



# Australians for Animals

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AUGUST 2018 NEWSLETTER



# WE'RE SO CLOSE TO LOSING OUR PRECIOUS KOALAS - DESPERATE TIMES

***AFA has been flat strap as the koala crises pile on top of each other like some kind of obscene volcano which, when it erupts, will be the death knell for the species – except for koalas in zoos and the few remaining pockets which are not protected.***

These gentle iconic animals are dying of starvation in drought stricken areas in NSW and Queensland, their habitats are being bulldozed by developers as Australia groans under the weight of massive immigration, their trees are wood chipped along with creatures living in the trees, koalas are suffering from chlamydia which causes conjunctivitis, painful urinary tract infections, they're dying of stress induced disease, koalas are being killed by cars, trucks, buses as they attempt to cross highways seeking food and shelter, all because of a lack of protection and mindless cruelty inflicted by governments.

A call to arms came from Coomera, a once beautiful coastal plain behind the Surfers Paradise madness is a classic example of the hideous policies of extinction which are being driven by the NSW, Queensland and Federal governments.

In 2007, the area was covered in native forest, home to one of the last remaining meta populations of koalas in south-east Queensland. 500 plus healthy koalas living peacefully, reproducing and harming no one.

But the Gold Coast City Council had its eye on the area and together with the Queensland state government, designated the area as the Coomera Strategic Master Plan where a massive shopping mall, Westfield, cinema, roads, residences for approximately 50,000 people would be built.

Trouble is the massive area needed for the development was prime koala habitat. No worries for Councils and governments. A compliant scientist was found, translocation was suggested as



**“42% OF TRANSLOCATED KOALAS HAVE DIED. 50% OF KOALAS REMAINING IN COOMERA HAVE DIED.”**

Queensland Parliament Estimates Committee

the solution and all obstacles are removed. Queensland government agencies can issue “Scientific Purposes Permits”, which allow for small numbers of koalas to be moved only and solely for scientific research.

In fact, the permits allowed for 260 koalas to be captured from the healthy 500 plus population and taken 40 km away to conservation areas with unknown forests and threats. To legitimise the captures, koalas were flagged down from trees, screaming in terror, some with joeys in the pouch, taken to a mobile field clinic, given a general anaesthetic,

blood and bone marrow samples taken, a needle inserted into stomach to extract urine, eye swabs, paws shaved, radio collared, micro-chipped and ear tagged.

And if this abuse was not enough, the koalas were sedated and driven 40 km away. Just to add to the koala misery, a number of koalas resident in the conservation areas (very low numbers) were also captured, given a general anaesthetic and subjected to the same battery of tests.

In the first four months, 23 translocated koalas were mauled

to death by dogs. The translocations ended in 2014 but no surveys are available nor information on their survival or otherwise until finally, AFA provided a wonderful journalist with a list of questions on the fate of the translocated koalas which he arranged to be asked in the Queensland Parliament.

42% of translocated koalas have died. 50% of koalas remaining in Coomera have died.

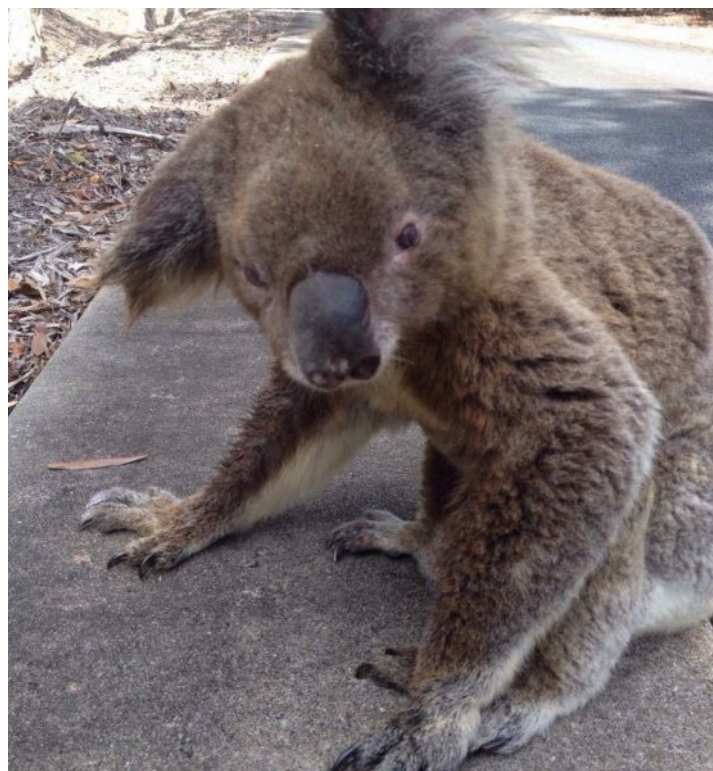
These appalling mortality estimates provided in Parliament may not be current as we have no information on whether annual surveys have been conducted, when, who did them, what methodology – just secrecy.

Coomera koalas are now scattered to the high winds.. some struggling to survive in an increasingly urban environment with houses cheek by jowl, massive development/residential projects in every square inch of this once picturesque plain. The Coomera Town Centre dominating a scene of absolute environmental madness, bulldozers ripped through forests leaving bare earth. Remaining forests battered, drowning in dust. Huge for sale signs for massive residential developments everywhere.

AFA is in deep discussion with the Environmental Defenders Office in Brisbane as there are grounds to take the Queensland government to court for failing to protect these koalas. Southeast Queensland is the heartland of koalas in that state with catastrophic declines on the Koala Coast and Pine Rivers ensuring that Coomera koalas should have had the highest level of protection.

# TRANSLOCATION - THE NEW POLITICAL SOLUTION FOR DEVELOPERS

*AFA is seeking a legal challenge against the Queensland government because the government is hell bent on adopting a policy of translocation which would mean that the Coomera situation can be repeated anywhere in the state where koalas are in the way of developers.*



Displaced Koala

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Translocation should never be used to allow habitat to be cleared and koalas dumped somewhere else.

These animals are faithful to their home ranges and with zero protection of habitat in any koala state, this policy effort is another nail in the coffin of extinction. NSW government is on the same track.

The Office of Environment &

Heritage in NSW has circulated a draft policy on translocation. No public advertisements, no ability for the public to comment or make submissions. The draft was sent to the exclusive few organisations, no NGOs or community groups dealing with koalas, no koala ecologists, no conservation organisations dealing with koalas, native forests and logging.



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KOALAS**



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## AFA IS A VERY LOUD VOICE FOR KOALAS

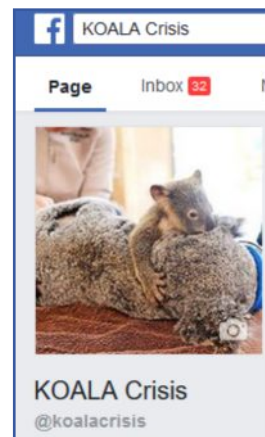
*Our Koala Crisis Facebook page is now the most powerful voice for koalas in the country with almost 2 million hits in the last couple of months.*

We have undertaken countless field trips, submitted a pile of Freedom of Information requests, engaged lawyers, scientists, contacted the media, politicians, written endless submissions.

We need funds for a legal challenge, this is the only way we're going to stop the destruction and keep koalas surviving into the future.

Please help. Koalas deserve all our efforts. We really are at the cross roads of survival.

*For the Animals,  
Sue Arnold & Friends*



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