

## 1. POLICY CERTIFICATION

Policy title:	WS006 - Firearms Policy and Procedures
Policy number:	<b>WS006</b>
Category:	<b>Policy</b>
Classification:	<b>Work Health &amp; Safety</b>
Status:	<b>Approved 1 May 2013 (OCM)</b>

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines on the use, possession, transportation and storage of firearms and controlled drugs by Council's Authorised Officers during the course of their employment with Roper Gulf Regional Council.

## 3. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

The firearm Policy applies to the Authorised Officers of Roper Gulf Regional Council. The intent of this policy is to set the procedures for possessing, transporting, using and storing the firearms and controlled drugs.

## 4. POLICY STATEMENT

If circumstances warrant the use of a firearm for the lawful and humane destruction of an animal then this shall be carried out by an authorised officer. No employee of Roper Gulf Regional Council other than the Authorised Officers are allowed to take control and use firearms or controlled drugs for animal welfare purpose.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the provisions of the National Firearms Safety Code and the Northern Territory Storage and Safe Keeping of Firearms Legislation. All authorised officers will act in accordance this legislation as well the Animal Welfare Legislation. Individual authorised officers must uphold all licence requirements in accordance with all relevant NT Legislation.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

<b>Firearm</b>	<p>"firearm" means a device or part of a device (whether or not assembled, operable or temporarily or permanently inoperable) that is designed or adapted to discharge shot, a bullet or other projectile:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) by expanding gases produced in the device; or</li><li>(b) by igniting combustible material; or</li><li>(c) by compressed air or other compressed gases (whether stored in the device or attached to the device in pressurised containers).</li></ul>
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<b>Authorised Officers</b>	Authorised officers are the officers appointed by the Council for the purpose of administering and enforcing the By-Laws under the Local Government Act and any other statutory Act for which the Authorised Officer is authorised.
<b>Animal Management Officers</b>	Those Roper Gulf Regional Council employees that are employed for the purposes of animal management and is an “Authorised Officer” under both the Animal Welfare Act and the Local Government Act.
<b>Employee license</b>	An Employee’s Licence permits a person to possess and use a firearm owned and registered by the holder of the Corporate Licence. The licence allows the employee only to use the firearm as part of his/her work duties and not for any other purpose.
<b>RGRC</b>	Roper Gulf Regional Council

## 6. PROCEDURES

### 6.1 Storage of Equipment

Animal Management Officers must ensure that the gun is out of site and vehicle is locked when not attended. Records will be kept for each time any of the firearm or tranquiliser guns are removed from the gun safe storage unit. These records will be produced at the request of compliance officer.

### 6.2 Misuse of Equipment

Any employee who is not an Authorised Officer under the Local Government Act and who does not have the authorization of the CEO or Director of Infrastructure and Technical Services to conduct an activity of euthanasia, and uses the firearm or tranquiliser weapon will run the risk of instant dismissal.

### 6.3 Unauthorised Carry or Storage

- No firearm or ammunition that is not licensed to RGRC should be stored or carried in at any of the Shire Buildings at any time.
- No firearm or ammunition that is not licensed to RGRC should be transported in an RGRC vehicle during working hours.

#### **6.4 Animal Management Firearm**

- Animal Management Officers are responsible for administration of the animal management firearm.
- Only staff who hold current Roper Gulf Regional Council firearm license; and are authorised officers; and have the permission of either the CEO or the Director Infrastructure and Technical Services are permitted to use the firearm.
- Firearm safety procedures must be complied with at all times.
- Firearm is to be used to destroy savage, stray, destructive, injured or feral animals as deemed necessary by Animal Management Officers and in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act.
- Gun register is to be completed prior to taking gun from office
- While the gun is being transported magazine and bullets are to be kept in the glove box of the vehicle.
- Firearm user is to be sure that there is no life or property in the line of fire prior to shooting.
- Once the animal has been hit the Animal Management officer must ensure that it is dead.
- If the animal is not dead a shot between the eyes may be required.
- Animals destroyed must be taken to the closest waste management station for burial.
- Gun register is to be completed when gun is returned
- Firearm is to be cleaned as soon as practical after use. Cleaning Kit to be kept on top of gun safe.
- Animal Management Officer is to ensure that firearm supplies are kept in stock

#### **6.5 Tranquilliser Gun**

- Animal Management Officer from Regional Managers Office will be responsible to administer the tranquilliser gun.
- Only officers that hold a current Northern Territory Police, Roper Gulf Regional Council Employees “C” class firearm licence may handle the tranquilliser gun or accessories.
- If the gun is taken from the gun safe, this licence must be on the person taking the gun
- Before taking the gun, the “dart Gun Register” must be fill out entering the date and time taken, the reason for taking it and be signed.
- Before taking the gun, the police in the area that the gun is to be used should be phoned . Give the police the details of where and when the gun will be used.
- While using the gun, all safety measures learned in the firearms training must be observed and abided by.

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- When the reason for the use of the gun has been completed, the gun must be returned immediately to the gun safe.
- On return of the gun, the Dart Gun Register must be completed, entering the date and time the gun was returned and signature.
- Depending on frequency of use, the dart gun should be cleaned once per month and the accessory equipment be checked.
- The cleaning of the dart gun is to be carried out at the Emungalan road depot workshop.
- The Animal Management Officer shall maintain the record of tranquilliser. The format for recording tranquilliser is attached as annex 1.

### 6.6 Control Pole

- Always have two officers in attendances. Approach the dog slowly; hold the control pole behind you or at your side with the cable loop hanging loosely.
- Never approach a dog with the control pole held high (like a weapon) as this will set the tone for the entire encounter.
- Using both hands slip the noose smoothly over the dogs head until the loop is around the dog's neck.
- Use one hand to pull the release cord to tighten the cable until the loop fits snugly, but not too tight.
- Keep both hands a slight distance apart on the pole. Once the loop is secured around the animals' neck, stand beside the dog and slowly guide the dog ahead.
- Manoeuvre the dog to the back of the vehicle; lift the dog onto the tail gate and into the cage. Close the cage door against the control pole and loosen the loop. While holding the cage door slowly remove the loop from the dogs neck and remove the control pole and close the cage door.
- Return the control pole to the holder on the vehicle.

### 6.7 Use of controlled drugs

- It is the responsibility of the Animal Management Officer to ensure that only personnel with the required competency has access to the drug used in the administration of the Inspectorate Department's duties and that in all instances the correct recording and reporting procedures are followed for the purchase, supply, administration and disposal of the drug.
- The Animal Management Officer must ensure that they keep accurate records, using the template provided by the Department of Health for recording data.
- The Animal Management Officer must ensure the records are stored and kept in an appropriate location. The records should include the amount of drug being purchased, used or destroyed, number of dogs treated and the total volume of the drug used.

- The Animal Management Officer must be advised of any Schedule 4 drugs that require disposal and make arrangements for their destruction in compliance with the Poisons Regulations 1965.

## 6.8 XYLAZINE

### **Administration:**

Xylazine is to be administered by the intravenous or intracardiac injection for rapid euthanasia. Intreperitoneal and intrathoracic administration of barbiturates is accompanied by extreme pain and is not regarded as humane. Xylazine is only be used for the euthanasia of dogs. The owner's consent must be obtained and it is the administrator's responsibility to ensure that only the correct animals are euthansied.

The Australian Veterinary Association's guidelines on the humane destruction of dogs must be adhered to at all times.

### **Storage:**

Xylazine is to be stored in a locked cupboard or locked refrigerator away from children and unauthorised adults at a temperature below 30°C. Do not freeze. Access to the key to this cupboard is restricted to personnel nominated in writing by the permit holder and the key is to beheld by the permit holder or his/her appointed deputy. The key to this cupboard should be coded-restricted cut access. It is ideal if Xylazine can be stored in a drug cabinet in a pharmacy or clinic.

### **Dosage and Packaging:**

Xylazine should only be purchased in concentrations of 300 – 350mg/ml. The pack size should not exceed 500ml and the stock holding for an area is not to excel 1,000ml. Xylazine is to be administered at the dose rate recommended by the manufacturer which is usually 1ml/2kg (volume dosage).

### **Disposal of Carcasses:**

All animals euthanized by Xylazine are to be buried or burnt. Access of other animals to carcasses must be prevented and carcasses are not to be used for any other purposes. Animals must be confirmed dead (no heart beating or breathing) at the completion of the injection.

### **Equipment for Use:**

A syringe with a volume of up to 10ml attached to a 21 gauge, 1 inch needle is recommended for intravenous injection. Intracardiac injections are best performed within a 21 gauge 1 ½ inch needle.

### **Animals:**

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Only dogs may be euthanized using Xylazine. Euthanasia of animals only forms a small component of animal welfare and it must be practiced with due care and responsibility.

Dogs of all ages may be euthanized with Xylazine. At no time are animals (of any type) to be euthanized by any other means than those stipulated in the Australian Veterinary Associations policy guidelines. These guidelines prohibit the use of other drugs or poisons.

**Disposal of Equipment**

Needles used to administer drugs must be disposed of immediately after use in a sharps container. These containers, once full, are to be given to the hospital who are responsible for the disposal of other medical waste. Syringes once used should be disposed of in a sharp disposal container.

**Information to be recorded**

Each time this drug is used the following information must be recorded:

1. The name of dog owner (if available)
2. Total dose or volume of drug used
3. Date of administration
4. Name and signature of person administering the drug

**Location**

Xylazine is only to be used within the boundaries of the Katherine municipality. It is not to be used on any animal under the care of a veterinarian.

**7. REFERENCES**

Acknowledgements (original author/source documents)	Local Government Act Permit Information/ NT Police Animal Welfare Act Firearms Legislation
Related Policies	WS003 – Work Health and safety Policy HR001 – Employee and Contractor Code of Conduct
Related Publications	<i>Nil</i>

**8. DOCUMENT CONTROL**

Policy number	<b>WS006</b>
Policy Owner	<b>Director Infrastructure &amp; Technical Services</b>
Endorsed by	<b>OCM</b>

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Date approved	<b>1 May 2013</b>
Revisions	<b>Nil</b>
Amendments	<b>Nil</b>
Next revision due	<b>May 2015</b>

**9. CONTACT PERSON**

Position

**Manager Governance, Corporate  
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