of cleanliness must be observed:
 - (a) by staff engaged in the preparation of food and drink for the animals; and
 - (b) in relation to the utensils and equipment used, and adequate facilities must be provided to enable this to be done.
2. Utensils and equipment used in preparing and distributing the food and drink must be cleaned after use and kept clean when not in use.
3. Food preparation areas must be washed down daily and treated with appropriate cleaning products.
4. Boots, aprons and brooms used in the food preparation area must be cleaned after use and kept clean when not in use.
5. Utensils and other equipment used in preparing the food and drink must not be used for any other purpose.

11. Food storage

1. Supplies of food for the animals must be stored in facilities in which they are adequately protected against deterioration, mould and contamination.
2. Toxic substances, dead animals and discarded foodstuffs must not be kept in a food storage area.
3. Stocks of food supplements must be handled, stored and rotated in a way that minimises nutritional loss.
4. Frozen food must be stored at a temperature that is not higher than 18 degrees below zero Celsius.

12. Food presentation

Utensils and equipment used for the offering of food and drink to animals:

- (a) must not be used for any other purpose;
- (b) must be easy to clean and designed to avoid risk of injury to the animals;

- (c) must, when in an enclosure, be placed in such a position that each animal in the enclosure has easy access to sufficient food and water and the risk of contamination from soiling by the animals is minimised;
- (d) except in the case of a self-feeder, must be washed following use and kept in a sanitary condition; and
- (e) in the case of a self-feeder, must be inspected daily to ensure that it is working effectively and does not contain caked or unwholesome food.

13. Drinking water

Clean potable water must at all times be available for the animals to drink.

14. Waste disposal

Provision must be made for the removal and disposal of:

- (a) animal and food wastes;
- (b) unwholesome food and water;
- (c) dead animals; and
- (d) introduced rubbish;

from each animal enclosure as often as is necessary to minimise vermin infestation and disease hazards, reduce odours and prevent the ingestion of potentially harmful objects.

15. Infectious diseases

If an animal is identified as having an infectious disease:

- (a) all hard surfaces of the enclosure must, after removal of the animal, be sanitised by:
 - washing with hot water (at least 75 degrees Celsius at source) and soap or detergent; or
 - washing with detergent followed by application of a suitable disinfectant; or
 - applying high-pressure steam; and
- (b) veterinary advice on the matter must be obtained and followed.

16. Pest and predator control

1. A safe, effective and regular program for the control of insects, ectoparasites and vertebrate pests must be established and maintained.
2. Enclosures must be so designed as to exclude predators.

PART 3 — HEALTH

17. Health checks and reports

1. Arrangements must be made for:
 - (a) the health of each animal to be checked each day; and
 - (b) the person checking the health of the animals to provide the exhibitor of the animals with an appropriate report on any distressed, sick or injured animal.
2. In particular, a report must be made in relation to an animal suffering from:
 - (a) obvious under-nourishment or weakness;
 - (b) bare spots in fur or feather covering;
 - (c) persistent diarrhoea;
 - (d) unusual nasal discharge;
 - (e) sores or open wounds; or
 - (f) broken bones or other physical injury.
3. If a report under subclause (1) is made in respect of an animal or poor physical health of an animal is otherwise detected, all reasonable steps must be taken to restore the animal to good physical health.
4. Such facilities must be maintained as are necessary for compliance with subclause (3).

18. Veterinary attention

1. Arrangements must be made for regular veterinary inspection and care of each animal.
2. Facilities must be provided on the authorised premises for:
 - (a) routine examination of animals in surroundings that are clean and well-ventilated;
 - (b) the restraint of animals;
 - (c) the administration of a general anaesthetic; and
 - (d) euthanasia for animals.
3. An enclosed treatment area must be provided on the authorised premises for the care of distressed, sick and injured animals and those recovering from sedation.

19. New arrivals

A newly-acquired animal must be kept in isolation for as long as may be necessary to provide for its examination,

acclimatisation and, if necessary, restoration to good health before being placed in the company of other animals.

20. Dead animals

1. Provision must be made for the handling of a dead animal in a way that minimises the risk of transmission of infection or disease.
2. Unless there is an arrangement for a dead animal to be quickly removed to veterinary facilities outside the authorised premises:
 - (a) facilities must be provided on the premises for conducting a post-mortem;
 - (b) examination in a safe and hygienic manner; and
 - (c) provision must be made for material to be stored under refrigeration if an immediate post-mortem examination is not possible.
3. Without affecting the generality of subclause (3), the facilities provided for post-mortem examinations must include:
 - (a) an efficient drainage system;
 - (b) washable floors and walls;
 - (c) an examination table; and
 - (d) facilities for taking and preserving specimens.
4. Equipment used for the storage of post-mortem material must not be used for any other purpose.
5. A veterinary examination to determine the cause of death must be made if:
 - (a) a dead animal was a permit animal;
 - (b) it appears that there may be a pattern of deaths; or
 - (c) in any other case, it is reasonably practicable to do so.
6. Unless the remains of a dead animal are:
 - (a) in use for scientific or educational purposes; or
 - (b) offered to, and accepted by, an approved museum or other approved scientific establishment;

they must be disposed of by incineration or burial or by any other method adopted on veterinary advice.

PART 4 — HUSBANDRY AND MANAGEMENT

21. Design of enclosure

1. An enclosure occupied by several animals must allow for normal patterns of group behaviour.
2. An enclosure must be of sufficient size, and the animals in the enclosure must be managed so as to:
 - (a) avoid undue domination of a herd or group by an individual or individuals;
 - (b) avoid the risk of persistent and unresolved conflict between herd or group members or between different species in enclosures containing different species;
 - (c) make it possible for an animal to avoid, or withdraw from, contact with other animals or with people;
 - (d) ensure that the carrying capacity of the enclosure is not exceeded;
 - (e) prevent an uncontrolled accumulation of parasites and other pathogens; and
 - (f) encourage and permit exercise and behavioural enrichment.
3. Animals in different enclosures must be so managed as to minimise stressful interactions between the animals.
4. An enclosure must:
 - (a) if possible, include naturalistic furniture; and
 - (b) include, where appropriate, such items as bedding material, branch work, burrows, nesting boxes and pools to aid and encourage normal behaviour.
5. Nocturnal animals must at all times have free access to sleeping quarters.
6. Aquatic and semi-aquatic animals must be provided with water for swimming.
7. Semi-aquatic animals must be provided with dry areas for resting.

22. Indoor housing of animals

1. Lighting inside indoor housing for an animal must be adequate for proper cleaning of the housing and for carrying out routine health and hygiene checks.
2. Indoor housing for an animal must be provided with ventilation that:
 - (a) is sufficient to maintain the health of the animal; and
 - (b) is so designed as to minimise undue draughts, odours and moisture condensation.

3. If an animal is a diurnal animal housed indoors, light must be provided in the housing; and of such quality, intensity and duration as to disturb as little as possible the normal physiological and behavioural patterns of the animal.

23. Animal handling

1. An animal must be handled only by, or under the supervision of, staff authorised for the purpose by the exhibitor of the animal.
2. An animal must not be handled in a way that causes it undue discomfort or distress or causes it physical harm.
3. The supervision of physical contact between an animal and a member of the public must be limited to a period, and must take place under conditions, consistent with the welfare of the animal.

24. Signs

1. Signs requesting the public to refrain from interfering with the animals, and feeding the animals (except, in the case of specified animals, with food provided by the exhibitor), must be conspicuously placed at appropriate places.
2. If an exhibitor of animals has made rules to be observed by the visiting public, these must be conspicuously placed at the entrance to the authorised premises.

PART 5 — SAFETY AND SECURITY

25. Construction of enclosure

1. An enclosure must be so constructed that:
 - (a) if the visiting public and the animal attendants exercise due care, they are safe;
 - (b) an animal in the enclosure can escape only in circumstances that cannot reasonably be foreseen and guarded against; and
 - (c) the animal can dig or burrow without escaping and not compromise the animal's welfare.

2. Vegetation or other material in or near an enclosure must be removed or repositioned if it would otherwise assist an animal to escape.
3. The enclosure in which a digging or burrowing animal is kept must be constructed:
 - (a) with a subterranean floor consisting entirely of concrete covered by sufficient soil so that the animal can dig or burrow without escaping; or
 - (b) with an enclosing fence of galvanised metal mesh or concrete extending below ground level to a depth of at least 1 metre and then extending horizontally within the enclosure for at least 1 metre so that the animal can dig or burrow without escaping; or
 - (c) so that the animal can dig or burrow without escaping.

26. Outer fence

An animal display establishment (other than a temporary establishment) must have an outer fence sufficient to discourage unauthorised entry to the establishment.

27. Gates, doors and slides

1. Except as provided by subclause (2), a gate or door on the perimeter of an enclosure must open inwards to the enclosure.
2. If an entrance to an enclosure (other than the entrance corridor to a drive-through area) is a safety entrance through successive gates or doors, they must open inwards towards the enclosure.
3. A gate, door or slide giving entrance to an enclosure must be so designed that an animal in the enclosure cannot:
 - (a) lift the gate or door off its hinges or a slide off its tracks; or
 - (b) unfasten the security device.

28. Dangerous animals

1. The entrance to an enclosure (other than a reptile pit) in which a dangerous animal is kept must be by means of a safety entrance through successive gates or doors which are kept locked by key or combination unless a person is within the enclosure.
2. If the doors or gates through which such an enclosure is entered are electrically operated, they must be provided with alternative means by which they may be manually operated without risk to the operator.

3. The operating position for gates, doors, slides or other means of access must provide for:
 - (a) a safe means of access; and
 - (b) a clear view of the gates, doors, slides and other means of access and the immediately surrounding area.

29. Stand-off barriers

1. If, but for this clause, direct contact between a dangerous animal and the public would be possible, the animal must be separated from the public by a barrier so designed that:
 - (a) direct contact with the animal is avoided; and
 - (b) evasion of the barrier by the public (especially children) is made as difficult as is reasonably practicable.
2. A pit containing dangerous snakes must be of sufficient depth to eliminate the possibility of physical contact between the public and the snakes.
3. Subclause (1) does not apply in relation to a drive-through area.

30. Warning signs

1. If an enclosure:
 - (a) contains an animal that is known to be dangerous, or may reasonably be suspected of being dangerous; or
 - (b) is dangerous because it includes an electrified fence;

the enclosure must be provided with an adequate number of clearly visible and legible signs giving proper warning, by means of words or signs, or both, of the danger.
2. The signs in a drive-through area must warn visitors to the area:
 - (a) not to leave the motor vehicle;
 - (b) to keep all the doors of the motor vehicle locked;
 - (c) to keep closed all the windows, and any sun-roof of the motor vehicle; and
 - (d) if the motor vehicle breaks down - to sound the horn, or flash the headlamps and warning lamps, and await the arrival of a rescue vehicle.

31. Safety of structures

If entry to a structure, or part of a structure, on authorised premises would present a threat to the health or safety of the public:

- (a) access to the structure or part must be kept locked against access by the public; and
- (b) there must be placed, so that they are readily seen and understood by the public, notices warning that entry to the structure or part is unsafe and that entry by the public is prohibited.

32. Entry to, and departure from, drive-through area

A drive-through area containing dangerous animals must be so constructed that entry to, and departure from, the area is available to the public only through a corridor that:

- (a) commences at the perimeter fence of the area and extends within the area for a distance of at least 25 metres;

- (b) is formed by fences of the same construction, and of at least the same height, as the perimeter fence;
- (c) has at each end a gate of a height and construction so devised that, unless one of them is securely closed, the other cannot be opened; and
- (d) is continuously monitored or operated by a suitably trained person while members of the public are inside the enclosure.

33. Access points between separate enclosures

If there are access points between separate enclosures within a drive-through area, they must be controlled so as to prevent an animal in one enclosure from entering of its own accord into another.