



PO Box 898 Murwillumbah NSW 2484  
02 6672 4789 [wildlife@tvwc.org.au](mailto:wildlife@tvwc.org.au)  
[www.tvwc.org.au](http://www.tvwc.org.au)

---

## POLICIES

---

### Care and Rehabilitation Policy

It is the ultimate objective of Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers Inc (TVWC) to rehabilitate sick, injured or orphaned native wildlife and release them into the wild. With the help of our resident vets, training courses, reference material and experienced members and in compliance with National Parks and Wildlife Service (NSW) policy, we aim for a high success rate.

- (a) Carers must at all times hold a current TVWC membership.
- (b) Members are required to maintain complete and accurate records of animals in their care and submit them regularly and/or relate progress to the Coordinators.
- (c) Permission must be obtained before entering private property and whilst there all care should be taken to respect the person's property and rights.
- (d) Members should not carry out a rescue if they feel it could cause injury to themselves or other persons, or the wildlife involved. In such cases refer to Coordinators to seek more experienced help and/or equipment.
- (e) As rescued animals are wild and under stress, members should not allow any unnecessary handling.
- (f) Members should refer cases of animals' abuse to the Coordinators, and endeavour to educate the caller in the correct manner of rescuing or holding the animal until we can attend.
- (g) Members should remember that TVWC is grateful to Vets who offer their services. Members are requested not to make excessive demands or to expect preferential treatment.
- (h) For the welfare of the animal, members will have facilities suitable for the animals in their care.
- (i) Members should not transport animals in their care across the border for treatment or other reasons without consultation with the Coordinators or National Parks and Wildlife Service (NSW).

---

### Release Policy

One of Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers Inc aims is to release rehabilitated animals back into their natural environment.

#### Location of Release

Where possible, the animal will be returned to the area in which it was found. Where this is not possible due to unsuitability, overcrowding, feral animals, etc, the animal is to be released into a suitable and safe habitat.

In determining the most suitable conditions for the release of an animal, consideration will be given to factors such as territory and food requirements, time of day, etc. Where there are doubts, NPWS is to be consulted.

#### Immediate Release of Animals

On attending a rescue it may be found that the animal is not sick or injured and is able to fend for itself. Experience has shown that this is not always the case; please refer to Coordinators for advice, for we have found that shock or other injuries do not show up for days sometimes, requiring the animal to be kept in care and attending a vet before a decision is made.

### **Release after Rehabilitation**

The member should ensure:

- The animal is fully rehabilitated or ready for release by seeking veterinary or other expert opinion.
- They notify the Coordinator pending release.
- The animal is released into its home range or suitable environment after consultation with Coordinator or NPWS.

### **Animals Unable to be Released**

After treatment where an animal is considered unable to be released, the Coordinator or NPWS should be consulted with a view to long term care.

### **Euthanasia Policy**

Animals should not be left to suffer or die in pain. In addition, some permanently disabled animals may be unsuitable for long term care. In such cases euthanasia should be carried out by (1) a veterinarian or (2) trained personnel.

The decision to euthanase an animal will be made by the member in consultation with the Coordinator or NPWS.

### **Feral Animal Policy**

It is not the aim or objective of TVWC to rescue or rehabilitate feral or domestic animals. However, basic information will be given to the caller to alleviate suffering of the animal and the caller referred to an appropriate organisation.

---

## **Active Carers' Policy**

The objective of Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers (TVWC) is to rescue and rehabilitate native fauna for return to their natural habitat, utilising the most up-to-date methods and information available and giving priority to the best interests of such fauna.

In order for TVWC to work within and meet NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service Licence conditions and policies, members of TVWC who actively care for wildlife are bound by the TVWC constitution and its policies.

### **Training**

- To be eligible as an active carer, appropriate training must be undertaken, unless the Committee of Management deems that the carer is eligible through their previous experience or training.
- Carers may only care for animals for which they have the appropriate training.
- Carers must attend appropriate training every two years as a refresher, in order to retain the authorisation to care for specific species.

### **Appropriate Facilities and Care**

- Carers must be prepared to accept visits from the relevant Animal Coordinator, an office-bearer or other experienced carer authorised by the Committee of Management to inspect their holding facilities and care methods.
- Animals held by a carer in unsuitable facilities or being cared for inappropriately may be transferred to another carer, as determined by the relevant Animal Coordinator or other authorised officer.
- The Committee of Management reserves the right to withdraw the authority to care from any carer if their care methods, facilities or management become detrimental to the welfare of the animals and their eventual release.

### **Notification and Liaison**

- Any carer who finds an animal, or takes delivery of an animal from a member of the public, must contact the duty Phone Volunteer on the day that the animal came to them, to supply the animal's details and to obtain a Call Number.
- Carers must notify the relevant Animal Coordinator within 24 hours of any animal coming into their care, and regularly keep the Coordinator informed of the animal's progress.
- Carers are not to transfer animals to another carer without first consulting with the relevant Animal Coordinator and must be prepared to transfer wildlife as directed, eg when the animal has outgrown the facilities of the carer, or when flying-foxes need to be transferred to a crèche, etc.
- When an animal is due for release, the carer should liaise with the relevant Animal Coordinator about appropriate release procedures and release site.
- Where a carer believes that an animal is not suitable for release, options shall be discussed with the appropriate Animal Coordinator and if the preferred option is for the animal to go into permanent care or be transferred to another organization, eg fauna park, this decision must be ratified by the Committee of Management and appropriate approval sought from NPWS before any such action is taken.
- The Committee of Management will have the final decision in any dispute regarding treatment, release or euthanasia of an animal in care.

## Record-keeping

- Carers are responsible for maintaining accurate records for any animal they take into care, including recording the Call Number, exact location from which the animal came, the care regime, the animal's progress and the outcome.
  - The Committee of Management may ask the carer to produce such records in order to determine if an appropriate care regime is being met, and the carer may be required to change their care regime in the best interests of the animal.
  - A Foster Carer's Report, in the format determined by the Committee of Management, must be completed by the carer for each animal taken into care and forwarded to the Records Officer within 14 days of the animal's death, release or transfer.
  - When an animal is transferred from one carer to another, a Foster Carer's Report must be completed and given to the carer, along with the animal.
- 

## Policy and Procedures for Veterinary Services

### 1. Introduction

Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers (TVWC) acknowledges and is very grateful for the assistance and services provided by Veterinarians in our region, services that are fundamental to the successful rehabilitation of sick, injured and orphaned wildlife.

TVWC is committed to maintaining good relations with and not making excessive demands upon Veterinarians who provide their services, working in cooperation with them, and within National Parks and Wildlife Service (NSW) requirements and guidelines.

However, TVWC must also work within its financial and human resource constraints and use veterinary services prudently. Therefore, this policy is aimed at providing procedures and guidelines to ensure that the good relations with Veterinarians are maintained, that we make the most effective possible use of our resources, and that TVWC members are working together in a coherent and consistent manner.

### 2. General Guidelines for the use of Veterinary Services

In making prudent use of veterinary services, the following should be complied with by TVWC members:

- (a) Wherever possible, vets should be consulted during normal business hours only, unless in an emergency, in which case the procedures and guidelines in **4.** and **5.** should be followed.
- (b) The Veterinary Clinic should be given a courtesy phone call before a member takes an animal there, or when a member of the public is instructed by the duty Phone Volunteer to do so. In the latter case, the Phone Volunteer is responsible for contacting the Veterinary Clinic.
- (c) Wherever possible, carers taking animals to a vet should wait there with the animal, until the animal can be attended to, unless another arrangement is convenient for and agreed to by the Veterinary Clinic.
- (d) In the case of an animal which may require extra-ordinary veterinary attention, eg X-rays, special tests, etc, an appointment may need to be made, taking into account that such services attract higher fees and such visits are subject to the procedures and guidelines outlined in **4.** and **5.**
- (e) Carers should confirm the costs of veterinary services *before* they are administered and, if potentially higher than the maximum amount of \$40, must obtain authorisation first, following the procedures in **4.**
- (f) Carers must quote the animal's Call Number to the Veterinary Clinic so that any chargeable services are recorded with this number.
- (g) TVWC does not cover the costs of any incidental, non-medical items purchased from a Veterinary Clinic, eg animal food and equipment.
- (h) Where an animal in veterinary care has not yet been assigned to a carer, the duty Phone Volunteer is responsible for the animal, including following the procedures for the authorisation of extra-ordinary costs, as outlined in **4.**, liaising with and keeping the Vets informed, etc, until the animal goes to a carer.

### 3. Quotation of Call Number

All animals taken to a Veterinary Clinic under the auspices of TVWC must have a TVWC Call Number, whether the animal is taken to the Vet by a TVWC volunteer or by a member of the public who has called TVWC and has been instructed to do so by the duty Phone Volunteer.

The Call Number is assigned by the duty Phone Volunteer and must be quoted to the Veterinary Clinic each time the animal is attended to.

TVWC cannot accept responsibility nor make payment for any veterinary costs where a TVWC Call Number is not quoted and does not appear on subsequent veterinary bills.

### 4. Procedures for Extra-Ordinary Veterinary Costs

Where the cost of veterinary services for an animal is likely to be higher than \$40, including consultation, medication and diagnostic costs, TVWC will only take financial responsibility for such extra-ordinary services where the procedures below have been followed and authorisation has been duly obtained *before* the services have been administered.

- (a) The TVWC carer or, where an animal that has not been brought in by a TVWC carer, the Veterinary Clinic, must call the TVWC central number to obtain authorisation.
- (b) The duty Phone Volunteer must then contact one of the following TVWC officers:
  - President
  - Treasurer
  - Secretary
  - Appropriate Animal Coordinator
- (c) The contacted officer must call the Vets immediately and, on the basis of the guidelines for such authorisation, outlined in 5., make the decision to authorise or veto the extra-ordinary services. Vets are to be encouraged to record the name of the TVWC officer who authorised the costs.
- (d) In the event that the duty Phone Volunteer cannot contact any of the above officers, the Phone Volunteer will authorise the services, on the recommendation of the attending Veterinarian. The Phone Volunteer will take note of and follow up such instances with one of the listed TVWC officers as soon as possible thereafter.

## **5. Guidelines for Authorisation of Extra-Ordinary Veterinary Services**

In making the decision to authorise extra-ordinary veterinary services – defined as services totalling above \$40, including consultation, medication and diagnostic costs – the authorised TVWC officers should take into account the following, interconnected factors:

- (a) The likelihood of the animal surviving the trauma, and of being successfully rehabilitated and able to live a "normal" life.
- (b) The species of the animal, particularly whether it is common, rare, threatened or endangered, eg a commonly-found Lorikeet compared to an endangered Long-nosed Potoroo.
- (c) The type and extent of injury, and to do so in relation to the species, eg a broken wing for a bird that feeds on the wing is unlikely to be viable.
- (d) The intrusiveness of the procedure on the animal and the stress of this and subsequent treatment regimes that may be required.
- (e) The age of the animal, both when too young or too old. For example, specialist guidelines on the viability of hairless joeys should be consulted, rather than putting the animals through a prolonged death. On the other hand, an animal may be exhibiting symptoms of or become injured because of old age.
- (f) The likely length of time the animal will need to be in care and the detrimental effects on the animal of this, eg an adult male possum being "out of the system" for too long has little chance of surviving once released.
- (g) The necessary expertise and availability of members to care for the animal, eg where long-term rehabilitation or specialist, on-going treatment is required.
- (h) The input that has already been expended on the animal, in the way of carer hours, energy and financial resources, eg an orphaned joey that has been in care for several months already.
- (i) The contribution of the services to our body of knowledge and carer expertise, so that future similar situations can be avoided or better dealt with, eg diagnostic or post-mortem tests in unusual situations.
- (j) The likelihood of further, on-going veterinary costs.
- (k) The financial position of the TVWC and the cost of the services in context of what has been spent overall and in similar situations, etc.

## **6. Out-of-hours Veterinary Services**

Out-of-hours veterinary services are not to be used unless absolutely essential and only within the guidelines and following the procedures set out in 4. and 5.

If they are used, carers should confirm with the Veterinary Clinic beforehand what the cost will be and any alternative options that may be available, eg scheduling the visit to coincide with another appointment or with the Vet's normal out-of-hours surgery visits, so that the Vet is not called out especially for TVWC.

In the case of an animal that needs to be humanely euthanased, possible alternatives that should be considered include use of the police, other emergency services, or an experienced member with a gun licence.

Also, consideration should be given to taking the animal to Currumbin Sanctuary's Wildlife Hospital, if the emergency occurs during Currumbin's weekend or public holiday opening hours.

## **7. X-raying and Other Diagnostic Procedures**

Where a fracture is not obvious but suspected and the likelihood is that the animal will suffer until the final diagnosis is confirmed, Veterinarians should be asked to take X-rays, subject to the same procedures and guidelines for extra-ordinary services outlined in 4. and 5. above. Similar considerations apply in the case of other diagnostic procedures, eg blood tests.

## **8. Cat Bites**

When an animal has been taken to a Veterinary Clinic on suspicion of a cat bite, antibiotics should be administered as a matter of course, subject to all other indications suggesting the animal has a good chance of survival and the other guidelines on veterinary services set out in 4. and 5. above.

## 9. Animals taken to Vets by Public

Animals taken to a Veterinary Clinic by a member of the public of their own volition, ie they have *not* been instructed to do so by the TVWC duty Phone Volunteer, do not become the responsibility of TVWC unless the animal goes into the care of a TVWC carer and the following procedure has been followed:

- (a) The member of the public must fill out a TVWC form at the Vets, with their details and those of the animal, eg where found, the circumstances, etc.  

This is imperative as many animals must be returned to the exact location they came from, we are required by NPWS to record and report on such details and, often, the carer needs to be able to contact the person who found the animal.
- (b) The Veterinary Clinic keeps the form until the animal is examined and it is determined whether it should go into care with a TVWC carer, be euthanased, or taken to/by another organization.
- (c) If the animal does not go to a TVWC carer, eg it is euthanased, the form may be destroyed, as such animals never become the responsibility of TVWC.
- (d) If the animal needs to go into care, the TVWC central number is called – not individual carers – and the duty Phone Volunteer will take details, assign and quote a Call Number, and organise a carer for the animal. They should inform the Veterinary Clinic of the name of the carer and of progress if there is an unusual delay.
- (e) The carer who collects the animal is given the form filled in by the member of the public, to use as the basis of their Foster Carer's Report form.

**NB:** Veterinary services rendered for such animals, where the animal does not subsequently come into the care of TVWC or the service was after hours, should not be charged to TVWC. In any case, services above \$40 need to be authorised beforehand, in accordance with the procedures in 4.

---

## Financial Matters Policy

### 1. Expenses

- (a) Generally, group funds cover group expenses such as officebearers' liability insurance, training, vet bills, TVWC hotline expenses and other administrative costs.
- (b) The Treasurer must present a monthly financial report to the Committee of Management, highlighting the financial position of the group and a summary of expenses incurred and income received.
- (c) Standard group expenses and day-to-day administrative costs, eg postage, stationery, photocopying, phone volunteer telephone costs and meeting expenses, must be approved by the Treasurer and one other Executive member. However, where the cost is abnormally high or in other unusual circumstances, the Treasurer will bring these to the attention of and seek approval from the Committee of Management.
- (d) All other, non-standard expenses or reimbursements must be approved by the Committee of Management before they are incurred, with a justification for the expense.
- (e) Where an expense cannot wait until the next Committee meeting, the Treasurer and one other Executive member may approve the purchase in the interim, and seek formal approval at the next meeting.

### 2. Reimbursement of Approved Expenses

- (a) Claims for reimbursements must be appropriately documented, generally with Tax Invoices and receipts, with claims for telephone expenses to be accompanied by itemised call records, including the reason for the call.
- (b) All claims for reimbursement must be made using an authorised claim form.

### 3. Financial Assistance to Members

- (a) Generally, members are responsible for meeting the costs of feeding and housing the native animals in their care, for transportation costs incurred in rescuing and transporting native animals, and other costs incurred in their endeavours as carers and office-bearers, eg telephone expenses.  

However, it is recognised that some members experience financial difficulties in meeting these costs and that some have an uneven burden placed on them because of their group responsibilities or the type and number of animals they rescue, transport and/or care for.

In these cases, individual members may submit claims for reimbursement which will be assessed by the Committee of Management on a case-by-case basis, subject to the conditions outlined in this subclause.
- (b) Financial assistance may be given to members in the form of:
  - (i) Reimbursement of costs incurred.
  - (ii) Contribution towards costs incurred.
  - (iii) The supply of animal foods or goods, eg Wombaroo products.
- (c) In the case of reimbursement of travel expenses, other than in exceptional circumstances, the Committee will not consider any claims unless at least 150 kilometres are travelled in a calendar month.

- (d) Applications for assistance must be made to the Committee of Management by the member, and should include:
  - (i) The amount being claimed and how this was arrived at.
  - (ii) The reason for the application.
  - (iii) Full and detailed receipts in the case of claims for reimbursement of costs.
  - (iv) Detailed travel records in the case of travel expenses. These should include, for each trip being claimed, the date, number of kilometres, the destination, the reason for the trip and, if applicable, the Call Number.
  - (v) Itemised call records in the case of telephone expenses, including the reason for the call.
- (e) The Committee of Management will make a decision on each application, including the reason why any application is not approved or only partially approved, and notify the applicant accordingly.

#### **4. Inspection of Books**

- (a) The group's financial records are available for any member to examine, with the current year's financial records and minutes to be available at all General Meetings for any member to view.
- (b) Alternatively, these records can be made available for any member to inspect, by contacting the Treasurer in the case of financial records, or the Secretary in relation to the minutes, to organise a mutually convenient time.

#### **5. Group Donation Boxes**

- (a) The Treasurer will keep an up-to-date listing of the location of each of the group's donation boxes, the date each was last emptied, the amount collected and banked, and the name of the person who emptied the box.
- (b) Members will not place or remove group donation boxes unless at the request or approval of the Treasurer.
- (c) Donation boxes will only be emptied by the Treasurer or other member authorised by the Committee of Management.
- (d) A letter of authority will be prepared for anyone authorised to empty or collect a donation box, and this letter must be presented to the manager of the premises where the box is held.
- (e) Where the donation box is being emptied by an authorised member, other than the Treasurer, the member shall promptly bank the money into the TVWC's account and supply the Treasurer with the date, location of the box, and the amount collected and banked.

#### **6. Donations from the Public**

- (a) Members are encouraged to seek donations from members of the public in order to assist the group in its work.
- (b) In the case of snake relocations, every endeavour will be made to receive a donation from the member of the public, although not to the point of putting the welfare of the animal at risk. Phone volunteers will, in the first instance, request a donation from the caller, and this will be followed up by the snake handler.
- (c) When members rescue, collect, relocate or care for a native animal of whatever species, or represent the group in any official capacity, they do so as members and under the authority of the group. Therefore, donations from members of the public to representatives of TVWC are donations to the group and not to individuals.
- (d) Non-monetary gifts over the value of \$20 given to TVWC members in the course of their roles as TVWC representatives shall be considered as TVWC property and the Treasurer must be notified of such gifts.
- (e) Gifts given specifically to a member by family or friend, as a personal gift for that member, shall not be deemed to be a donation to the group. Any clarification of whether such gifts are donations or gifts should be directed to the Treasurer.
- (f)
  - (i) When a member of the public gives a donation to a TVWC member in the course of a call out, the TVWC member must inform the Phone Volunteer, including the amount received, and the Phone Volunteer will record this on their Call Form.
  - (ii) Where the donation is to be sent by the member of the public to the group's postal address or to be made through the website PayPal system, the Phone Volunteer should also record this on the Call Form.
  - (iii) The Records Officer will inform the Treasurer of such donations recorded on Call Forms, including the details in (h) below.
- (g) The Treasurer shall be informed promptly, directly by the member concerned, of all other donations given or pledged, together with the details outlined in (h) below.
- (h) For each donation received or pledged, the following details are required:
  - (i) Date of the donation
  - (ii) Amount
  - (iii) Name and address of the donor
  - (iv) Reason for the donation
  - (v) How the donation has/is being paid, ie cash, cheque, direct deposit, PayPal via the website, or by post.
  - (vi) The Call Number, if applicable

- (i) All donations given to a member should either be:
  - (i) Forwarded promptly to the Treasurer or to a Committee of Management member, together with the details in (h) above.
  - (ii) Banked directly into the group's General Account with the St George Bank (BSB 112-879; Account No 127579224) by the member, with the Treasurer being informed promptly of the details in (h) above.
- (j) The Treasurer will reconcile donations received against Call Records and from notifications from members, following up any donations outstanding.
- (k) The Treasurer will ensure that donations are receipted appropriately and promptly, including ensuring that tax-deductible donations are documented and transferred to the TVWC Public Fund accordingly.

## 7. TVWC Property

- (a) The group has equipment donated or purchased for specific purposes that always remains the property of the group.
- (b) The Treasurer, or other person appointed by the Committee of Management (the appointee), shall have responsibility for overseeing such equipment, keeping an inventory of all TVWC property.
- (c) The inventory shall identify the purpose of each item of equipment and, accordingly, be designated by the Treasurer or appointee as a general group asset or as the responsibility of a particular officebearer, or officebearers, where it has multiple uses.
- (d) The placement or relocation of items that are regarded as general group assets shall be determined by the Committee of Management, with officebearer/s determining the placement and relocation of group equipment under their jurisdiction.
- (e) Members who hold TVWC property must return it on their resignation from the group or when directed by the authorised person.
- (f) Members are required to keep TVWC property secure and in good working order, taking into account fair wear and tear, and not make modifications to it without consultation with the appropriate officebearer, Treasurer or appointee.
- (g)
  - (i) A member must inform the Treasurer or appointee promptly of any theft, loss or damage to, or problems with, any TVWC property they hold.
  - (ii) Where it is considered that the cause of the theft, loss, damage or problem was mistreatment, inappropriate use or negligence, the Treasurer or appointee must bring this to the attention of the Committee of Management who shall decide on an appropriate course of action. This may include requesting the member to repair or replace the item.
  - (iii) Where the item needs maintenance or is no longer of functional use to the group, eg through old age or breakdown, the Treasurer or appointee may, in consultation with the appropriate officebearers, decide on the fate of the property, eg to write it off or repair it, with the expenditure towards such repairs being subject to the normal Committee authorisation procedures.
- (h) Members should not transfer an item of TVWC property to another member without prior consultation with the Treasurer, appointee or appropriate officebearer.
- (i) If a member does not return TVWC property on their resignation or when requested, the Committee reserves the right to request payment for the replacement cost of the item from the person.

## Bat Policy

This policy is to be read in conjunction with TVWC Active Carers' Policy. It does not override, but rather adds to it, in relation to bat-specific issues.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the personal safety of all persons involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of bats in our group; to ensure public safety; to minimize negative publicity regarding flying-foxes; and to ensure best possible practice for bat rehabilitation. The word 'bat/s' used hereafter in this policy refers to all species of megabats and microbats. The word 'carer/s' used hereafter refers to all vaccinated members involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of bats.

### Public Health

1. All carers must be vaccinated against Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABLV), and provide a completed ABLV vaccination form to the Bat Coordinator, before handling or caring for bats.

TVWC will refund up to two-thirds of the cost of vaccinations for members, on the recommendation of the Bat Coordinator and subsequent approval by the Committee of Management. One third of the cost is to be refunded after the completion of the course of vaccinations, and the other third at the end of six months, subject to the member having been actively involved in the rescue and/or rehabilitation of bats within TVWC during this period, with the Bat Coordinator assessing the involvement of the member and making a recommendation to the Committee.

2. All vaccinated carers must have annual titre checks by their GP – covered by Medicare – and provide a completed ABLV vaccination form to the Coordinator, no later than 1<sup>st</sup> September of each year. This is in accordance with current best practice, and to ensure that immunity protection does not fall to dangerously low levels.
  - (a) The Bat Coordinator will take on the responsibility of informing, in writing, all relevant carers no later than 1 July each year that said testing is necessary.
  - (b) Titre results are as follows:
    - (i) A titre reading of 0.5 IU/ml or below means that the carer must not rescue or care for any sort of bat until booster vaccination is complete.
    - (ii) A reading of 1.0 IU/ml or below means that warning of low immunity must be given and booster vaccination discussed with the person's doctor.
    - (iii) A reading above 1.0 IU/ml indicates adequate protection [1.5 is better].
  - (c) Any carer showing a titre result of 1.0 or less must receive a course of two booster vaccinations before resuming handling and rehabilitation of bats.
  - (d) Failure to provide the above-mentioned documentation of titre results and/or booster results to the Bat Coordinator will mean that the carer will not be able to undertake the rescue and rehabilitation of bats, until such documentation is provided.
3. All documentation falls under the category of patient/doctor confidentiality and, therefore, is not to be made public knowledge, except to the Committee of Management in the event of a dispute.
4. Un-vaccinated carers are not to put themselves or the animals at risk by handling bats, other than in exceptional circumstances, and only after consultation with the Bat Coordinator, such as the rescue of some microbat species, or the rescue of orphaned baby flying-foxes in certain situations. These animals are to be handed to a vaccinated carer as soon as possible.
5. On no account must bats ever be allowed to be in a situation that places unvaccinated people in direct physical contact with the animal/s. This includes inappropriate practices such as the 'wearing' of bats in public places. Any carer found acting in this irresponsible manner will have the animal immediately removed from their care.

### **C3 Incidents**

6. A C3 incident is one where a bat has bitten or scratched an unvaccinated person, whether a member of the public or a carer. C3 incidents not swiftly acted upon can be potentially fatal and, as such, a strict three-phase protocol must be followed:
  - (a) Reporting
 

All C3 incidents must be reported verbally by all parties aware of the incident, such as the duty Phone Volunteer and attending carer/s, to the Bat Coordinator with utmost urgency. This is because, after consultation with their doctor, the affected person may be urgently required to receive a course of post-exposure vaccinations (PEP). Also, the NSW Health Department may require that the bat is euthanased and rapidly tested for ABLV.
  - (b) C3 Incident Form
 

In cases of C3 incidents, the attending carer/s must fill out sections 1 and 2 of the C3 Incident Report Form on site and immediately inform the Bat Coordinator who will then arrange to collect the form in person in order to immediately follow-up the case.
  - (c) Follow-up
 

The Bat Coordinator will immediately perform the follow-up actions set out in Section 3 of the C3 Incident Report Form, liaising with all relevant parties, including DPI, NSW Health, affected party, medical practitioner, carer/s involved, and vet, as applicable.

These actions are to ensure that the injured party has sought medical advice, and started a course of PEP vaccinations, if required.

If deemed necessary by the NSW Health Department, the Bat Coordinator will also arrange for euthanasia and transportation of the bat to a designated DPI facility for ABLV testing, via DECCW or veterinary courier transport.

Once all follow-up actions have been completed, the Bat Coordinator will sign off the form, inform the TVWC Committee of Management, who will minute of the event and table the C3 Incident Report Form.

### **Facilities & Training**

7. All prospective bat carers must allow inspection of facilities by the Bat Coordinator before caring for bats, or at other times when bats are in their care.

### **Communication**

8. In accordance with nationally accepted guidelines, all carers raising orphaned baby flying-foxes are to adopt weekly reporting of growth measurements to the Coordinator. The Coordinator is then responsible for passing on these weekly measurements to the Northern Rivers Wildlife Carers (NRWC) Bat Coordinator at release intake, who in turn passes these on for national collation.

### **Raising Orphaned Flying-foxes**

9. Orphaned baby flying-foxes are to be raised in accordance with nationally accepted guidelines.

After stabilising, all babies arriving into care will be placed with carers at the coordinator's discretion, according to the ongoing social, health and other needs of the animal and orphans already in care.

### **Creche and Release**

10. All hand-reared flying-fox babies within TVWC must be submitted:

- To the designated creching facility and
- To NRWC release intakes at Booyong

on the dates advised by the Bat Coordinator.

- (a) Failure to comply with the above will severely compromise that animal's chance of integration into the right age group, at the right time. If such a situation arises, the coordinator has the right to remove the animal/s from that person's care.
- (b) Where the carer is unable to attend crèche or release, the Bat Coordinator will assume responsibility for the transportation of these animals to crèche.
- (c) Release fees will be paid by TVWC.

### **Disputes**

11. Any carer not adhering to this policy will be 'coached' by the Coordinator. Further contravention, or serious infringements in the first instance, will result in the animal/s being removed from that person's care. The Coordinator will then report on their decision to the Committee of Management.
12. In the case of dispute of any parts of this policy, the Committee of Management will discuss and decide on an appropriate course of action. Any committee decision on the matter in dispute will be binding.
13. Any carer risking public safety, as outlined in clause 5. above, may be reported to DECCW. This is a serious breach of protocol and, potentially, a life-threatening situation. The Bat Coordinator would then further advise the Committee that the carer should be removed from the Active Members' List.