



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

ACMSPE303A Provide basic care of common native mammals

Revision Number: 1

ACMSPE303A Provide basic care of common native mammals

Modification History

Not applicable.

Unit Descriptor

Unit descriptor	This unit of competency covers the process of identifying common native mammals, their behavioural and physical needs, providing daily care requirements, assisting with behaviour requirements and basic preventative health measures. Licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements may apply to this unit in relation to the protection of native mammals. Therefore, it will be necessary to check with the relevant state or territory regulators for current licensing, legislative or regulatory requirements before undertaking this unit.
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Application of the Unit

Application of the unit	The unit is applicable to those working in the animal care industry where it may be necessary to rear commonly kept native mammals. This may include animal shelters or rehabilitation organisations, zoos or similar workplaces. In some cases, animals may have been rescued from the wild and successful rehabilitation is required to restore animal health and wellbeing before releasing back to their natural environment. In addition to legal and ethical responsibilities, all units of competency in the ACM10 Animal Care and Management Training Package have the requirement for animals to be handled gently and calmly. The individual is required to exhibit appropriate care for animals so that stress and discomfort is minimised.
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Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Prerequisite units		

Employability Skills Information

Employability skills	This unit contains employability skills.
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Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.	Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where bold italicised text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge section and the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.
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Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Identify commonly available native mammals	1.1. Profile of native mammals commonly held in facility, including habitat, nutrition, health and behavioural characteristics, is defined. 1.2. External features are described using industry terminology. 1.3. Native mammals are classified using industry-specific terminology. 1.4. Colours, markings and other identifying features are defined, interpreted and documented.
2. Identify and evaluate behavioural and housing needs	2.1. Indicators of animal comfort and normal behaviour are identified and signs of distressed native mammals are recognised and reported to supervisor. 2.2. Industry standards and guidelines for housing design, environmental factors and appropriate stocking densities are identified. 2.3. Enrichment needs are identified and evaluated for specific animal species. 2.4. Current animal housing design is evaluated in relation to the welfare of animals kept and legislation requirements.
3. Catch, handle and restrain native mammals	3.1. Occupational health and safety (OHS) risks associated with handling and restraining native mammals are identified and methods used to minimise risks are demonstrated. 3.2. Equipment used to catch, handle and restrain native mammals is prepared and evaluated. 3.3. Native mammals are approached and caught while minimising risks to animal and others. 3.4. Native mammals are restrained using a range of approved animal welfare management procedures.
4. Assist with health care needs	4.1. Signs of good health in native mammals are identified and recorded in animal health and treatment records. 4.2. Common health issues are identified and signs of disease or other conditions are reported to supervisor. 4.3. General health maintenance and preventative treatment procedures are identified and implemented in accordance with level of job responsibility, regulatory requirements and supervisor guidance. 4.4. Options for activity and enrichment are identified,

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
	evaluated for impact on native mammal health and implemented as directed by supervisor.
5. Feed native mammals	5.1. Digestive system features are identified and related to native mammal-specific feeding routines and diets. 5.2. Preferred food sources are identified and samples are assessed for quality and suitability. 5.3. Potential feeding hazards are identified and risk control options defined. 5.4. Feed is prepared in accordance with dietary needs. 5.5. Feed is distributed and consumption, including abnormalities, is reported in accordance with workplace routines.
6. Maintain records	6.1. Documentation on the care and management of native mammals is completed in accordance with workplace procedures and legislation requirements.

Required Skills and Knowledge

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

This section describes the skills and knowledge required for this unit.

Required skills

- complete relevant work-related documents and maintain accurate animal records
- comply with OHS, animal care, ethics and industry codes of conduct, regulations and legislations
- employ safe and environmentally responsible organisational systems and procedures when working with, restraining and handling native mammals
- maintain the highest standards of personal and workplace hygiene and infection control at all times to reduce the risk of infection and cross-infection
- measure, interpret and record native mammal weight, length and other relevant objective indicators of change in physiological status
- monitor mammal health, condition and behaviour and recognise normal and abnormal signs
- prepare doses for treatments as directed and verified by supervisor
- provide basic first aid to native mammals as required under supervision
- use equipment and materials correctly and in accordance with manufacturers' specifications
- literacy skills to read and follow organisational policies and procedures, including OHS and animal welfare, follow sequenced written instructions; and record information accurately and legibly
- oral communication skills/language to fulfil the job role as specified by the organisation, including questioning, active listening, asking for clarification and seeking advice from supervisor
- numeracy skills to estimate, calculate and record routine workplace measures
- interpersonal skills to work with others and relate to people from a range of cultural, social and religious backgrounds and with a range of physical and mental abilities
- problem-solving skills to assess appropriate practices and prioritise daily tasks
- use safe manual handling techniques and/or equipment
- use safe waste handling and disposal procedures.

Required knowledge

- anatomical and physiological terminology and glossary of terms
- anatomical structures and physiological features related to basic care requirements for native mammals
- awareness of natural native mammal behaviour relating to the characteristics of the species, age, health status, behavioural and social needs and the signs of distress, illness and undesirable behaviours
- basic mammal care and hygiene principles

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- basic mammal first aid techniques
- housing, social and activity needs of native mammals and environmental impacts on health and wellbeing
- methods of transmission of disease and infection
- organisational policies and procedures regarding the care and health maintenance of mammals
- personal protective clothing and equipment and when and how it should be used
- physical conditions and vital signs of native mammals
- potential hazards and risks to animals and staff during feeding and cleaning of housing
- relevant legislation, regulations and codes of practice, including OHS, animal welfare and ethics
- safe native mammal handling techniques and procedures, potential hazards and control measures
- terminology and language variations used by workplace staff and the public to describe mammals, their behaviour, status, health and treatments
- terminology used to describe and document health and behavioural signs, including desirable and undesirable features
- types of food and food supplements and their role in native mammal diets, including natural dietary requirements for specific species and appropriate plant recognition,
- types of information that has to be reported and recorded in animal care workplaces
- workplace hygiene standards, disinfectants, cleaning agents, cleaning techniques and cleaning equipment and materials.

Evidence Guide

EVIDENCE GUIDE

The Evidence Guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, range statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Training Package.

Overview of assessment

Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit

The evidence required to demonstrate competence in this unit must be relevant to workplace operations and satisfy all of the requirements of the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge and the range statement of this unit. Assessors should ensure that candidates can:

- identify the specific characteristics and needs of native mammals and apply these to the best practice industry standard of housing, socialising, feeding and health management
- classify and identify native mammals by age, sex, condition, colours, markings and other identifying features using industry terminology
- safely and humanely catch, handle and restrain native mammals
- report and document treatments, behaviours and other information on individual animals in accordance with animal welfare regulations, industry standards, workplace protocols and procedures.

The skills and knowledge required to provide basic care of common native mammals must be transferable to a range of work environments and contexts and include the ability to deal with unplanned events.

Context of and specific resources for assessment

Assessment of this unit is to be practical in nature and will most appropriately be assessed against the types of processes required in the industry sector in which candidates are working or in a situation that reproduces normal work conditions. Workplaces can include animal shelters or rehabilitation organisations, zoos and wildlife parks or similar workplaces.

There must be access to a range of native mammals as well as relevant information, equipment and/or resources to enable one to demonstrate competence. Assessment must cover a minimum of three commonly available

EVIDENCE GUIDE	
	native mammal species.
Method of assessment	To ensure consistency in one's performance, competency should be demonstrated, to industry defined standards, on more than one occasion over a period of time in order to cover a variety of circumstances and where possible, over a number of assessment activities. The assessment strategy must include practical skills assessment. Suggested strategies for this unit are: • written and/or oral assessment of candidate's required knowledge • observed, documented and first-hand testimonial evidence of candidate's application of practical tasks • simulation exercises that reproduce normal work conditions • third-party evidence • workplace documentation • portfolio. This unit may be assessed in a holistic way with other units of competency relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role.
Guidance information for assessment	Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands (e.g. literacy and numeracy demands) and the needs of particular target groups (e.g. people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, people with a language background other than English, youth and people from low socioeconomic backgrounds).

Range Statement

RANGE STATEMENT

The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Bold italicised wording, if used in the performance criteria, is detailed below. Essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) may also be included.

Commonly available ***native mammals*** may include:

- marsupials
- monotremes.

Behavioural characteristics may include:

- behaviour characteristics can vary according to:
 - the breeding season
 - the species, breed, age and sex of the animals
 - the time of day or night
- behaviour characteristics associated with different species:
 - activity levels at certain times of day or night
 - feeding and foraging
 - fight or flight
 - social interaction
 - feeding behaviours
- defensive behaviour:
 - biting, kicking, charging or spitting
 - defending territory, other animals or food
 - growling, barking, hissing or screaming
 - hair on topline being raised
- dominance gestures:
 - attempts to hump handler's leg or other animal
 - attempts to get higher than handler or other animals
- hunting or stalking gestures
- stereotypical behaviour:
 - repetitive patterns
 - self-mutilation
 - restlessness
- submissive gestures:
 - lowering body
 - rolling onto back

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	- tail between legs - turning away from handler or other animals.
<i>Colours, markings and other identifying features</i> may include:	- age, sex and size - coat or skin colours and texture - eye colour - markings, patterns and permanent scars - microchip, ear tags, tattoos and markings and leg bands.
<i>Signs of distressed native mammals</i> may include:	- aggressive behaviour - inappetence - subdued behaviour - trembling - vocalisation.
<i>Housing design and environmental factors</i> may include:	- environmental: - biological control of waste - cleaning routines and methods - drainage and weather protection - general animal housing security - housing furniture - local council requirements related to: - limits to numbers and types of animals allowed - noise control - pest control - restricting access to animals - waste management - ventilation, heating and cooling requirements - housing design: - housing options: - caged - fully enclosed - indoor - moated - naturalistic - outdoor - housing requirements: - compatibility of species housed together - food and water distribution

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	• location considerations • longevity and sturdiness of materials • required floor area for specific species • security considerations • suitability for specific species • species-specific options for animals to hide or rest • designs that allow for enrichment activities or species-specific exercise, feeding or socialising • social options: • solitary • pairs • single sexed groups • polyandrous/polygamous groups • mixed species.
<i>Enrichment needs</i> may include:	• food or food-related enrichment: • giving animals opportunities to forage for food by hiding it in substrates • giving the animal food that requires processing (e.g. peeling or shelling fruit or seeds) • physical enrichment items: • gnawing manipulada • hide boxes, tunnels and ladders • nest building or bedding material: • shredded paper • straw • substrate or wood shavings • non-edible items that can be easily added or removed from the environment, such as toys • perches, roosting shelves and nest boxes • social enrichment: • human imprinting and cohabitation with domestic pets should be avoided as this may prevent successful rehabilitation to the wild • levels of contact with other animals of the same species or breed • social interactions between the animal and carer may also be appropriate if it is not

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	planned to release the animal to its natural environment.
Welfare of animals requirements may include:	- adequate housing, nutrition and stock levels - compliance to appropriate state or territory legislation and regulations - enrichment opportunities - the absence of pests and vermin - the compatibility of species and breeds.
OHS risks when working with animals may include:	- animal bites, kicks, scratches and crush injuries - biological hazardous waste and sharps disposal - handling of chemicals and medicines - gas leakage - inhalation of aerosol particles - intraocular contamination - manual handling, including carrying, lifting and shifting - needle pricks and cuts from other sharps - release of infective agents (animal and human) - slippery or uneven work surfaces - zoonoses.
Equipment used to catch, handle and restrain native mammals may include:	- cages, yards, pens, bags and towels - collars, leads, halters and harnesses - treats and toys.
Methods used to approach and catch native mammals may include:	- calling animal - encouraging animal to approach by offering a treat - quietly approaching animal, slipping on collar and attaching lead or catching and holding animal gently with hands - running animal into a small enclosure.
Common health issues may include:	- behavioural disorders - environmental hazards: - ventilation - temperature extremes - exposure to the elements - adequate exercise - infectious diseases caused by: - bacteria, virus, fungus and mould - internal and external parasites

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	• non-infection diseases: • nutritional imbalances and disruptions • genetic disorders • metabolic • neoplastic • physical traumas • chemical toxicities and allergies • zoonotic diseases.
General health maintenance and preventative treatment may include:	• routine health check-up • control of parasites • grooming • immunisation/vaccinations, as required • insect control • quarantine • routine observation of waste elimination and faecal examination.
Digestive system features may include:	• anatomical features: • mouth and teeth structures • digestive chemicals and bacteria • alimentary canal and stomach • intestines, rectum and anus • physiological features: • eating processes • nutrient requirements, absorption and storage methods • waste elimination • feeding patterns and natural dietary requirements for the species • potential digestive system malfunctions or problems • water needs.
Food source considerations include:	• captive diets must be similar to the natural diet of the species to: • minimise the impact of captivity • stimulate normal digestive function • maximise development of natural survival techniques • prior to their release, it is recommended that rehabilitated animals should be eating at least 85 per cent natural diet made up of food that would

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	be available to them in the area where they are to be released.
Feeding hazards may include:	• animal movement and handling • shelf life of foodstuffs • manual handling and general food preparation, storage and distribution equipment • contamination of foodstuffs from vermin, bacteria, fungus, virus and other sources • organic and other dusts • excessive noise • possibility of zoonotic infection.
Documentation on the care and management of mammals may include:	• accident and incident records • chemical and veterinary supplies register • detailed and accurate records for each animal: • species and sex of animal • identification and history • feeding, health and treatment records • diary, rosters and task completion and timeframe records • equipment use, damage and repair register • OHS safe work method statements, material safety data sheets (MSDS) and other records • provisions records of current stock and items used and items required • stock control records.

Unit Sector(s)

Unit sector	Species specific
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Competency field

Competency field	
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Co-requisite units

Co-requisite units		