



Australian Government
Department of the Environment

PDR: MC15-035680

Dr Douglas Kerlin
Chief Ecologist
Australian Koala Foundation
PO Box 2659
Brisbane QLD 4001

Dear Dr Kerlin

Thank you for your email of 11 September 2015 to the Minister for the Environment, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, concerning the possible shooting of a koala in Gunnedah. The Minister has passed your email to me for reply.

The Australian Government is committed to the protection and recovery of the koala, one of Australia's iconic species. The listing of the combined koala population of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory as a threatened species under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, which is Australia's national environmental law, provides this protection. The listing ensures that any proposed action that is likely to have a significant impact on the koala must be referred to the Department of the Environment to determine whether approval is required under national environmental law.

The Government is also working with state and territory governments to implement the National Koala Conservation and Management Strategy (the Strategy) which identifies actions to conserve koalas across their natural range. A national recovery plan for the listed koalas of Queensland, New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory is in preparation and will build on the work undertaken to date under the Strategy. The recovery plan, developed under national environmental law, will set out research and management actions necessary to stop the decline and support the recovery of the koala. More information about what is being done to protect the koala is available on the Department of the Environment's website at: www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicspecies.pl?taxon_id=85104.

I am sorry to hear that a koala may have been shot in Gunnedah. The Australian Government's involvement in managing or responding to incidents such as this is limited to instances where significant impacts to the species may or are likely to occur. The day-to-day management of koalas and their welfare are primarily matters for the relevant state and local governments and the RSPCA.

Thank you for writing on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Shane Gaddes
Assistant Secretary
Compliance and Enforcement Branch
9 October 2015