

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Ms Manison to the Minister for Parks and Wildlife:

Crocodile Management

1. How much is budgeted for crocodile management and how does this compare with the previous two years?
2. How many crocodiles have been removed from the Darwin crocodile management zone each year, over the past three years?
3. How have staff and resources to support the crocodile management team changed over the past two years?
4. Have you conducted any evaluations of crocodile awareness and education programs and if yes, what improvements or other changes are planned?

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1. **How much is budgeted for crocodile management and how does this compare with the previous two years?**

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
	Budget	Budget	Budget
Salaries	397,000	398,000	415,000
Operational	206,000	184,000	200,000
Capital items	111,000	86,000	70,000
Be Crocwise	75,000	75,000	100,000
Total	789,000	743,000	785,000

2. **How many crocodiles have been removed from the Darwin crocodile management zone each year, over the past three years?**

Crocodylus. porosus caught in Darwin Crocodile Management Zone over the last 3 years:

- 199 crocodiles in 2014/2015
- 202 crocodiles in 2013/2014
- 204 crocodiles in 2012/2013

3. **How have staff and resources to support the crocodile management team changed over the past two years?**

The Crocodile Management Unit has been funded for five FTE positions over the last two years. Staff turnover has led to short term vacancies which are filled through normal NTPS recruitment processes. Additionally the Katherine Wildlife Rangers, three FTE, have increased their role in Crocodile Management for the Katherine Region and now have a

budget for crocodile Management. It is estimated that 54% of their effort is towards Crocodile Management

The Crocodile Management Unit's operational budget has remained constant in the last two years for both Darwin and Katherine.

4. Have you conducted any evaluations of crocodile awareness and education programs and if yes, what improvements or other changes are planned?

As part of the inquest into the death of Briony Anne Goodsell (2010), the Coroner made the following recommendation, '*I recommend that the increased public safety measures which are set out in detail at sections 4.4-4.6 of the Management Program for the Saltwater Crocodile in the Northern Territory of Australia 2009-2014 are resourced and implemented in accordance with that program*'.

The *Be Crocwise* program has been operating for five years, so at the end of 2013, a decision was made to review the *Be Crocwise* program to: (a) review the effectiveness of each component of the program; (b) assess whether funding allocations should be altered to better capture the target audience; (c) assess opportunities and risks of the existing program; and (d) implement initiatives to overcome these risks and promote opportunities.

The Commission established a working group to review the *Be Crocwise* program. This group comprised officers from the Wildlife Operations Unit, Community Engagement Unit, as well as from Communications and Media Unit, Department of Land Resource Management.

The key outcomes of the review are:

- *Be Crocwise* messages have greater uptake in urban and regional areas. To better target Indigenous communities, *Be Crocwise* safety messages should aim to target the entire community, not just school students.
- The song and design competitions were very successful in engaging the community in the safety messages. Continuation of the competition should be used to further build on the *Be Crocwise* messages. Program success was greater in remote and regional schools than urban schools.
- There are uptake differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Television advertisements and other communications should therefore be tailored to these different groups and targeted for specific times of the year i.e. school holidays and tourist seasons.
- There has been a decrease in the interest / uptake of *Be Crocwise* Education talks over the past two years, suggesting that an alternative approach may be necessary to invigorate interest and refresh messages.
- The television advertisements have been in place for four years.
- It is recommended that at the end of 2016-17, market research is undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the campaign both within regional and remote centres.

- Research has demonstrated that the highest risk demographic for crocodile attack is young males in the 18 - 35 age group, who participate in swimming, wading, fishing and boating. Targeted programs would significantly benefit this demographic.

To better target young males, the Commission developed a television commercial focused on safety when fishing and is now attending various community events and forums specific to this demographic.

To better target Indigenous communities, the Commission developed a *Be Crocwise* video clip, complete with song and animations, aimed at increasing awareness of crocodiles in Indigenous communities across the Top End. The spoken part of the *Be Crocwise* clip has been translated into five Indigenous languages, including Kriol, Anindilyakwa (Groote Eylandt), Yolngu Matha (North-East Arnhem Land), Tiwi and Murrinpatha (Wadeye). In addition, the Commission elected to have the entire song translated into Kriol. It is anticipated that the use of translations will further enhance the messaging and promote crocodile awareness and safety to a broader component of the community, from young children through to adults.