

# VICTORIAN KANGAROO ALLIANCE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## RESULTS OF KANGAROO SHOOTING IN SHIRE OF YARRA RANGES SURVEY

The Victorian Kangaroo Alliance conducted an online survey recently to allow members of the Shire of Yarra Ranges (SYR) community to comment on whether the council should advocate to be excluded from the commercial killing zone of the Victorian Kangaroo Harvest Program.

This survey was created on Google forms, the link to which was disseminated across SYR and community groups in the region, including; Healesville Noticeboard, Seville and Surrounds Community, HillsTribe Community Noticeboard, Yarra Valley and Outer Eastern Victoria Noticeboard, Yarra Ranges Noticeboard, Yarra Valley Noticeboard and The Hills and the Dandenongs.

Between the 2/3/2025 and the 16/3/2025 (two weeks) the survey received 255 responses. 193 responses were from those who stated they were residents, 4 were from those who worked in the shire, 50 were regular domestic visitors, 5 were from neighbouring LGAs, 1 did not disclose their LGA of residence and 2 indicated they were international respondents intending to visit.

### 1. To the question:

***What are your thoughts about commercial kangaroo shooters operating in SYR?***

173 did not support their activity (67.8%)  
67 supported them (26.2%)  
6 were ambivalent (2%)  
9 were unsure (3%)

Comments in support of shooting included:

*"Shoot as many as possible"*  
*"It needs to be expanded to get rid of them."*  
*"Good, it should have commenced earlier [sic] and reduced the accidents caused by kangaroos"*  
*"To [sic] many kangaroos need more shooters"*  
*"They are in plague proportions and destroying crops farmers fields [sic] and not to mention the amount of cars damaged due their abundance"*  
*"Great idea. Too many need culling"*  
*"Wish they would shoot more I'm over the kangaroos destroying freshly seeded pastures and fences there is [sic] way to [sic] many"*

Comments opposed to shooting included:

*"We should not be killing our native animals. The Yarra valley should be a safe haven for our animals."*

*"It should not occur. People come here to see the kangaroos, i.e. tourism, and it's great to live in this area just an hour from the city that has native wildlife."*

*"Kangaroos should NOT be shot! We take their land and call them pests. We are a disgrace for how we treat wildlife."*

*"It's abhorrent and should not be allowed."*

*"They should not be able to operate in the Yarra Ranges council area and SYR. "Kangaroos have limited areas to live and move and they should be protected. They are a beautiful part of the native wildlife in the area and should be protected at all costs. We love the mobs that live around us, it's part of the beauty and appeal of the area for our family and those around us."*

*"It makes me sick. Disgusting and it's not right how we treat our native animals."*

## 2. To the question:

***Do you think the SYR Council should advocate to have SYR excluded from the commercial killing zone?***

176 were for (69%)

70 were against (27%)

7 were unsure (2%)

2 indicated that any decision should conditional, eg.  
be based on a determined population size

## 3. To the question:

***Have you had experience of kangaroo shooting within SYR? If possible, please include specific examples.***

*"Finding remains and noting local kangaroos disappearing."*

*"I witnessed the absolute devastation of a mob of kangaroos at the end of my street. So many things concerned me regarding stumbling on this carnage, not least of just how close to residential properties this had taking [sic] place. This mob were regular visitors to our and surrounding properties.*

*We protect these Kangaroos, only to find they are being slaughtered right next door. The manner in which these kangaroos innards were discarded was a small incite [sic] into the disregard the shooters had for these animals. My family and I were watching the headlights driving at high speeds around the paddock they were slaughtered in, we just didn't for a minute think those headlights were shooters chasing animals around a paddock slaughtering them. Please for the love of god don't allow this practice in our backyards, the mobs that live off Victoria road are our Kangaroos, we love them.*

*Please let them live in peace."*

*"My partner has witnessed the industry and was disgusted by the general attitude and treatment of kangaroos in the hunting process."*

*"Found Carcasses, Seen Illegal Shooters"*

*"Ute with dead kangaroos hooked up in back of Ute driving through Seville in day light on Warburton Hwy. image has stayed with me and I dread seeing it again"*

*" Yes - finding remains of kangaroos blasted to death. Seeing starving Joey's coming in to many wildlife shelters"*

*" Found live joeys in pouches with shot mums. Some mums still alive with severe wounds. Displaced at foot joeys who usually end up in renal failure from myopathy. One at foot joey still alive with half his face gone. Friend has had shooters at night, loud bangs, spot lights along fenceline and police say they cant [sic] do anything."*

*"Found remains, orphaned joeys and shots did not always resulting a clean kill, leaving animals to suffer a prolonged & painful death."*

*"Various experiences; my family and I have come across remains during a walk. This was very traumatic, particularly being with children who we had to shield from the event. We are also concerned about declining numbers of local kangaroos."*

*"Witnessing shooters, Finding remains"*

*"I have witnessed 4wd utes drive through town with about 10-12 dead roos hanging off hooks"*

#### **4. To the question:**

***How have you been impacted by your experience? e.g. impacts on mental health, wellbeing, amenity, community relationships, etc.***

140 respondents indicated that the shooting activity program had impacted them personally with:

75 indicating isolated feelings of distress  
2 cases of exposure of the deceased and butchered animals to children  
5 exposures to evidence of cruelty  
7 reports of feeling less safe  
4 exposures to traumatic scenes  
38 instances where mental health has been adversely affected  
15 instances indicating an adverse effect on community connections.

Specific details disclosed by respondents included:

*"I had my granddaughter with me who is 8 and it was very distressing for us both"*

*"I was devastated...So much so that I now actively opposed commercial shooting"*

*"Mental health for ALL family members including the stress on pets and our farm animals"*

*"All of the above. Mental health, wellbeing, amenity. I'm scared to go out around there at night. It's dangerous with the un-monitored [sic] shooting. Occasionally finding a kangaroo that has been shot in the face and left for dead. It's criminal."*

*"My emotional and mental well-being is affected daily by the knowledge that our beautiful kangaroos are being mercilessly killed"*

*"My anxiety is immense when campaigning to protect kangaroos and help the communities that love them. There is an acute sense of helplessness and frustration. I am very burnt out from always trying to help others, so it's extra sad to then also find my own local mob has been decimated. My best efforts are never even close to enough, so I feel very hopeless and disillusioned with our brutal government that just doesn't care."*

*"Witnessing the carnage and aftermath of a "authorized" kill still makes me feel sick to the stomach, a small mob has regrouped and are often in our front paddock grazing or laying in the sun. The thought of the same fate happening to our kangaroos is devastating"*

*"It makes me feel overwhelming [sic] sad and sick"*

*"I find this very very distressing i love our kangaroos and other wildlife"*

*"The thought of kangaroos being killed senselessly impacts my mental health as it is saddening to know this is happening, and makes me lose faith in our community that this is allowed and people support and encourage it."*

*"Yes. The unrelenting extreme cruelty and massive lack of respect for a native animal that has every right to be living here without fear and derision. This has impacted my mental health and I am feeling unsafe to be anywhere in the Yarra Ranges because these shooters will shoot ANYWHERE and they DO."*

*"My mental health is at breaking point. Never, ever been this bad. And im [sic] not alone, the trauma caused by this is huge and widespread"*

*"My friends peaceful lifestyle is severely impacted and his children were devastated by the events. He is considering moving to a region without commercial killing"*

*"Yes unfortunately we are next door to Caulfield Grammar and have seen the declining roo numbers in our area. Not good when you are running a BnB Have also seen some that have obviously been the victim of an unsuccessful kill shot. 3 recently on Rayner crt. It's distressing also for tourists/guests to see this in our area."*

*"The killing is causing great distress to many in the community. I am a volunteer wildlife carer and in regular contact with wildlife rescuers. They are sick and tired of 'cleaning up' after the industry: new data confirms an increase of 55% in gunshot wounds since the introduction of the VIC kangaroo killing program in 2019! I am worried about the suffering of the animals but, I am also concerned of the mental well being of fellow wildlife rescuers."*

Of the 75 respondents who indicated that they had **not been impacted** by the shooting, **37 still supported the proposition that SYR advocate for the exclusion from the commercial shooting**. Their associated comments clearly indicated that, while not being psychologically affected, they were expressing a strong ethical position that did not support the shooting of wildlife.

Of those remaining who stated they had not experienced any impact but supported the shooting and opposed the proposition, some expressed these comments:

*"Really. [sic] Mental health issues because of roos. Wake up"*  
*"Not at all. You'd have to be emotionally/mentally unbalanced to be really effected [sic] in these ways."*  
*"No, people need to grow [up], it's not skippy"*  
*"I'm so sick of these stupid kangaroos. Please start poisoning them as well as shooting."*  
*"[I] have shot many"*  
*"I get excited to see them drop with a shot to the head"*  
*"Don't be ridiculous"*  
*"Being able to keep the numbers of kangaroos down to an exceptable [sic] number by use of an experienced shooter has been a great experience. As always locals have been understanding of the need to keep numbers manageable, only uneducated people that don't originate from the country areas have a hard time understanding the necessity of this animal conservation."*  
*"They're an absolute pain in the arse eating all the grass. Nothing left for my livestock."*

A number of other comments pertained to the cost of vehicle damage from impacts on roads, and fence damage and grazing competition on rural properties, implying that shooting would address these problems.

## **Conclusion**

The Victorian Kangaroo Alliance survey is a realistic attempt to gain an appreciation of the perspectives of the SYR community. The results do not equate to the views of the whole SYR population, but do strongly indicate the extent of community feeling and concern.

The survey captured a variety of views within a short time frame, indicating a highly motivated cohort of respondents.

Results indicate an overwhelming opposition to shooting of kangaroos in the SYR, by a factor of nearly 3:1 against.

These responses provide a strong indication that commercial killing of kangaroos in SYR has no social licence.

Respondents made it clear that the program causes great harm to the community. The few claimed benefits seem spurious as concerns about damage—allegedly caused by kangaroos but without any evidence—could still be mitigated (ideally non-lethally) via the Authority to Control Wildlife permit program.

Accordingly SYR should be confident to advocate to the Victorian Government that it be excluded from the Gippsland commercial kangaroo 'harvest zone'.

**Dated: 26 March 2025**

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# Residents condemn commercial kangaroo shooting in Shire of Yarra Ranges following local survey

## OVERVIEW

The **Victorian Kangaroo Alliance** recently conducted a survey across the Shire of Yarra Ranges community, following a local campaign urging the Council to advocate the LGA's removal from the Gippsland commercial kangaroo harvest zone.

At its upcoming Council Meeting on **Tuesday 8 April**, the Yarra Ranges Council will vote on the matter.

Results of the survey, which attracted 255 responses in two weeks between 2/3/2025 and 16/3/2025, were overwhelmingly against the activity, citing distress, adverse mental health impacts, exposure to children of butchered animals, evidence of animal cruelty, feeling less safe in their area due to use of firearms at night and loss of community connections.

Peter Preuss, a local conservationist involved in this issue for decades said, "Commercial killing of kangaroos was banned in Victoria almost forty years ago by a Labor government. The then Environment Minister, Evan Walker, agreed the kangaroo industry to be unsustainable and unacceptably cruel. He promised the industry would never again be allowed in this state."

In 2014, the outgoing Coalition state government quietly re-introduced commercial shooting without public consultation. This was continued under the newly-elected Labor government and average kill quotas have risen from 58,000 per annum pre-commercialisation, to now over 181,000 since the reintroduction of the kangaroo industry. This clearly demonstrates the sustainability risks associated with the commercial incentive, a fact that was acknowledged by the government's own review of the program in 2019.

The commercial killing of kangaroos has spread throughout Victoria, including the Yarra Ranges, which has recently been rezoned into Gippsland under the Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan 2024-2028 (KHMP).

Ten other peri-urban local government area (LGAs) have been exempt from commercial killing under the new KHMP, some of whom expressly requested exclusion. Excluded LGAs were recognised by the government as 'outer suburbs and urban growth corridors'. This begs the question why the Shire of Yarra Ranges was the only peri-urban LGA that was not



similarly excluded. It is abundantly clear that this brutal wildlife trade has no place in a Shire known for peaceful residential areas, natural beauty, and tourism.

On **April 8**, the elected representatives of the Yarra Ranges have the opportunity to join neighbouring Councils in standing up for kangaroos, widely respected and beloved by both residents and visitors to the region.

## QUOTES

Quote attributable to Aunty Janet Turpie-Johnstone, Victorian Elder, academic and researcher:

*“For those of us with connections to this Country, Kangaroos are Kin, and as members of our families, we are expected to protect them. As a resident in the Yarra Ranges, it strikes me as contradictory that we have to lobby and debate an issue such as the welfare of this endemic species – a species that has inhabited these lands for millions of years. Where does the need to slaughter and commercialise these creatures come from? It is apparent that such violence is not even critiqued by those who participate in buying the products of this slaughter. That raises such a poignancy for me. As members of familial circles, they contribute to our relationship with Country. Therefore, their lives are imbued with respect and care. In the context of the regimens of slaughter and commercialisation, this remarkable Native species tells us much about who we are, rather than the Kangaroo’s unique contribution to the biogeography of Victoria.”*

Quote attributable to Dr Natasha Bassett BVSc (Hons) V5009:

*“As a resident of the Shire of Yarra Ranges, I have many reservations about commercial harvesting being conducted here, but my most deep seated objections to it arise from my professional role as a wildlife and welfare veterinarian. Unfortunately, my direct professional experience of commercial harvesters (and the downstream results of their operations) has been nothing short of alarming. I have personally witnessed the trail of brutality left after harvesters have been in operation. I call on our Council not to look the other way whilst harvesters wreak havoc with minimal oversight from any regulatory body. Council must take seriously the concerns of so many of us who love our Shire and the wildlife therein.”*