

TOOLBOX TALK: Koala Field Guide

Toolbox talks are a great way to share important information. Take a few minutes to read through this document with your staff and contractors.

1.0 PRE-HARVEST SURVEY

1.1 Look for high use indicators

All trees likely to be felled must be inspected by a koala spotter for high use indicators using a walkover method (visually inspecting on foot), and incidentally for koalas. High use indicators are signs on and around trees that show they're frequently used by koalas, such as:

- >20 scats
- Multiple scratches
- Rub/scent marks.

1.2 Take action where high use indicators are found

A high use tree is to be protected as a habitat and recruitment tree (H&R tree) - as per The QPWS Code. The tree is not to be felled and should be marked and inspected to determine if there is a koala in the tree.

1.3 If a koala is found during pre-harvest survey

If a koala is found during pre-harvest survey. Implement reporting and protection measures in the Koala Field Guide and Koala Species Management Profile, both available from <https://www.qldnativeforestry.com/environment>.

2.0 DAILY PRE-HARVEST SURVEY

2.1 Look for koalas

Use the spiral method (360-degree survey) everyday, prior to commencing harvesting and after rest breaks. Walk in a spiral pattern with one tree, or a group of trees, at the centre, to view the trees from several angles and distances from the base of the tree to the drip line and throughout levels of the canopy.

Implement **1.2** (see left column) if high-use indicators are located and **2.2** if a koala is found.

2.2 An exclusion zone is required if a koala is found

When koalas are found prior to harvesting, record the GPS point and apply a 100m exclusion zone around the koala. Consider physical marking with flagging tape or paint for easy identification, notify DAF and other operators in the area and complete a survey record available from <https://www.qldnativeforestry.com/environment>.

Operations must only recommence after 6am the following day. After 6am, the tree must be inspected for the koala. If the koala is no longer in the excluded area, then operations can recommence.

3.0 DURING HARVEST

If a koala is found during harvesting, implement 2.2 and cease harvesting immediately. Shift to a different area, and make sure to leave a habitat link within the harvesting adjacent vegetated areas to allow koalas to move out of the site of their own accord. Minimise damage and implement residue management as per The QPWS Code for identified H&R trees.

4.0 ANY TIME

Assess the koala for general condition or physical harm and determine if veterinary care is required. Keep a copy of the Koala Care Response Plan in your wallet or on your phone for a quick guide.

If you are unsure, always refer to the Koala Species Management Profile and seek advice from DAF and TQ

Information in this Toolbox Talk is taken from the **Koala Field Guide for Queensland Forestry Operations**, available from the [qldnativeforestry.com.au](https://www.qldnativeforestry.com.au) website via: <https://bit.ly/KoalaFieldGuide>

Documentation to keep

- Record all koala sightings and details in record.
- Include date, time and location for observations.
- Record all sighting and exclusions on your OHP map.
- Map completed pre-harvest and daily pre-harvest survey area.
- Submit documents to DAF as required. DAF will notify DES for the inclusion in the relevant database.

Mandatory training

All operators undertaking harvesting (mechanical and hand felling) or any form of tree removal/felling must complete 'koala spotter' training that covers identifying high use trees, observing koalas and conducting koala surveys.

Contact Timber Queensland for information on upcoming training dates