

## APY EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN FOR WESTERN APY COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY CAMELS

### Background

APY Lands contains areas with high densities of feral camels with population estimates ranging from 38,000 upwards. During prolonged dry periods camels migrate and congregate near permanent waters associated with springs and rock holes in the ranges that extend east-west across the north of the Lands. Typically, the first summer storms occur along the ranges any time from late October and the smell of water attracts more camels from 100's of kilometres further south and west. The first significant rainfall events occur from about late December and depending on the spread of the rainfall will encourage the heavy concentration of camels to disperse.

At this time of year, the communities and homelands west of Amata are particularly vulnerable to invasions by camels that are seeking water. Under threat are significant infrastructure developments including sewerage ponds, swimming pools, bores/tanks and water reticulation and air transport and emergency services. Damage is also done to home air conditioning units, water reticulation, fences and other barriers. Social impacts include the stress and fear associated with many large feral animals patrolling community streets and entering property, contamination with camel faeces and urine, harassment of dogs, and the hazard posed to road transport. There are also significant cultural and environmental impacts on natural waters outside of the communities.

This is not a new situation to people living in these communities. In the summer of 2007/8, following a period of drought, tens of thousands of thirsty camels moved east along the ranges threatening to damage hundreds of thousands of dollars of pastoral and community infrastructure. They were successfully turned back by the sustained action of APY Land Management workers and the community members from Kenmore Park and ultimately with the assistance of rain. Despite petitioning the Alinytjara Wilurara NRM Board, DPC-AARD and DWLBC the only funding available was for *shoot-to-waste*.

Since that period, APY has unsuccessfully applied for funding support to deliver camel management from the Indigenous Land Corporation and Caring for Our Country Programs. APY is a partner in the recently announced national Camel Management Project auspiced through Ninti 1 however, the contract with the Australian Government has not yet been signed and funding is only available for actions that reduce the numbers of camels.

APY recognises its responsibility for camel management and has a goal to reduce the feral herd to the nationally acceptable level 1 camel per square kilometre (0.1 km<sup>2</sup>). In recent years, APY has continued to undertake strategic actions inline with its camel management strategy including: development of pastoral infrastructure suitable for camel use; construction of a game meat processing facility; removal of camels from the eastern area (trucked off nearly 1000 camels in 2009); establishment of strategic water points in the east for camels; and, active pursuit of market opportunities and industry development.

It is important to note that under the *Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Land Rights Act (1981)*, APY has responsibility to its members for land management and that consultation on major decisions are made through general meetings and the Executive Board. Through its Land Management Unit, APY supports the social and economic objectives of *Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara*. This includes identifying and creating opportunities for employment in natural resource management and enabling the sustainable use of the natural resources for economic development – in both the traditional and contemporary sense. At the recent Executive Board meeting (2 Dec 09), the Board reaffirmed its policy of *no shoot-to-waste*.

In November, Nganampa Environmental Health staff alerted APY to the risk associated with camel invasion and destruction of important community infrastructure. Staff from western community schools were calling for immediate action as camels were causing damage to school property and causing fear in the community. Nyapari community reported that planes would not be able to land on the airstrip because of camels breaching the fence. At the same time, Land Management staff had mustered over 400 head from the immediate vicinity of Amata community and prevented serious destruction in that community.

#### **APY camel crisis meeting 11 Dec 2009**

The APY Executive Board recognised that a potential for crisis is real and called a meeting of representatives of Anangu communities affected by the camels for 11 December to draft an Emergency Response Plan. Representatives from Government agencies were invited as observers.

The meeting heard that 2009 may be a worse situation than 2007/08 as Peter Campaign (DPC-AARD) reported 700 head in Pipalyatjara community and warned of the potential closure of the Watarru airstrip. SAPOL reported the loss of emergency vehicles as a result of recent camel related collisions and the potential for loss of life.

#### **Options**

Three options were evaluated:

1. *Shoot to waste*: APY retains a *no shoot to waste* policy and any change would require consent of an APY general meeting (Feb/Mar at the earliest). Given approval, such an option will take about a month to mobilise. There has already been negative feedback from the camel cull at Docker River. There is always funding available for culling as per precedence of Docker River experience this week and APY in 2007/8. There is usually no engagement of Anangu in this type of work. There are unknown environmental impacts.
2. *Development of off-point water source for camels*: There is no immediate reduction in numbers and historically there is no funding for this. However it can be implemented immediately with minimal delay. It is an acceptable method to the Anangu. It involves Anangu in the work. Camels will continually be attracted to the water, relieving community pressures post emergency. It utilises regular and accessible pastoral infrastructure that can be maintained (post emergency) for sustained population reduction through medium and long term strategic action (mustering and removal).
3. *Mustering and walking to yards for removal*: The eastern side of APY already has too many camels and yards are full and over Christmas the markets are closed. There are too many camels involved to successfully drive and hold for trucking. It involves Anangu in the work and is an acceptable method. To support the drive considerable plant and equipment needs to be mobilised and water points developed for large numbers.

**The meeting agreed that the only option that could be implemented *immediately* was the provision of watering points near communities and to then muster, drive and habituate the camels to the new water. APY Land Management would prepare a proposal for an Emergency Response, with budget, to present to the various stakeholders for funding. APY Land Management would be the delivery agent.**

**PROPOSED APY 6-WEEK EMERGENCY PLAN (Mon 14 Dec -Mon 25 Jan 2010)****1. Develop Off-point Water Supplies**

To equip 5 existing bores with submersible pumps, diesel powered supply, and 2km piping to provide immediate permanent water supply for camels. To be sited near enough to communities to enable mustering to the water but far enough away not to impact on community supplies:

- Three will be located within 30km of Kalka/Pipalyatjara community: Puta Puta (approx 20 km east), Nyikukura (about 15 km nw of Kalka), and the unnamed/disused bore about 5 km w of Pipalyatjara airstrip.
- One at Watarru, bore location to be confirmed by DPC-AARD
- One at Umpukulu (roughly half way between Amata and Pipalyatjara).

These bores have approval for use however, should unforeseen issues arise, such as limited bore capacity, alternatives have been discussed for Tankaanu (between Nyapari and Kanpi) and Malara homelands (20km east from Pipalyatjara). If the alternatives are needed the budget will require variation in the piping.

**2. Camel Proof Exclosures**

Each bore/pump/generator needs to be protected from camel damage or the entire unit could be destroyed. An exclosure will be built immediately around each unit. This will be made with portable panels reinforced with heavy duty steel posts.

**3. Mustering**

Camels will be mustered from Kalka/Pipalyatjara, Watarru, Nyapari, Kanpi and Murputja over 3 weeks after the 5 off-point waters have been established and protected with exclosures. Camels will be mustered and walked to the nearest of these water points. A contract mustering crew will be employed by Land Management for 3 weeks.

**4. Logistics**

Quotes have been received for most materials. Purchase and delivery of materials can commence immediately. Materials can be freighted from Adelaide through APY camel transport arrangements which are running continuously (2 trips per week) over this period.

Considerable travel is required. The distance from Umuwa to Pipalyatjara is approx 350km and additional 120km to Watarru. Fuel is available in Umuwa @ \$1.60/L. Roads are currently in very bad condition and wear/tear on vehicles is very high.

The emergency response is occurring during peak holiday period and time of climatic extremes and impacts on the availability of support staff. Land Management has a team that is available to work on roster over the Christmas/New Year period. Anangu are available for this period.

**5. Project Monitoring**

Essential Services staff (DPC-AARD) can monitor and report:

- completion and operation of 5 off-point water supplies
- completion of 5 exclosures
- number of camels in immediate community area
- camel invasions

LM bore crew will provide weekly reports to Team Leader

Team Leader will provide weekly report to APY

Financial acquittal by APY

**Proposed 6 Week Emergency Work Program**

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Vehicle fuel/maintenance</b>
Week 1	Order materials Receive materials Confirm bore sites Bore tests Prep bores Confirm machinery from Bungala (Kalka/Pip)	5 days Team Leader  5 days 2 LM crew (Scotty, Roger)	Trayback 1000km: 200L @ \$1.60 = \$320, plus \$200 r+m
Week 2	Mobilisation of machinery/equipment Equip 3 bores at Pip Equip 1 bore Watarru	5 days Team Leader  5 days of 4 LM crew (Scotty, Roger Andrew, David)	Truck/trailer, trayback, tractor, bobcat: 600L @\$1.60 = \$960 plus \$500 for r+m
Week 3	Equip 1 at Umpukulu Demob of machinery/equipment Installation of 5 exclosures	5 days Team Leader 5 days of 4 LM crew (Scotty, Roger Andrew, David)	Truck/trailer, trayback, tractor, bobcat: 600L @\$1.60 = \$960 plus \$500 for r+m
Week 4	2 trips to monitor and repair (Umuwa-Pip-Watarru-Umuwa 1000km round trip).  Muster and walk camels out of communities onto new water	1 day Team Leader  4 days of 2 LM workers to monitor.  3 days Contract mustering	400L for Trayback plus 200L for generators = \$960 plus \$200 r+m  Mustering @\$2000/day includes vehicle/fuel
Week 5	2 trips to monitor and repair (Umuwa-Pip-Watarru-Umuwa).  Muster and walk camels out of communities onto new water	1 day Team Leader  4 days of 2 LM workers to monitor.  3 days Contract mustering	Trayback plus 200L for generators = \$960 plus \$200 r+m  Mustering @\$2000/day includes vehicle/fuel
Week 6	2 trips to monitor and repair (Umuwa-Pip-Watarru-Umuwa).  Muster and walk camels out of communities onto new water	1 day Team Leader  4 days of 2 LM workers to monitor.  3 days Contract mustering	Trayback plus 200L for generators = \$960 plus \$200 r+m  Mustering @\$2000/day includes vehicle/fuel

**Budget for Proposed 6 Week Emergency Response**

	Description and Rates	Total \$ (gst incl.)
Salaries	Team Leader: 18 days @ \$360/day	6,480
	Land Management work crew: 74 days @ \$250/d	18,500
Contractors	Mustering crew: 6 days @ \$2000/d	12,000
Allowances	Award rate \$35/day for camping for Team Leader and LM crew: 92 days @ \$35/day	3,220
Vehicles/machinery	<sup>1</sup> Fuel for vehicles (Truck/trailer, Trayback, Tractor, bobcat) and to operate generators	5,320
	Repairs and maintenance	1,800
<sup>2</sup> Materials	10km 2 inch rural poly pipe	23,100
	100 Joiners	2,575
	5 Kubota diesel generators	30,388
	5 submersible pump units	19,250
	Misc fittings and filters	1,000
	5 bore hole/pump/generator camel proof enclosures (constructed with portable panels)	12,500
<sup>3</sup> Freight	1 trailer from Adelaide to Umuwa	4,500
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>140,633</b>
Admin/financial management	5%	7,032
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>147,665</b>

<sup>1</sup>Fuel (diesel) in Umuwa @ \$1.60/L

<sup>2</sup>Materials based on Quote 8526 received from Watershed Alice Springs 11/12/09

<sup>3</sup>Camels trucks are currently running 2 trips/week between Amata and Umuwa

**Risks**

RISK	RESPONSE
Not funded or delayed funding	Worst case: catastrophic breach of infrastructure eg damage to Pipalyatjara sewerage lagoon leading to community evacuation, under State Disaster Plan, for prolonged period, and expensive repair/renovation work (estimate \$300k plus). Best case: adequate rain to disperse camels
Materials not arriving on time	Action will be delayed pro rata
Local storms prevents access	Camels may disperse but for a short period. Work will be delayed until dry.
Widespread rainfall disperses camels	Materials will be deployed as per strategic medium to long term actions in APYLM camel management plan. Funding support should not be cut.
Catastrophic breach of infrastructure before commencement or completion of the program.	Worst case: community evacuation, under State Disaster Plan, for prolonged period, and expensive repair/renovation work (estimate up to \$300k).

Further information is available from:

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