



## Animal Welfare Improvement Proposal Town of Port Hedland

### 1. Summary

- We know that animal welfare is very important to the Town of Port Hedland (the Town) and its residents.
- As with most regions in Western Australia, there are opportunities to significantly improve animal welfare in the region.
- Due to limited resources, RSPCA WA is unable to deliver an effective service to the Town.
- An opportunity exists in partnership with the Town (and other neighbouring shires) to employ an RSPCA WA Inspector in the region.
- A financial contribution by the Town of \$20,000 per annum will enable RSPCA WA to engage with the local community and deliver important educational programs, regular routine visits and an animal cruelty reporting and response service i.e. the compliance and enforcement functions under the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* (the Act).
- If agreed, an MOU will be developed to reflect the commitment made between the Town and RSPCA WA.
- There is precedent with this partnership model. Currently the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder provides \$40,000 in funding for a part-time RSPCA WA Animal Welfare Officer based in Kalgoorlie. There has been significant improvements in the way animals are treated throughout the region as a direct result of the City partnering with RSPCA WA in recent years.

### 2. Proposal

A two-year funding commitment to RSPCA WA is sought from the Town to deliver improvements in animal welfare throughout the region. The funding required equates to 11% of the overall funding required to deliver a full-time service in the Pilbara region.

2017/18	\$20,000
2018/19	\$20,000

The two key deliverables in the proposal are:

#### A. **Development and delivery of localised and effective community education programs and information for Town residents**

Deliver a total of two targeted education programs per annum to the seven schools in the Town:

- Port Hedland Primary School
- Hedland Senior High School
- St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School
- Strelley Community School
- Parnngurr Community School
- Baler Primary School
- Cassia Primary School

These school educational programs are specifically developed to promote responsible pet ownership and dog safety. They also introduce the legislation around animal welfare and the legal responsibilities of pet ownership.

In addition, RSPCA WA will provide two animal welfare articles on topics of interest relevant to the region per annum for potential inclusion in the Town's e-news or newsletter to residents.

**B. Provision of dedicated animal welfare education, compliance and enforcement function under the Act**

The RSPCA WA Inspector will either be based in Karratha or Port Hedland (depending on support) and will respond to all reports to the RSPCA's 24 hour/7day per week call centre. RSPCA WA will investigate cruelty reports, provide education and, as a last resort, prosecute offenders when appropriate and (ultimately) required.

The RSPCA WA Inspector will also meet regularly with Town officers and provide a report on related activities twice per year. The RSPCA WA Inspector will at all times be available for enquiries made by the rangers regarding the Act and conduct relevant internal training as per the request of the relevant Director or Manager, or the Rangers Coordinator.

### **3. RSPCA WA Community Action Days**

An optional extra for the Town (at a cost of \$5,000) is the organisation of RSPCA WA Community Action Days. These are free events that help local communities who may be struggling with basic pet requirements and provides the opportunity for them to get together with RSPCA WA Inspectors, local rangers and vet staff.

Through these events, RSPCA WA aims to encourage people to become responsible pet owners. It includes providing information on common problems such as fleas, worms, ticks, fly bitten ears, mange, shelter, food and water. RSPCA WA will work with rangers to explain to pet owners the process for registrations and local council laws and there are vets available to give free advice for their pets and free check-ups for dogs.

At these events, RSPCA WA offers:

- Pet food for families in financial need
- Flea, worming and tick medication for dogs and cats
- Free dog microchipping (\*not available for litters or breeders)
- Veterinary health checks for dogs
- Pamphlets explaining responsible pet ownership
- Free sausage sizzle
- Stickers and various other giveaways

## 4. Proposal benefits to the Town

- A 24/7 animal cruelty call centre for the community
- Fully 'serviced' and trained dedicated animal welfare officer coverage
- Education, compliance and enforcement services for ratepayers (under the Act)
- Relieving rangers from animal welfare issues, which will then enable resources to be focused more on other priorities
- Safeguarding Town rangers in terms of compliance with the Act
- Improved community attitudes to animals
- Detailed six-monthly activity reports provided
- Two articles per year for the Town's e-news or newsletter publications to residents
- A clear demonstration to the community that the Town highly values animal welfare

Examples of RSPCA WA activities in the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder are provided at **Attachment 1**.

## 5. RSPCA WA requirements

- Financial support from the Town (\$20,000 per annum for two years)
- Public promotion of the new service
- Pound facility access (occasional)
- Support in promoting the establishment of a local RSPCA branch *Friends of the RSPCA* volunteer group
- In relation to animals, the Town will continue to deal with all obligations under current cat and dog legislation.

A copy of the RSPCA Pilbara proposed relationships diagram is provided at **Attachment 2**.

## 6. Proposal benefits to support the Town's Strategic Community Plan

An RSPCA WA presence and engagement with the community will foster improved attitudes to animals and positively add to the social fabric of the community. As Mahatma Gandhi reportedly stated "*The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.*"

The Town's stated vision is - *to become a nationally significant friendly city that people are proud to call home.*

This proposal directly aligns with and supports the Town's vision, as well as the following two key themes and outcomes as identified within the Town's *Strategic Community Plan 2014-2024* document:

[http://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/profiles/porthedland/assets/clientdata/document-centre/public\\_documents/strategic\\_plans/scp\\_final\\_version\\_20142024.pdf](http://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/profiles/porthedland/assets/clientdata/document-centre/public_documents/strategic_plans/scp_final_version_20142024.pdf)

Key themes relevant to this partnership proposal:

### **Theme 1: Building a unified and vibrant community**

We are a friendly and exciting city of diverse neighbours which is alive with recreational, cultural and entertainment activities that enrich residents' and visitors' quality of life. Generations of residents are proud to call Port Hedland home.

- 1.1 A unified community across our townships
- Ensure all members of the community can access our services and facilities
  - Provide safe and accessible community facilities, services, events and open spaces that connect people and neighbours
  - Facilitate the provision of high-quality health services and facilities equal to those found in metropolitan areas
- 1.2 A vibrant community rich in diverse cultures
- Deliver and support programs, events, facilities and services which attract and retain residents to increase our permanent population
  - Work with key agencies and our community to reduce antisocial behaviours and improve community safety

In terms of ensuring Town resources are delivering an optimum benefit to the community, this investment of \$20,000 (equivalent to 11% of the total cost) is a smart and efficient investment which will deliver strong returns to the community and its animals.

Through working collaboratively with the Town and its residents, an RSPCA presence will assist in improving cohesion and pride within the community. We know, based on our experience that a love of animals brings communities together. Should the Town be able to partner with RSPCA WA, the Society will look to form an RSPCA branch *Friends of the RSPCA* (local volunteer group) and there is potential to develop and deliver a *Million Paws Walk* event in the Town next year.

It is proposed that a few survey questions relating to animal welfare be considered by the Town for inclusion in any Community Survey research it may undertake in the future, to measure how well the community perceives the Town and RSPCA WA are addressing animal welfare.

## 7. Current RSPCA WA operations

Established 125 years ago, RSPCA WA is the State's oldest, largest and leading animal welfare organisation. The Society's current objectives continue to reflect its early objectives of promoting animal welfare and kindness to animals and preventing or suppressing cruelty to animals.

The Inspectorate of RSPCA WA provides education, compliance and enforcement functions under the Act. Inspectors work in the field, following up on reports of animal cruelty, conducting rescues and educating members of the public on the appropriate care of their animals.

This work occurs in the context of the broad range of animal welfare activities delivered by the Society's other divisions, which involve significant infrastructure and expertise in the care of all animals. Consequently, the Inspectorate's functions under the Act are supported and enhanced by the facilities and staff undertaking the Society's other activities, which are made possible by public financial support.

RSPCA WA relies on the community and other fundraising initiatives for 95% of its income. 5% is provided by the State Government.

RSPCA WA has relatively limited coverage in regional Western Australia. It has a number of departments which have some involvement in regional activities including the following:

1. RSPCA Inspectors in Geraldton, Albany, Bunbury and Kalgoorlie (part-time) - these Inspectors, together with those based in Perth, educate the public on responsible animal ownership and respond to cruelty complaints across the State.
2. RSPCA branches (volunteer *Friends of the RSPCA*) are located in four locations across Western Australia, including Kalgoorlie.
3. RSPCA Community Education - based in Perth, with some limited regional outreach programs and activities including with schools.
4. RSPCA Policy and Planning - this role is working with a range of stakeholders, including the Department of Agriculture and Food, Department of Local Government and others on a range of topics relating to issues across the State, including cat and dog management facilities, cat trapping, feral animal management, animals in transport, livestock, and various codes of practice/regulations.
5. RSPCA Community Engagement - facilitation of events and activities including the signature *Million Paws Walk* event, staged in nine locations across the State, including Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Bunbury and Albany.

## 8. RSPCA WA Inspectorate

RSPCA WA receives \$350,000 from the State Government and \$40,000 from the Shire of Kalgoorlie-Boulder to help offset the costs of providing an Inspectorate service in Western Australia. In 2016/17, the overall cost of running the Inspectorate during this period is estimated at \$3.5 million.

On average, RSPCA WA receives 40-50 calls to its cruelty line every day, totalling more than 15,000 per annum.

There are currently 11 RSPCA WA Inspectors who respond to calls State-wide. There is currently very limited ability for the Society to respond to animal cruelty reports and proactively engage with communities within the Town.

These Inspectors play a key role in the front line operations of RSPCA WA. They conduct much of their work in the field, following up on complaints of cruelty, conducting animal rescues, educating people on the appropriate care of animals and, where necessary, gathering evidence, preparing briefs and assisting in the prosecution of offenders as part of their role in enforcing the Act. The Inspectors are proactive and also conduct routine inspections of animal holding facilities, commercial facilities and entertainment venues, to ensure appropriate standards are maintained.

RSPCA WA Inspectors work with the local community, Shire rangers, Police, vets, rescue groups and volunteers, to improve animal welfare. The importance of maintaining strong stakeholder relationships in our regional work is critical.

Due to our greater presence in Kalgoorlie-Boulder, from 1 July 2016 to 30 May 2017, RSPCA WA received 245 reports to its *1300CRUELTY* call line for incidents in the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

## 9. RSPCA WA Community Education

The Community Education team works with schools, local councils, community groups and the general public to improve knowledge, awareness and attitudes to animal welfare. Some examples of projects the Community Education officers are involved with include:

- Presentations/workshops/discussions on a variety of topics specific to community needs and interests.
- Advice and assistance to communities working to improve the welfare of animals within the community, with a focus on outreach and marginalised communities.
- Attendance at community events.
- Fostering relations with communities through positive interaction with RSPCA WA staff and animals.

In terms of school-based programs, RSPCA WA provides a range of learning opportunities and programs directly linked to the Australian National Curriculum. Lessons relating to 'cruelty awareness' include:

### **Lesson 1: Developing empathy**

The ability to empathise is something we are all born with, but it is still a skill that requires both practice and understanding. This lesson provides a platform for students to develop empathy towards animals and other living beings. Students place themselves in the 'paws or claws' of an animal and interpret the emotions it feels when human actions intervene.

### **Lesson 2: Cruelty cases**

Can you be the Judge in some of our animal welfare cases? RSPCA education officers present real life animal cruelty cases and allow students to decide upon appropriate punishments. The use of real-life RSPCA WA animal welfare cases demonstrates to students that there are real-life consequences for real-life actions.

### **Lesson 3: Taking responsibility**

Students evaluate and compare their new understanding of animal welfare. They are then allocated the project of developing an appropriate illustrative story to promote animal welfare and taking responsibility for younger students (vertical and peer learning).

## 10. RSPCA branches (volunteer groups)

The first branch formed was in Albany (*Friends of the RSPCA*) and it has been operational for over 15 years. Since then, three more branches have emerged in Geraldton, Kalgoorlie and York.

These groups are involved in providing education, foster caring, rehoming and desexing services in certain areas. They also coordinate events and activities in their local communities, including for fundraising purposes.

## 11. Local veterinary support

Discussions will be held with the Port Hedland Veterinary Hospital and the South Hedland Veterinary Hospital regarding providing support to the RSPCA WA Inspector for animals requiring veterinary treatment (at RSPCA WA's cost). Animals from the Town will be included in these arrangements. Similar arrangements exist in many other regional locations.

## 12. WA Police - Port Hedland

RSPCA WA has a MOU with the WA Police which works well in areas where RSPCA WA has a presence. A good working relationship will be established with the WA Police located in both Port Hedland and South Hedland.

## 13. RSPCA WA Inspector training and equipment

The RSPCA WA Inspector will be recruited and selected based on relevant experience and qualifications. Upon commencement (and prior to entering field work) new Inspectors undertake inductions and training to ensure that performance expectations are achieved and a high quality, customer focused service consistent with RSPCA WA values is provided to the public.

By way of comparison, the Goldfields Inspector has participated in a range of training including:

- Livestock Management and Control training
- Certificate IV training in Government Statutory Compliance
- Firearms training
- Working at Heights training
- First Aid training
- Regular legal training provided by RSPCA WA In-house Legal Counsel

Quarterly training is also provided on legal matters such as investigation, continuity of evidence and court procedures conducted by in-house Legal Counsel:

- Effective search warrant execution training provided by the Australian Federal Police
- Risk/Health & Safety assessments, implementing a new OH&S Manual
- Conflict Management and Situational Awareness training
- Deceptive Detective Masterclass training
- Direction Notice training
- Standard Operating Procedures
- Compliance, Enforcement and Prosecution
- Dog Emotion and Cognition training
- Suicide Risk and Trauma: Workplace Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

The Inspector's work is also guided and enhanced by the following tools and procedural manuals, which have been developed internally by the Inspectorate:

- Standard Operating Procedures
- Inspectorate Health and Safety Working Instructions
- Compliance, Enforcement and Prosecutions Policy
- Inspectorate Animal Welfare Decisions Chart which is designed to provide Inspectors with a quick reference in the field - this is carried in the vehicle with all the documents above
- Legislative Framework



RSPCA WA provides all training, equipment, finance, HR, IT, Perth animal shelter, veterinary support, adoption and foster care programs, legal support. Continued development of Inspectors includes:

- Individual development plans
- Annual appraisals
- One-on-one meetings
- Weekly tool box teleconference meetings with all Inspectors
- Set key performance indicators
- Health and Safety training
- Certificate IV Compliance & Investigation
- Working at Heights training
- Working in Confined Spaces
- Gas meter testing
- Diploma in Government Compliance
- Media protocols training

A full list of equipment supplied by RSPCA WA is at **Attachment 3**.

## 14. Other notes

- **Responding to cruelty complaints**

The Town's residents will utilise RSPCA WA's 1300 CRUELTY call line. Details are taken by the call centre, which will then be provided to the RSPCA WA Inspector in real time. Priority levels are quickly established and urgent reports are attended to as soon as practical. A 24 hour/7-days per week cruelty report service will be provided.

- **Caring for seized/surrendered animals**

RSPCA WA Inspectors are responsible for the care of animals which come into the custody of the Society as part of their duties e.g. seizures and surrenders. Working arrangements with the Town and the local vet will be utilised and additional foster carers will be established as a matter of priority. When required, RSPCA WA will relocate animals to its Perth Animal Care Centre for longer term veterinary and/or behavioural treatment.

*NOTE: It is vital that the community and the rangers are aware that, as per the current cat and dog legislation, RSPCA WA cannot respond to stray cats and dogs. Our work is limited to dealing with animals with welfare issues.*

- **Abandoned animals**

Abandoned animals are either inadvertently or purposely cast off by their owners and are often left confined on a property e.g. dwelling or yard. These often have animal welfare issues from lack of resources, such as food and water.

If Inspectors exercise their powers under the Act and enter the property, the animal will be seized and taken into possession. If the owner can be found, surrender will be sought. Alternatively, an application for forfeiture to the Magistrate's Court will be considered.



If the animal is abandoned at large/in a public space and there is no welfare issue, and no possibility of locating an owner or person responsible, the animal will then be referred to the Town as a stray.

- **Foster care**

RSPCA WA will utilise a dedicated foster care network in the Pilbara and potentially look to recruit some foster carers in the Town. Currently Save Animal From Euthanasia (SAFE) provide support in other regional locations and it is anticipated this will occur in Port Hedland (meetings are scheduled).

Inspectors have clear obligations in terms of the care and protections of animals in care and must keep them in safe custody and ensure they are properly treated and cared for at all times.

Costs for food, vet care, cat litter and all other essential items will be met by RSPCA WA.

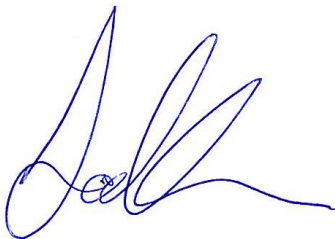
There is likely to be a need to transport animals from Port Hedland to Perth to enter the RSPCA WA foster care program managed in the Metropolitan area. This cost will be borne by the Society.

- **Animal adoptions**

RSPCA WA will utilise the *RSPCA Adopt-a-Pet* rehoming program and SAFE's adoption program in Port Hedland for appropriate animals.

- **Approach to wildlife issues**

A relationship with the Department of Parks & Wildlife in Port Hedland will be established. The RSPCA Inspector will investigate wildlife cruelty complaints, as per the approach in other areas.



David van Ooran  
Chief Executive Officer

15 June 2017

## Attachment 1 - Examples of RSPCA activities in Kalgoorlie-Boulder



Abandoned cat and kittens - West Lamington. Two animals adopted, others in foster care.

Rescued deaf dog from hot car at Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital carpark, now adopted by new owner.



Dog left without sufficient food and water.



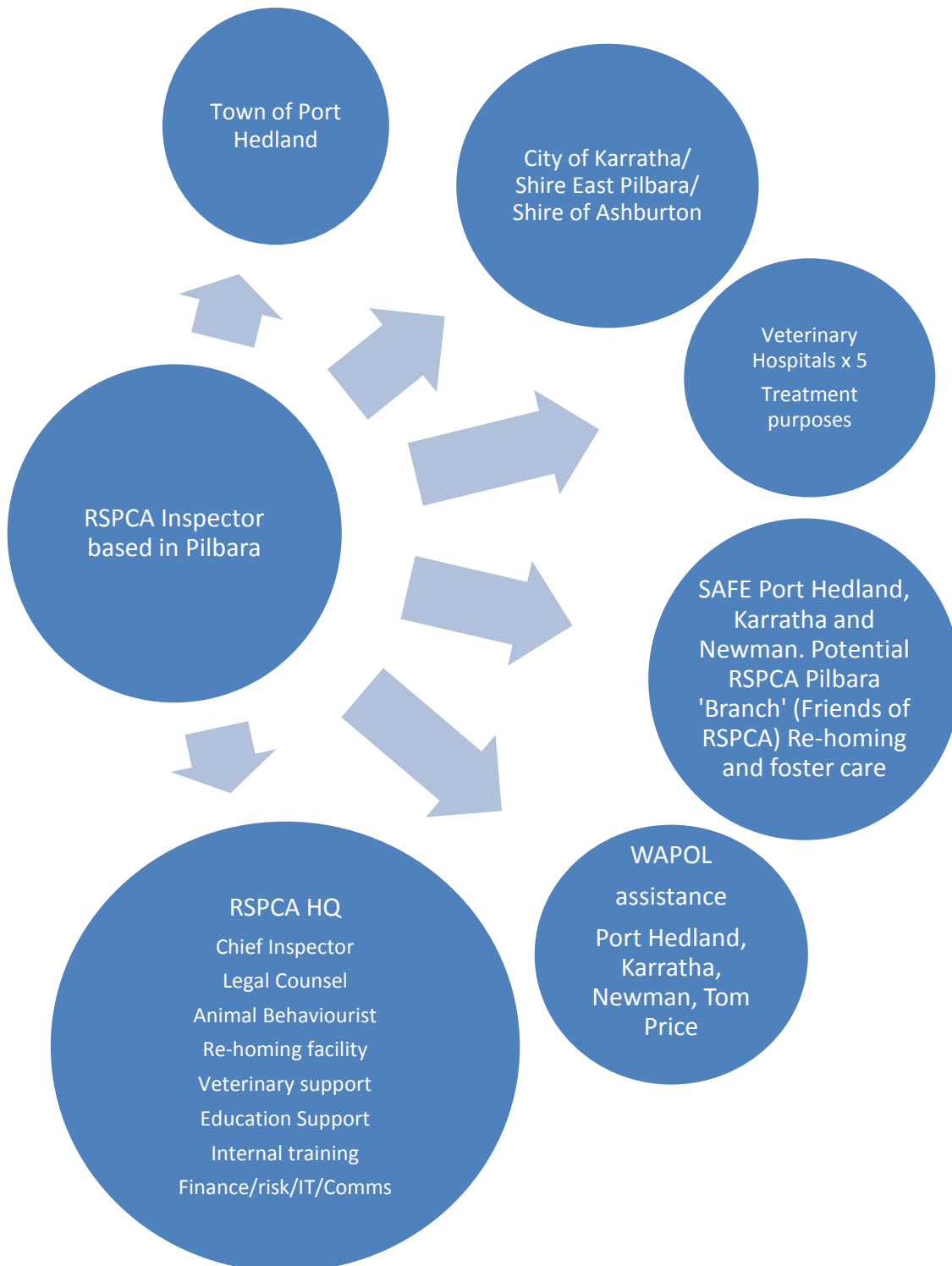
Two joeys chased by children. Now in foster care to recover and be released.

RSPCA school program at Hannans Primary School.



## Attachment 2 - RSPCA relationships in the Pilbara

The proposed relationship between RSPCA WA, Local Government Ranger Services, Veterinary Hospital and Foster/Rehoming groups:



### Attachment 3 - RSPCA Inspector standard equipment list

Vehicle Equipment	Y/N
Bolt Cutters	
Cable Ties 100/400mm	
Car Jack	
Cross Brace	
Ladder	
Padlocks	
Pliers – Leatherman	
Shovel/Spade	
Animal Sling	
Tape Measure	
Tyre Pressure Gauge	
Wire Cutters	
Towels	
Water Containers	
Animal First Aid Kit	
Dog Pole	
Dog Leads	
Dog Muzzles	
Ear Protectors	
Emergency Triangles	
Fire Extinguisher	
First Aid Kit	
Horse Halter and Lead	
Lunge Lead	
Large Net	
Small Net	
Rubber Mats for the Pod	

Car Equipment	Y/N
Buckets	
Cages	
Cat Traps	
Gloves	
Gauntlets	
Evidence Kit- see below	
- laminated sheet for exhibit photos	
- disposable gloves	
- evidence bags	
- white body bags	
- sample pots	
- cable ties	
- blue evidence cable ties	
Bio-security Kit- see below	
- trigene spray	
- tray	
- water container	
- scrubbing brush	
- white disposable overalls	
- gum boots	
Hoof Pick	
Torch	
Animal Products	Y/N
Hand Gel	
Trigene	
Flea Treatments	
Wormers	
Fly Strike Powder	
Cetrigen	
Food	
Community Outreach Shirt	

<b>Essential Documents</b>	<b>Y/N</b>
Standard Operating Procedures	
Animal Welfare Act and Regs	
Notebook	
Direction Book	
Property Receipt Notice Book	
Purchase Order Book	
Movement of Exhibits Book	
Notice to Enter Book	
Animal Welfare Act Guidelines	
Codes of Practice	
Inspectorate Health and Safety Working Instructions 2015	
Stationery File	
Waybills	
Donation Books	
Donation Envelopes	
Yellow Stickers	
White Waterproof Notice Tags	
Animal First Aid Booklet	
DAFWA advice sheets information folder	
Transport Policy	
RSPCA Policies	
Working at heights folder	
<b>Uniforms</b>	<b>Y/N</b>
Utility Vest	
Hi-vis Vest	
Waterproof Rain Jacket	
Gum Boots	
Overalls	
Belt	
Work Boots (Steel cap)	
Trousers	
Shirts	
Epauettes	
Jumpers	
Woollen/Acrylic Vests	
Rescue Polo Shirt	
Baseball Cap	
Wide brim Hat	

<b>Personal Equipment</b>	<b>Y/N</b>
Name Badge	
ID Card	
Misc Cards	
Still Camera (serial number)	
Video Camera (serial number)	
Phone (serial number)	
iPad (number)	
Micro-chip reader (serial number)	
Battery Chargers and Cords	
Thermometer (serial number)	
Body Camera (serial number)	
Spray Equipment-hand/large	
GPS (serial number)	
Hard Hats	
Dust Mask	
Respiratory Masks	
Voice Recorder	
Projector (Education)	
<b>Regional</b>	<b>Y/N</b>
Animal Food	
Lock up storage for Master copies etc	
Stationery	
Printer/Scanner (serial number)	
Home Computer/Laptop (serial number)	
Satellite Phone (serial number)	
Lockable Gun Storage	
Lockable Ammunition storage	

**END**