

1.25 Microbat Policy

Policy drafted/proposed by Bat Standards Team October 2008

Adopted 13 December 2008

Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release

Drafted by WIRES Bat Standards Team October 2008

Introduction

1.25.1 This document covers the rescue, rehabilitation and release of Microchiroptera (insectivorous or micro-bats). This document must be reviewed regularly at a time interval determined by WIRES State Council and amended when necessary.

Policy

- 1.25.2 A Microbat Coordinator or Coordinating Committee is to be elected in each branch annually and will be responsible for coordinating the rescue, stabilising, care and rehabilitation of each Microbat. The Coordinator or members of the Coordinating Committee must meet the criteria for authorisation as Microbat rescuers and rehabilitators as outlined in this policy. The Microbat Coordinator or Coordinating Committee will be responsible for record keeping systems that monitor the care and rehabilitation process. All Coordinators must work within the WIRES Microbat policy and act on advice and/or direction received from the WIRES Bat Standards Team.
- 1.25.3 All Microbat rescuers and rehabilitators must have completed a Lyssavirus Pre or Post Exposure vaccination program. Each rescuer and rehabilitator must undertake annual titre level checks and maintain booster vaccinations as deemed appropriate by WIRES based on advice from the NSW Health Department.
- 1.25.4 All vaccinations, titre levels and booster procedures are to be registered with the Coordinator or Coordinating Committee who in turn will register them with WIRES Head Office prior to the 30th September annually.
- 1.25.5 All Microbat rescuers and rehabilitators must be:
- fully trained in the rescue and care of Microbats by completion of an initial course and 3rd yearly refresher courses. All courses must be approved in advance by the WIRES Bat Standards Team; and
 - vaccinated with up to date titre levels recorded; and
 - financial members of and authorised by WIRES Inc.
- 1.25.6 Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release of Microbats must follow the methods outlined in training material approved by the Bat Standards Team.

- 1.25.7 Only in matters of emergency such as a situation where the rescuer believes delay in consulting a veterinarian will risk the survival chances of the Microbat and when the Coordinator or member of the Coordinating Committee cannot be contacted promptly - are Microbats to be taken to a vet before contacting the Coordinator or Coordinating Committee. All veterinary consultation, recommendations and treatments must be reported to the Coordinator or Coordinating Committee within 24 hours.
- 1.25.8 All rehabilitators must communicate weekly or as required by their Branch Microbat Coordinator or Coordinating Committee and accept supervision of their care by that Coordinator or Coordinating Committee or an experienced person nominated by the Branch Microbat Coordinator or Coordinating Committee
- 1.25.9 All Microbats coming into care must be reported to the Coordinator or Coordinating Committee within 24 hours, sooner if possible. The record of the animal must be entered onto the WIRES database as soon as possible either by the rescuer or the Branch nominated statistics recorder. Case planning for each animal should include considerations such as the age of the animal, the injuries with which it presents and any need for company of the particular species.
- 1.25.10 All rescuers and rehabilitators should maintain awareness of the possibility of Lyssavirus with every animal rescued and should isolate any animal presenting with signs of Lyssavirus. If, after observation and enough time to allow the animal to "settle", there is still a high index of suspicion for Lyssavirus the Coordinator or Coordinating Committee must be consulted and plans made in that consultation for possible euthanasia and Australian Bat Lyssavirus testing.
- 1.25.11 No rehabilitating Microbat is to be housed with permanent care animals.
- 1.25.12 All Microbats must be released in a suitable natural environment at the point of rescue, making sure there are no physical or geographic barriers between the release and original encounter sites. If for some reason this is not possible the guidance of the Bat Standards Team must be sought in planning the release.
- 1.25.13 Juveniles or animals rescued and released as a group should be released in a Bat box as per notes in the training material.